

Contested and Contextual Identities: Ethnicity, Religion  
and Identity among the Pakhtuns of Malakand, Pakistan.

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## Abstract

This study reflects on Pakhtun sense of belonging and suggests a complex and dynamic process of identification that involves multiple aspects. The multilayered, contextual and contested identification process among Pakhtuns indicates segmentary ethnicity that has intra ethnic, inter ethnic and national aspects. It argues that the literature on Pakhtun identity highlights the internal stratification and ecological variation amongst Pakhtuns but stop short of establishing any relationship between this internal stratification and the process of identification. The literature also fails to see the significance of the continuous and progressive identification of Pakhtuns with Pakistan and Islam. Focusing on generative processes (internal and external identification) in time of flux this thesis remains contemporary in its approach to ethnicity and identity. It also contributes to the debate in Social Anthropology about the relative emphasis on 'boundary' or the 'cultural stuff'. The research focuses on Malakand in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan), which in its changing administrative status has hybridity of the 'autonomous' Tribal Areas and 'governed' Settled Districts. Such transforming status has a greater significance to investigate identity processes in time of flux and in the context of Pakhtun ecological variation. I have argued in this study that Pakhtuns in Malakand categorize each other as *Khanan* and *Ghariban* in times of socio economic change. These categories in reciprocal opposition maintain categorical boundary through a meaning system that is informed by particular patterns of social conduct. The two categories are also involved in contextual contestation over the ethnic identity i.e who is Pakhtun? The contestation involves alternative emphasis on ascribed and performing aspects of Pakhtunness in local and non local contexts. Pakhtuns also reflect on their Pakistani and Muslim identities in a progressive way. Although Pakhtun identity remains primary in relation to Pakistani identity, they do perceive themselves as belonging to a multi ethnic Pakistani identity. The non ideological and non sectarian Muslim identity remains significant to Pakhtuns. However, the current religious unrest in the region has generated a discourse that reconsiders the relationship between Pakhtun cultural code and Islam. The thesis thus concludes that dynamic identification processes among Pakhtuns of Pakistan indicate multilayered, contested and contextual Pakhtunness. This also alludes to the segmentary nature of ethnicity and the complexity of relationship between ethnicity and Islam in Pakistan.

## List of contents

List of illustrations	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Author's declaration	ix
Introduction	1
Inter ethnic and intra ethnic	
Pakhtun identity and Pakistani nationalism	
My identity and the field	
The plan of the thesis	
Chapter 1: Ethnicity and Identification in Pakistan: Theoretical perspectives	16
<b>1.1: Ethnicity, identification and boundary making</b>	17
Ethnicity in common descent or shared culture	
Identification	
Boundary or 'cultural stuff'	
<b>1.2: Bases of Pakhtun identity</b>	25
Pakhto language	
Patrilineal descent and tribal identity	
<i>Pakhtunwali</i>	
Islam and Pakhtun identity	
<b>1.3: Theoretical Framework Focused</b>	36
Internal processes and their complexity	
Inter-ethnic processes and identification	
'Ethnicity etcetera': Anthropological approaches	
<b>Conclusion</b>	46
Chapter 2: Methodology	48
<b>2.1 Research questions and proposed answers</b>	48

<b>2.2 Case study</b>	53
Justification for the case of Malakand	
Political and historical profile of Malakand	
Historical Sketch of Malakand	
Research field	
<b>2.3 Research Design</b>	68
Background of the field work	
Access to the field and informants	
Fieldwork experiences	
Limitations of the study	
Research methods	
<b>Conclusion</b>	75
 Chapter 3: Collective identification and Categorization in Malakand	 76
<b>3.1 Jirga Period (<i>Da Jirgey pa wakh</i>)</b>	78
Anomalies in social categorization	
Migration in Malakand	
The emergence of <i>Bazar</i> (market)	
The transition	
<b>3.2 Post Jirga Period (<i>Da Jirgey na pas</i>)</b>	93
‘Group identification’ and ‘categorization’	
<b>Conclusion</b>	103
 Chapter 4: Categories, Boundaries and Contested meanings	 104
<b>4.1 Institutional Contexts of Boundary making</b>	105
<b>4.2 Behavioral Patterns and Boundary meanings</b>	109
Ego and Achievement: defining behavioral Patterns	
<i>Melmastiya</i> (hospitality): <i>Hujra</i> (guest house) and <i>Dukan</i> (Shop)	
Honor (bravery): Business and Landownership	
<i>Gham Kahdi</i> (sorrow and Joy)	
Political Leadership: Party leaders and <i>bazar mesharan</i> (market elders)	

<b>4.3 Contested Meanings and Boundary strategies</b>	120
Saliency and ‘transvaluation’ of boundary	
<b>Conclusion</b>	125
Chapter 5: Contested Pakhtun identity	126
<b>5.1 Indigenous struggle and ethnic identification</b>	127
Tribal Agency: Perverted or autonomous system	
Awami-khel’s struggle for ‘emancipation’ and ‘honor’	
<b>5.2 Ascribed and Performing aspects of Pakhtunness</b>	138
Literature on Ascribed and Performed aspects of Pakhtunness	
Ascribed and performed Pakhtunness in Malakand	
Ascribed Pakhtunness	
Performing Pakhtunness	
Overlapping between Ascribed and Performing Pakhtunness	
<b>Conclusion</b>	149
Chapter 6: ‘ <i>Pakistaniat</i> ’ of Pakhtuns	151
<b>6.1 Ethnic identity as a primary identity</b>	152
<b>6.2 Integration of Pakhtuns in the State</b>	154
Socio-economic integration of Pakhtuns in Pakistan	
Personification of Space	
<b>6.3 Sense of belonging to Pakistan: The <i>Pakistaniat</i> of Pakhtuns</b>	158
Pakistani Nationalism	
Inter ethnic discourse of power and violence: the collision path	
The discourse of sacrifice	
‘Pakistan has yet to become a nation’: Diversity in belonging	
<b>Conclusion</b>	177
Chapter 7: Religious identification	179
<b>7.1 Islamic Contestation in Pakistan</b>	181

Religious traditions in South Asia	
Deobandi Islam and its transformation	
Support for Sharia and Deobandi movements in Malakand	
Non Saliency of sectarian boundaries in Malakand	
<b>7.2 State Nationalism, Islam and Pakhtun identity</b>	<b>194</b>
Pakhtun ethnicity and Islam in national context	
<b>7.3 Islam and Pakhtunwali: Convergence and Divergence</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>7.4 Islam and Pakhtun identity</b>	<b>207</b>
Exclusivity in observing Islam	
Piety and austerity	
Religious categories	
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>213</b>
Conclusion	215
Appendix	227
Bibliography	231

## **List of illustrations**

Map 1: District Map of NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and FATA	56
Map 2: Administrative division of Malakand Protected Area	57
Map 3: Administrative division of Swat Rani Zai sub division of Malakand	57

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## **Author's Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is based on my own research work. Moreover, following papers were presented in various conferences during PhD studies.

“Ethnic and religious identities in Pashtun Politics”, Paper presented in CANE conference, 17 November, 2007, University of York, UK.

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## Introduction

The tragic incidents of 11 September 2001, helped shaping an understanding that humanity and global peace is threatened by ‘unprecedented terror’. This understanding caused enormous shift of interest towards the Muslim world where the source of such terror was perceived to be. Such interest was transmitted through the words and images of media and through the extended academic enquiries. Although the media presentation of Muslim societies was often predicated on the distorted interpretation that produced stereotypes, the intellectual endeavors were also deficient in exposing the realities and complexities of these societies. More than a particular mind set, it was the difficulty in access to these societies that caused such inadequacy. In the paucity of fresh data from these societies, researchers relied on the earlier historical and anthropological accounts with some intake from media reports and related them to the broader theoretical phenomena such as modernity, development, nationalism, religious revivalism, etc. Consequently, the end product of such a process was a holistic, elementary and unequivocal account of the societies that were otherwise much more in their subtleties, intricacies, diversities and variability.

Pakistan being one of the most pivotal Muslim States has been at the center of the recent turbulence since 11 September 2001. Most specifically, Pakistan’s North Western part and its majority Pakhtun population has been at the center of almost all commentaries, policy reports and analysis on the ‘war on terror’.<sup>1</sup> Pakhtuns in Pakistan and in the neighboring Afghanistan are often conveniently associated with Islamic militancy in the region. They are also found the protagonists of the Islamic revivalist tendencies manifested in the proliferation of Deobandi influence, attainment of electoral power by the religious political parties, and the increasing strength of the militant

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<sup>1</sup> Pakhtuns, Pukhtun, Pashtuns or Pathans are different names of the (more than 40 million) people spread across the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. My informants in the field called themselves Pakhtun and therefore, I borrow the word Pakhtun from their usage and refer to them as Pakhtuns in this text (see also Ahmed, 1980; Edwards, 1996). 1998 Census of Pakistan reveals that, besides the majority of Punjabis (44.15%), Pakhtuns are the second most numerous ethnic group of Pakistan (15.42 %) followed by Sindhis (14.1%), Saraiki speaking (10.53 %), Mohajirs (7.57 %) and Baluchis (3.57 %). Pakhtun in Pakistan are mostly settled in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan and the Federally Administered Areas (FATA). The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is often identified with Pakhtuns and this is reflected through the recent change of its name from North West Frontier Province (NWFP) to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The province was created by the British in 1901 and its name was recently changed by the 18th constitutional amendment. The amendment was passed by the parliament through a consensus vote and was signed into law by the President of Pakistan on 19 April 2010 (The News, 20 April 2010).

organization such as Taliban and Al-Qaeda.<sup>2</sup> These linkages then help construct the image of a Pakhtun in the image of Taliban or 'Islamic terrorists'. These stereotypes are then disseminated through international and national media in Pakistan. They also engender question about Pakhtun identity and its relation with Islam. Most of the presentations of Pakhtun identity are the rereading of the historical accounts of religious millenarian movements of 19th and 20th century in the region and some of the anthropological enquiries that report tribal conflict, factionalism and violence. Such understanding of Pakhtun identity construct a Pakhtun who is strict adherent of his primordial and static cultural code known as Pakhtunwali and Islamic Jihad. Therefore, a Pakhtun is seen as a 'primitive' and 'fanatic Muslim'.

Pakhtuns around the world daily encounter these stereotypes not only through the vibrant media but also through their interaction with wide range of people. The experience of such an encounter, often in form of an ordeal, channels into contemplation on their identity and the possible reaction to such stereotypes. Exceeding amount of anguish and contemplation expressed in various peace association, forums and blogs on the world wide web can be witnessed. This study is part of my own reflective and contemplative endeavor to comprehend Pakhtun identity and its related complexities. My Pakhtun credentials put me in a position that manifest concerns that I share with my Pakhtun friends and also the advantage of having access to a society that is less accessible to others. Therefore, unlike many other academic endeavors, mine is both rooted in a concern I share with my Pakhtun friends and in the advantageous position I have to gain access and reach out to the people that are conveniently relegated to 'Islamic fundamentalists' and 'militants'.

My focus in this study is on Pakhtun identity as it is central to understanding the complexity of their society and existence. Moreover, what I present here is an analysis of Pakhtun's perspective on the complexity of Pakhtun identity. I have investigated the processes of identification set in their changing social conditions by inquiring *how do Pakhtuns identify themselves?* Part of this enquiry focuses on the intra ethnic and inter ethnic aspects of identification and part of it looks into the debate about Pakhtun religious and national identification. By intra ethnic I mean processes of categorization and identification within the Pakhtun population and by inter ethnic I refer to

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<sup>2</sup> Deobandi sect of Sunni Islam is the product of 19th century reform movement in India. See chapter 8 for details.

identification vis a vis other (non Pakhtun) ethnic groups. It is through this intra ethnic and inter ethnic I will elaborate the dynamic, contextual and segmentary ethnicity and identity of Pakhtuns. Moreover, by national and religious aspects of identification I mean the sense of belonging to Pakistan (*Pakistaniat*) and Islam (Muslimness). Through such analysis I will explore the interplay of ethnicity, religion and nationalism in Pakistan.

### Inter ethnic and intra ethnic

Since the classical anthropological studies of Barth (1959a,b) and Ahmed (1980) there has been rarely any cogent anthropological enquiry that could reflect on Pakhtun identity and its changing form in a time of flux. Any such enquiry would have exposed the complexity of identity embedded in the multiplicity of Pakhtunness. The multiple aspects include internal and external or intra ethnic and inter ethnic processes. Discussion on Pakhtun identity often includes the ecological variation that influences Pakhtun identity. It is this variation that provides background for exploring the internal processes that affect the maintenance of identity. It constructs the categories of Tribal Areas Pakhtun and Settled Area Pakhtuns.

In Pakistan the major classification of this variation is categorized into administratively autonomous Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) or simply Tribal Areas and constituent districts of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, known as Settled Areas. The Tribal Areas have been historically and traditionally autonomous from the influences of the centralized State of Pakistan and Afghanistan with relevantly a greater proportion of population organized on tribal lines. The acephalous, segmentary tribal organization, (mostly) untaxed pastoral economy and egalitarian ethos manifested in tribal council known as Jirga make Tribal Areas different from Settled Areas. It is here that the ideal Pakhtun cultural code, Pakhtunwali, is practiced in exacting manner (cf. Ahmed, 1980).

However Settled Areas fall into the region that has been under the influence of States and empires through out history. Pakhtuns have arrived to these places through conquest, migration and settlement. These areas have irrigated land that nurtures a feudal economy (Ahmed, 1976: 82-83), generates taxes for the State and produces stratified and hierarchical society (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1980). These situations and

the consistent socioeconomic changes have created conditions where autonomy is compromised and some of the tribal features of organization and culture have become weakened or redundant. Therefore, the identity is renegotiated by changing the content and minimum requirements of identity (Barth, 1969b). Most importantly a huge population in the Settled Areas has lost the memory of their ancestry and therefore can hardly establish their claims over the land distribution associated with tribal conquest and settlement.<sup>3</sup> This population is often described as the descendants of the conquered people, members of the occupational groups accompanying the Pakhtun tribes, migrants of different origin or previously of Pakhtun descent (but lost the status due to loss of landownership). These people are denied Pakhtun identity by the landowning tribally organized Pakhtuns (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1980).

The difference between tribal and Settled Areas has been meaningful in a sense that the social stratification has different consequences. The Settled Areas demonstrate that stratification has caused some discontent in the lower status groups. This discontent is recorded in the anthropological literature (Barth, 1959b;1981) but has been taken as insignificant phenomenon due to the general consensus on cultural ethos. The cultural values are perceived to be conspicuous and desirable. However, it can be assumed that in Tribal Areas such discontent is insignificant for a very small proportion of the population falls in this category (cf. Ahmed, 1980; Anderson, 1983). However, discontent in Tribal Areas is manifested differently. The younger clansmen hold grudges against the patronage system of the encapsulating State and the primary beneficiary of this patronage i.e Maliks (tribal chiefs). The Maliks, enjoyed various inducements and privileges from the State which elevated them to a special status in otherwise egalitarian society (Ahmed, 1980).

The anthropological literature on these societies refer to internal cleavages (tribal, ecological and status) and the hierarchical configuration of status groups in Settled Areas (Barth, 1959b; Ahmed, 1976), but fail to relate these issues to the identity crisis generated through contestation across these fissures. These processes of contestation do engender a question; *who is Pakhtun?* However, the dearth of literature that focuses on these internal processes is pivotal in obscuring the problematic Pakhtun identity. I will argue that it is imperative to problematize Pakhtun identity in the current

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<sup>3</sup> In some cases like Swat the proportion of this landless people is close to 80% of the entire population (cf. Barth, 1959a,b).

context to comprehend its complexity. However, equally important is to revisit the external aspects of the identity despite the problematic character. Where the internal processes are characterized by contestation, the external is a dialectic between contestation and consensus. It is this internal external aspect of Pakhtun identity that makes it imperative to revisit the literature on Pakhtuns. Most significantly, such trends in the Anthropological literature on Pakhtuns refers to some broader debates and contestations in social and cultural Anthropology on how ethnicity be conceived and the broader paradox, either to focus on ‘cultural stuff’ (internal content) of the ethnic group or their ‘boundary’ vis a vis others.

The choice of Malakand as a case study to investigate the inter ethnic and intra ethnic aspect of Pakhtun identity is due to its position on the margins of tribal and settled distinction. The hybridity of Malakand also reflect broader socio economic changes in the region that has consequences for the Pakhtun identity. In exploring the case of Malakand I will be able to explain the complexity of Pakhtun identity in the time of flux that characterize Malakand.

The inter ethnic processes of identification demonstrate the contextuality of Pakhtun identity. The way they configure, maintain and employ identity in various contexts allude to the contextual Pakhtunness. Moreover, in general terms the entire society is often perceived as tribal society where tribal identity defines Pakhtuns. In this very tribal identity the entire region is included. A person belonging to a certain area within Pakhtun region in interaction with other Pakhtuns in Peshawar (capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) would allow the others to assume that the person belongs to one of the recognized tribes of the particular region. Therefore, if one is from Mardan, Swat and Malakand his or her identity will be assumed as Yousafzai for that is the land of Yousafzai tribe, despite demographic diversity in the region. However, such general identity would not count in specific enquiries such as marriages. In those situations the person’s Pakhtunness may be probed to establish his Pakhtun credentials. Moreover, in the local context in Malakand, Mardan or Swat the identity will become more complex taking the form of contestation on the inclusion and exclusion. In a locality such as Malakand context itself may be local or non local. In non local more inclusive markers such as language may be used to identify a Pakhtun.

In local context claims and counter claims of identity may involve contestations for the social stratification, status hierarchies and reinterpretation of Pakhtunwali

features may create situation that has consequences for the ethnic identity. The consequences are further consolidated by historical processes within localities such as migration, economic change, State's intervention and reforms, etc. These situations are dealt with by the social actors in particular ways. They pragmatically reflect on their identities to get sense of the world and their existence in such a world. More significantly, within the local context it is the inter ethnic and intra ethnic aspects of their identity that they contemplate. Therefore, the inter ethnic or intra ethnic aspects of Pakhtun identity are significant factors that require research enquiry. It is with such understanding that this study proceeds and probes the complexity of Pakhtun identity and thus contributes to the literature on Pakhtuns. Moreover, focusing on such complexity it will also contribute to the theoretical literature on the segmentary and contextual ethnicity and identity.

### Pakhtun Identity and Pakistani Nationalism

Beside the intra and inter ethnic aspects of Pakhtun identity a developing aspect of Pakhtuns in Pakistan is their identification with Pakistan. I will argue that debates about identification among Pakhtuns are progressive and continuous processes that extend from intra ethnic and inter ethnic to the domain of national and religious identification. Therefore, it is imperative not only to explore various aspects of Pakhtun identity but also through this exploration reflect on Pakistan's paradox of nation making. Literature on ethnicity and nationalism in Pakistan identify a perennial problem of accommodating diverse ethnicities within the national realm. The predicament is certainly not unique in the case of Pakistan, as many post-colonial Nation States are struggling simultaneously to cope with ethnic heterogeneity and developing nationality. Pakistan is perhaps unique with its post colonial past that has seen such endeavors tarnished by the secession of one of its wings (East Pakistan-1971) to become a sovereign nation State of Bangladesh. Notwithstanding, some of the political analysts argued that the task of nation formation would be easy in post secession (1971 onwards) for at least the geographical congruity and historical commonality would prevent further break up. Analysis in the literature illustrate that the locus of the perpetual problem is not the binary relationship between ethnicity and nationalism but religion as a thriving factor in this relationship.

The literature discussing the above paradox of Pakistan focusses primarily on how nation formation and State building processes are run by post colonial State. It therefore, identifies that the paradox directly or indirectly influences all other political issues of democracy, institution building, political integration, social cohesion, power distribution, role of religion in politics, social development, etc. The debate in this literature often elucidate the relationship between Muslim nationalism in colonial India and post colonial nation formation in Pakistan. It then includes a variety of interpretations of the perennial problem of ethnic resentment and national integration. However, currently the literature is emphatically alluding to the growing nexus of religion, ethnicity and political unrest in Pakistan. These academic interests are primarily but not exclusively shaped by the current wave of Islamic radicalism and revivalism in Pakistan and reflect the enormous global interest.

I will suggest that an important approach to the paradox of nation making in Pakistan would be to focus on the identification processes among ethnic groups and the ways they relate to State's nation making efforts. Although, it shifts some of the focus off from the ethnic mobilization in form of ethno nationalist movements, the approach remains sensitive to the relationship of ethnicity, nationality and Islam. Adopting such approach I will show how Pakhtun identification with Pakistan will reveal interesting processes that involve pragmatic sense of belonging to a nation in making. Such an approach would be useful for future studies on other ethnic groups and their integration in Pakistan. Moreover, such an approach will elaborate on the current emphasis on religion and ethnicity on Pakistan for religion represents a continuity from ethnic to national (Pakistani) domain. However, despite such continuity it is still debatable whether religion has been a unifying or disintegrating factor.

### **Perspectives on Pakistani Nationalism:**

The argument in this project about the nation formation in Pakistan remains rooted in a scholarly debate that is divided into rational choice and discursive positions. These positions provide us different perspectives that enrich our understanding of the paradox of nation formation in Pakistan. However, the official and 'essentialized' perspective of Muslim nationalism in South Asia argue that, Muslim nation, identity and consciousness had been persistent since the eighth century arrival of Islam in the region (Qureshi,

1969; Malik, 1963; Iqbal, 2003).<sup>4</sup> They emphasize centuries old objective differences between Hindus and Muslims that were reinvigorated by colonial political conditions where it was becoming difficult for Muslims to share a political space with Hindus. This perspective is discredited by a number of scholars who argue that the objective differences between Muslims and Hindus were not substantial enough to have constituted nations and required separate States. However, this very group of scholars differ with each other on the relative emphasis on elite manipulation and ideational concerns. They constitute two distinctive perspectives of rational choice or elite manipulation (Alavi, 1986; Brass, 1974; 1977; Samad, 2007; Jalal, 1985; 1995b) and discursive production of nationalism (Van der Veer, 1994; Metcalf, 2004; Verkaaik, 2007; Shaikh, 1989; 2008; 2009).<sup>5</sup> While rational choice or elite manipulation group insists that elite interests were a major factor in mobilizing Muslims and demanding a nation State for Muslims (Brass, 1974; Alavi, 1986; Samad, 2007), discursive group insists that Muslim nationalism was the product of discourse on community, nation and power (Shaikh, 1989; 2009), that evolved in the religious institutions and reforms efforts going back to 19th century (Van Der Veer, 1994; Metcalf, 2004; Verkaaik, 2007).<sup>6</sup> Although analytical alienation in these two perspectives and related positions may not be very vivid, such division help understanding the complexity of nation formation and contested sense of belonging to Pakistan.

Disagreeing with essentialist perspective, I find the other perspective and its internal disagreement useful in analyzing the complexity of Pakhtun sense of belonging and Pakistani nationalism. Elite interests are clearly reflected in State's effort to promote Muslim communal discourse and monopoly of power. The discourse perspective on other hand, correctly identifies the normative aspects of Pakistani nationalism and contestation on the definition of Islam. In this manner the two can be related to the extent that elite continue to manipulate the discourse on Muslim nationalism by projecting communal discourse and discouraging regional expression of

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<sup>4</sup> Francis Robinson (1974) argues that differences between these categories were perennial; however, the elite highlighted them to push for separatism. For an informative debate between Paul Brass and Francis Robinson see, Robinson (1977) and Brass (1977).

<sup>5</sup> I have borrowed the term elite focused and rational choice from Van Der Veer, who calls it 'elite-focussed rational choice approach' (1994: 29).

<sup>6</sup> This group emphasize the role of Islam as against elite focused group and stresses normative concerns of the Muslims of India. See for example the critique of elite interests argument in Farzana Shaikh (2009: 9-13).

identity to retain power. However, where the later overemphasize discourse and focus more on contest in the domain of Islam rather than ethnicity, the former ignores pragmatic discursive sense of belonging among the masses that calls for accommodative principles to constitute a nation. However, I will argue that the usefulness of interests perspective in explaining continuous elite manipulation of national identity and its ability in explaining the inter-ethnic discourse among Pakhtuns. Similarly, I will show that the normative explanation, discourse on contested meaning of Islam is useful in explaining Pakhtuns' discourse on sacrifice and insistence that Pakistan has yet to become a nation.

### **National identity formation:**

In this thesis I propose that nation formation in Pakistan can best be understood as a process that has been manipulated by elite but at the same time manifested in a broader discourse on nation and power. Tracing the history of such a process reveals interesting developments that have consequences for the ways ethnic groups shape their sense of belonging to the nation. Both rational choice and discursive focus schools provides valuable insights into such process.

The elite focused group (Alavi, 1989; Samad, 2007; Qureshi, 1993, Jalal, 1995b) argue that although the regional and religious divisions and factions within the Muslim elite and masses were temporarily put on hold, they reemerged soon after independence (1947). Punjabis and Mohajirs constituting the dominant elite and sharing power, suppressed ethnic and regional expressions of identity (Qurashi, 1993; Samad 2007; Alavi, 1989). They collectively and unscrupulously retained centralized State and projected national identity based in Islam and Urdu. Mohajirs losing power made Punjabis the most prominent (Jalal, 1995b: Samad, 1994). Punjabis have therefore successively merged their ethnic identity into Pakistani identity and by doing so they wish to recover their lost identity (Jalal, 1995b: 84). Therefore the dominance of Punjabi salariat is an incessant phenomenon and with the parallel rise of Pakhtun elite at the cost of Mohajirs's marginalization (Samad, 2007). Moreover, the policy of the ruling elite towards ethnic diversity *'has been cynically to co-opt or coerce groups that have not been accommodative'* which has made center and ethnic groups relations problematic (Samad, 2007: 127).

The discursive school of thought has focused more on the evolving and shifting discourse on national identity and ethnic diversity. It refers to historical context of the discourse of nation formation (Metcalf, 2004; Verkaaik, 2004; 2001; Veer, 1994; Shaikh, 2009). The earlier period (1947-1970) was more focused on communal discourse (Hindus versus Muslims) and opposition to India. The State adopted a modernist interpretation of Islam that was opposed to traditional, rural and customary Islam (considered perverted by Hindu influences). Being discrediting of ethnic and regional cultures and languages it emphasized Urdu language and culture (Metcalf, 2004: ch. 9, 10; Van Der Veer, 1994: 63-64; Shaikh, 2009: ch. 2, 3, Verkaaik, 2001; 2004). There has been contestation on the idea of nationhood in this period between the Mohajirs (immigrants from India) and the natives of the land (Punjabis, Pakhtuns, Baluchis, Sindhis, etc) (Shaikh, 2009; 54-56). The communal discourse of the State favors Mohajirs and Punjabis who are willing to associate themselves with it (Shaikh, 2009: 54-56). With the succession of East Pakistan in 1971, this communal discourse was replaced by an alternative territorial national discourse.<sup>7</sup> Z. A. Bhutto added ethnic identity *qaum* to national identity under the influence of this discourse (Verkaaik, 2004: 40-41). However, Zia ul Haq through his Islamization process introduced a '*supra territorial dimension of identity*' to this discourse which sought to formulate a 'denationalized' Muslim identity (Shaikh, 2009: 56-57). Moreover, consistent in all these discourses is the centrality of Muslim identity, which also is the central symbol of identification for most of the Pakistanis (cf. Metcalf, 2004: 232-233).

The concluding argument of the discursive debate suggest a 'conundrum of consensus' that characterizes Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009). This conundrum is manifested in the discursive contestation on community, nation and power in Pakistan. This contestation is informed by lack of consensus on the meaning of Islam. Various ethnic groups in Pakistan kept this conundrum alive and the debates were continued between the migrated Mohajirs and geographically based Panjabis, Pakhtuns, Sindhis and Baluchis (Shaikh, 2009:3-4). Where the majority Punjabis identify with Pakistani identity, the minorities support the shift in favor of "plural expression of Pakistani identity", and "locally negotiated national community" (Shaikh, 2009: 46-55). In my analysis (in chapter 6) I will explain how the State's favored communal discourse and

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<sup>7</sup> This was proposed and elaborated by two renown scholars by Aitzaz Ahsan (1996) and A. H. Dani (cited in Shaikh, 2009: 57).

national identity based exclusively in Islam is of less significant for ethnic minorities such as Pakhtuns. I will show how they articulate multi ethnic national identity by conceiving nation formation as a perennial process.

### **Pakhtun integration in Pakistan:**

Relevant to the debate about the nation formation in Pakistan is the question of Pakhtun integration in Pakistan. Although differences of opinion on the question are significant the progressive social and economic integration of Pakhtuns in Pakistan have convinced many to conclude that Pakhtun case represent a possible success of nation formation in Pakistan. They do so because Pakhtuns in Pakistan have taken advantage of the economic opportunities offered by Pakistan. They have control over the land, industries and other economic resources in their province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They have also exploited opportunities in trade, transportation, and labour sectors outside their region (mostly in the cities of Karachi, Lahore and in Middle East). Pakhtuns have retained their share in the most powerful institutions of the country i.e military and civilian bureaucracy.

In the above context the Pakhtun case continues to baffle and divide political analysts and scholars. Just as scholars are divided on question of nation formation and identification in Pakistan, so are they on the Pakhtun sense of belonging and integration into the State of Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> Some have argued that Pakhtuns have been integrating in the national sphere to an extent that they will soon discard ethnic sentiments (Khan.A, 2005a; Jalal, 1995a; Ahmed, 1985; Noman, 1990: Ahmed, 1996). Others insist that Pakhtun demonstrate sporadic irredentism due to vibrant ethnic sentiments (Cohen, 2005; Jaffrelot, 2005; Waseem; 2006; Weiss, 1999; Behuria, 2005). Recently, the Islamic radicalism and militancy in Pakistan and particularly in Pakhtun region has shifted some of these debates to suggest the interplay of ethnicity and Islam in the case

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<sup>8</sup> Integration or assimilation of Pakhtuns is not significantly clarified by the literature on the ethno nationalism in Pakistan. Some would even suggest that ethnic groups are assimilating slowly into Pakistani identity (Shafqat, 2007: xxix) and many would refer to the integration of Pakhtuns (Jalal, 1995a; Ahmed, 1996). Assimilation in its soft meaning as '*a process or processes by which the people of diverse racial origins and different cultural heritage, occupying a common territory, achieve a cultural solidarity at least to sustain a national existence*' (Park, 1930: 281) In this way it is an effort to bring minorities to mainstream of a country's social life (Alba and Nee, 1997: 828). While in hard meaning suggests State imposed normative program that is busy destroying the minority cultures (Alba and Nee, 1997: 827). I suggest that assimilation carried out by Pakistan lies somewhere between these two extremes and could be called integration in political sense but include discouragement of ethnic identities to become political.

of Pakhtuns. They argue that Pakhtuns have been nurturing irredentist sentiments albeit under a transformed ethno-nationalism that includes religion as the most prominent constituent (Weiss, 1999; Cohen, 2005). Yet others consider it part of the broader process of ‘ethnicizing Islam’ in Pakistan (Verkaaik, 2007).

The striking reference to this interplay (of ethnicity and Islam) in the current context of increasing interest in ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ and ‘Islamic revivalism’ reveals the significance of otherwise consistent paradox. The paradox refers to the divisive or unifying character of Islam in Pakistan and the employing of such diversity or fusion in nationalist or ethnic discourses. Moreover, this also highlights the significance of religion in the identification processes among the ethnic groups. I will focus on how Pakhtuns identify with Islam and whether they have evolved a particular sectarian or ideological identity vis a vis other ethnic groups in Pakistan (chapter 7). I will argue that, although, religious change among Pakhtuns is discernible it remains limited to change in performance of certain rituals and practices without internalizing any sectarian message. This has also been reflected in identification vis a vis other ethnic groups, which are perceived to be lesser Muslims rather than Muslims of a particular sect or ideology. I argue that Pakhtuns do cherish their belonging to Ummah but at the same time differentiate between their Muslimness and the others. Such analysis will also help us understand the current media focus on the religious extremism in the region and its consequent stereotyping of Pakhtuns.

### My identity and the field

My Pakhtun identity and upbringing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa contributes to the significance of this work. Most importantly, it was my identity and position that allowed this research to unfold. Unlike non Pakhtun researchers who would have encountered extremely different situations, as an insider I was able to gain access to the area that is otherwise difficult to access in these testing times. It was through my friends and a range of acquaintances that I was able to gather data to support my arguments. Inaccessibility is one of the major reasons in the dearth of serious research enquiry since the classic anthropological studies (Banerjee, 2000). Most of the current accounts of the region and its people depend heavily on the description and narration of the journalists, some of whom are from those particular areas. The fact that this work, through its

engagement with extensive literature and ethnographic enquiry, signifies itself in the existing literature by improving understanding of the people and society that is highly inaccessible.

Where my access to the informants was the consequence of my position as an insider, my status as an outsider put some restraints on the information that I sought to elicit. Being a student in a Western University and unrelated to the people in the field I was an outsider, with its own ramifications related to this work. I will report below (chapter 2) how my research was influenced by the precarious security situation and politically charged environment; however, it is imperative to mention here that such an ambiance had its own effect on the people of the region and their relation with me as a researcher. My position as an outsider became more consequential in the event of enormous media reporting of the religious unrest in the region. In various situations in the field my position as outsider meant that I was to be shared with and had access to selective information; and as an insider, I was expected to report with sensitivity required from any Pakhtun in such a time of crisis. This was particularly relevant in the section (of the thesis) inquiring religious change and the relationship of the change with identity. The sensitivity of the people and their interest in this work also reveal their enormous acumen of the world they are living in and their enthusiasm to share it with.

In the last chapter of the thesis on religious identity, I therefore had to report what my informants were saying in response to the stereotypes and media presentation and then relate it to various arguments and analysis in the literature. Moreover, delicate security situation in the region and my status as an outsider partly restricted my observation of religious life in the region (see chapter 2). Therefore, with these limitations I made a sense of religious change or reformation in the region. Together my outsider and insider positions enabled me to partly unpack a highly inaccessible society and show the significance of inherent identity processes but also to suggest avenues for future researchers, who will improve our comprehension of these societies. Therefore, I concede that future research will probably look more thoroughly into the dynamics of religious change and its relation with Pakhtun identity.

Moreover, the significance of this study is partly due to my own identity and position and partly due to the case study I have chosen such as Malakand. Malakand provides us with a unique case to explore the tribal and settled division through its hybrid administrative and ecological status that has evolved over time. Malakand,

previously a full-fledged tribal Agency has been subjected to political and administrative reforms since 1969. These reforms have placed it in a situation that is neither the status of Settled Areas nor of Tribal Areas. Malakand has also been severely affected by the religious militancy and one of the first regions chosen by the religious elements to launch campaign for the implementation of Sharia. Interestingly it is also the only Tribal Agency in Pakistan that was subjected to comprehensive political reforms aiming at incorporating it in the Settled Areas. Moreover, the region also hosted a local struggle against the tribal agency status and in favor of recognition through various demands of rights including the right of identity.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the region has been affected by economic changes, continuous migration and social changes related to literacy, stratification, etc. Therefore, through these socio economic changes, marginality and hybridity of Malakand I will explore the complexity of Pakhtun identity. It also signifies the relevancy of local contexts where the Pakhtun identity may demonstrate complexity that is often ignored by the literature. Moreover, the situation in case of Malakand may have relevancy for other areas in the Pakhtun region that are undergoing similar changes and processes.

### The plan of the thesis

The first chapter of the thesis will set the theoretical framework for the thesis. It illustrates how ethnicity is explained to represent common descent or shared culture and the disagreement in the theoretical literature on whether the emphasis should be on the internal content of the ethnic collectivities or the boundaries they draw vis a vis others. It also argues that the relevant usefulness of identification as a process. Additionally, the chapter refers to the contestation in the literature on what constitute Pakhtun identity and more profound contestation in the realm of Pakistani identity. Second chapter sets questions derived from the literature review and related to the theoretical framework of the first chapter. It also elaborates on the Malakand as a case study and justification for various decisions related to research design.

Chapter 3 argues that various hierarchical statuses in Malakand are transforming into reciprocal categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban*. It therefore, explains the intra

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<sup>9</sup> This movement is known as Awami-khel. It was inaugurated in 1967 and became fully functional in 1969. Awami-khel was led by a landless immigrant of Batkhela (Malakand), Muhammad Khan. Being a local struggle this movement is completely ignored by the literature on the region.

ethnic processes among the Pakhtuns of Malakand. Chapter 4 extends this intra ethnic discussion to the internal boundaries making and the meanings these boundaries convey. It elaborates on the behavioral attributes of the major categories and their reflection in cultural institutions. Chapter 5 focuses on the question of who is Pakhtun? It illustrates how the categorical distinction in Malakand has consequences for Pakhtun identity. It also elaborates on the contextual and contested nature of Pakhtun identity. Chapter 6 elaborates on Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan. It suggests that despite the primacy of ethnic identity the evolving sense of *Pakistaniat* among the Pakhtuns is discernible. The last chapter illustrates that despite religious reformation of Pakhtuns their identification with any particular religious sect or ideology is unwarranted. It also postulates that inconsistencies in Pakhtun cultural code (Pakhtunwali) and Islam are highlighted by a discourse that reflects dichotomized positions of ethno nationalists and religious groups.

## Chapter 1

### **Ethnicity and identification in Pakistan: Theoretical perspectives**

The complexity of ethnicity is evident from disagreement on its definition and the variety of theoretical approaches to it and the diversity of its empirical exploration. Such complexity is well explored through diverse theoretical perspectives and supported by empirical evidence that has contributed to our understanding of the concept. The most comprehensive and ubiquitous perspectives on the concept are to be found within the broader disciplines of social and cultural Anthropology. Moreover, these disciplines not only suggest the diversity of forms in which ethnicity appear and reappear but also refer to its enduring character. Related concepts, of identification and boundary making, allude to social aspects of ethnicity. They also manifest impressive and useful analytical tools to understand the complexity of social classification and interaction in the contemporary societies. Ethnicity is defined in the literature with relative emphasis on either common descent (albeit putative) or culture. Moreover, since the 1960s some of the literature has focused on whether the emphasis should be on what constitutes ethnic collectivity (i.e culture and putative common descent) or on the boundary it produces through social interaction. I taken ethnicity primarily in its social constructed sense with mutual impact of its constituent elements and boundary. However, the focus of this project is on the processes of identification and boundaries making among Pakhtuns.

Pakhtuns being the most numerous ethnic minority of Pakistan have been subjected to rigorous anthropological and political enquiry for their perennial, yet complicated, sense of ethnic identification. Nevertheless, I explain various identity features by referring to the relative debate in the literature on the association of these particular markers with Pakhtunness. Interestingly, Pakhtuns in Pakistan have been affected by Pakistan's own paradox of nation making. Nation making in Pakistan not only involves the dilemma of relationship between ethnicity and religion but also the choice of the appropriate means to enact the project. All this can be explicated in the context of identification among Pakhtuns.

In this chapter I will elaborate how ethnicity being a complex phenomenon is variously defined and explore the debates about its content. I will then show how identification as a process is important and will explicate that identification understood in social relational sense would involve boundaries making. I will illustrate a particular Boundaries making issue of whether the relative emphasis in anthropological analysis be on the cultural content or on the boundary of ethnic groups. I will then turn to delineate the salient features of Pakhtun identity and will also reflect on the studies that focused on Pakhtuns identity maintenance in diverse ecological settings. I will finally elaborate the theoretical framework exploring the debates about the complexity of segmentary ethnicity, multiple identification and their relevance in case of Pakhtuns.

### 1.1: Ethnicity, Identification and Boundary Making

In this section of the chapter I will elaborate on the concepts of ethnicity, identification and boundaries making. I will also illustrate how these are related phenomenon and seek to understand the broader debates and their usefulness in providing a conceptual framework to this project.

#### **Ethnicity in common descent or shared culture:**

One of the theoretical issue that is central to this project is whether ethnicity is in common descent or shared culture. Ethnicity with all its complexity is reported to demonstrate ambivalence in whether emphasis should rest on common descent or common culture. Also questions are raised about the nature of ‘self conscious claims’ (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 18-21) that constitute an ethnic collectivity, particularly when such claims are characterised by social interaction, relation and contrast (Cronell and Hartmann, 1998, Jenkins, 2008a, Eriksen, 2002). Therefore, not just the literature is divided on the emphasis (over culture or descent) but is also undecided on the combined emphases and the social boundary an ethnic collectivity creates in social interaction.

I will also show through empirical data I have collected from Malakand that Pakhtuns have been employing this difference to generate a debate about who is

Pakhtun? The renowned sociologist Max Weber was the first to elaborate the subjective sense of shared descent and shared history.

We shall call ethnic groups those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonisation and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (Weber, 1978: 389).

Currently, the literature on ethno-nationalism and ethnic conflicts (with political perspectives) has emphasised on kinship, putative descent, historical continuity of the myths and symbols associated with origin. Horowitz (1985) in his seminal work on ethnic conflicts has emphasised the kinship and ascriptive aspects of ethnicity and ethnic affiliations. He argues that ethnic identity changes but not often; for varying degree ‘ethnic identity is established at birth for most group members’; however, this also may vary (1985:52). He rather bluntly asserted that, “the language of ethnicity is the language of kinship” (1985: 57).<sup>10</sup>

Ethnic groups are also seen in the sense of cultural groups and cultural similarities are explained as primary to ethnic groups. This explanation prevailed for some time (Jenkins, 2002: 34) and in fact replaced to a degree the Weberian emphasis on subjective sense of common descent (Cornell and Hartman, 1998: 17). In the cultural sense ethnic group was defined by Farley, “as a group of people who are generally recognised by themselves and/or by others as a distinct group, with such recognition based on social or cultural characteristics” (cited in Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 17).

The issue with culture is that, at times shared by the members of one group with that of other and the members of the same group may not share the same culture (Hughes, 1994; Moerman, 1965; Barth, 1969a). Barth (1969a) and his colleagues in the seminal work ‘*Ethnic groups and boundaries*’ sought to signify ethnic boundaries rather than the cultural content of the ethnic collectivities. He argues that the focus must shift to “ethnic *boundary* that defines the group and not the cultural stuff that it

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<sup>10</sup> Also see Fishman (1980: 84) and Nash (1989).

encloses” (1969a: 15) and from the isolated (or separated) character of ethnic group as embedded in the approach that focus on internal content such as culture (1969a: 10).<sup>11</sup> However, later Barth (1994) realised that the cultural stuff does matter.

Within the contested positions on the question of ethnicity I have used a framework that is closer to Eriksen (2002) and Jenkins (2008a). Eriksen’s understanding of ethnicity which focuses on interactional aspect explains that cultural differences between ethnic groups are not necessarily decisive features of ethnicity unless they are made so in social interaction (2002: 12-13). Jenkins suggests that ethnicity and culture are not ‘what people have’ or ‘belong to’ rather they are, but “...complex repertoires which people experience, use, learn and do in their daily lives, within which they construct an ongoing sense of themselves and an understanding of their fellows. Ethnicity, in particular is best thought of as an ongoing process of ethnic identification” (2008a: 15). Therefore, taking insights from Eriksen’s (2002) and Jenkins (2008a) it understands ethnicity in terms of socially constructed ‘sameness’ and ‘distinctiveness’ with some reference to culture and putative claims of common descent. Moreover, these processes of similarities and differences are not exclusively enacted in political claims but in the realm of everyday existence. In this way I take insights from Brubaker for he elaborates how “ethnicity happens in a variety of everyday settings” (2004: 2). There is also some value in Brubaker’s (2004) suggestion that the analytical usefulness of term such as ‘groupness’, ‘categorisation’, ‘identification’ to avoid reification.

In opposition to Primordialists approach to ethnicity and identity, which explains the ties of identity and ethnicity are ‘ineffable’, ‘overpowering’ and ‘coercive’ (Shils, 1957; Geertz, 1963), I have found the position of constructivist useful. ‘Constructivist’ argue that, ‘ethnicity is the product of social process rather than a cultural given, made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth’ (Wimmer, 2008a: 971). Despite my position closer to constructivists, I agree with Jenkins that, “there are limits to the plasticity of ethnicity, as well to its fixity and solidity” (2008a: 173). Furthermore, we also know from anthropological studies that despite the fact that features of Pakhtunwali have been manipulated, discarded and transformed (Bartlotti, 2000; Banerjee, 2000; Barth, 1969b),

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<sup>11</sup> <sup>11</sup> Eriksen (2002) argues that Barth had ‘processual’ and ‘relational approach’ to ethnicity, that defines ethnic groups ‘through its relationship to others’ (p. 38).

it has been practised for centuries and is often believed to characterise Pakhtun social cultural and political life.

### **Identification:**

The second most important conceptual issue to the project is of identification that is also related to the complexity of ethnicity. Its multilayered processes, contextuality, flexibility and employability is well explored (Lyman and Douglas 1973; Royce 1982; Jenkins, 2008a, Kasfir, 1979). I widely use the term identification in the sense of constructing ‘similarity’ and ‘differences’ (cf. Jenkins, 2008a; 2008b). However, the construction of similarity and differences is a multiple construction of similarity and differences, used contextually by individuals and collectivities.

Cornell and Hartmann (1998) postulated that identity construction is implicitly or explicitly about story or narration that manifest explanation of who we are or who they are. They argue that ethnicity or race are the idioms used to compose such a story and the narration itself tell us about the significance of these idioms (p. 251-252). Therefore, the consequences (good or bad) of these idioms are less important for they are constructed by humans, rather it is of greater important to see how they are employed (Cornell and Harman, 1998: 252).

There is a growing trend particularly since Barth’s work on ethnicity in emphasising more on the process of identification rather than identity (Barth, 1969a; Jenkins, 2008; Royce, 1982; Brubaker, 2004).<sup>12</sup> Collective (social) identification simultaneously involves emphasising ‘similarity’ or commonality within a group and ‘differentiation’ from without (others) (Jenkins, 2008b). These also refer to the process of inclusion and exclusion and consequent boundary making (Jenkins, 2008b:102). The collectivities of groups and categories are generated through these *external* and *internal* dialectics (2008b:105).<sup>13</sup>

All collectivities can be conceptualised by reference to processes of group identification and social categorisation: each side of the dichotomy is

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<sup>12</sup> Yunas Samad (1995b; 2007) has used the term identification for the process of Muslim identity formation in former India and Pakistan. He criticizes what he argues is official esstentialization of Muslim identity in Pakistan. He illustrates that such essentialist view of identity in Pakistan has concealed innate ambiguity, subtleties and overlaps and has left little room for diversity and accommodation.

<sup>13</sup> Italics used in the original source.

implicated in the other and social identification is the outcome of a dialectical process of internal and external definition (Jenkins, 2008a: 56-57).

These internal and external processes of group identification are central to this study for they are not just employed to draw boundary between Pakhtun and non Pakhtun, as most of the previous literature has done, i.e Barth (1959b), but to explain social classification and stratification within a population claiming Pakhtun identity. Moreover, we are timely informed by Cornell and Hartmann (1998) that internal differentiation within ethnic and racial categories matter and the members at times ‘contain’ these differences (p. 203-213).

All ethnic and racial populations have within their experience the bases of subdivision, and subdivision in turn offer potential bases for fragmentation, leading either to new ethnicities, to alliances across the ethnic boundary, or to new, non-ethnic identities altogether (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 213).

Nevertheless, within an ethnic group such processes may have their own significant existence. Processes of categorisation and group identification within ethnic group may have consequences for the same processes at inter ethnic level; therefore, social actors may construct multiple similarities and differences. Differences within the group can become irrelevant and similarities could be sought during ethnic group’s interaction with others. This paradox is of greater importance and to understand the ethnic identification with all its complexities one should refer to it.

I will elaborate below (ch 3 and 4) how previous studies, Barth (1959b) and Lindholm (1982), ignored these processes of categorisation and group identification among what Barth termed ‘Pathan’ by focusing more on caste type hierarchical stratification. I intend to relate these processes to other such processes at different levels of collective identification. I also establish that identification (both self and other) are situational and contextual (cf. Brubaker, 2004). Moreover, since “Similarity and difference reflect each other across a shared boundary” (Jenkins, 2008b: 103), my emphasis in the next section would be on boundary making and maintenance.

### **Boundary Making: strategies and issues.**

Significant research focus has been shifted to the processes of boundary making and remaking since the seminal work of Fredrick Barth such as “Ethnic groups and boundaries” (1969a). As argued above, Barth insisted that boundaries of ethnic groups matter more than the ‘cultural stuff’ (1969a: 15), therefore, focus must shift to the boundaries separating ethnic groups. Barth’s (1969a) emphasis on boundary and his ‘relational and processual approach to ethnicity’ (Eriksen, 2002: 38) was meant to contest ‘cultural determinism’ (Eriksen, 2002: 53) and structural functionalist understanding of society, social groups and culture as ‘things’ (Jenkins, 2008a: 12-13). Although Barth’s focus on the concept of boundary generated a debate whether he was suggesting constant (and fixed) ethnic categories, he is broadly understood to be arguing in favour of social construction of boundaries and identities and thus envisaging flexible and variable rather than ‘reified’ and ‘hard’ groups and identity (Eriksen, 2002: 38,53; Jenkins, 2008a 12,13, 19).<sup>14</sup> I also concede the current understanding of Barth’s proposition (Jenkins, 2008a) and therefore explicate social production of the boundaries between various categories in Malakand.

In most meticulous terms the concept of boundaries refers to social classification and the networks of everyday relationship based on ‘actions of connecting and distancing’ (Wimmer, 2008a: 975). The former is about the division of the world into ‘us’ and ‘them’ and the later is a ‘script of action’ related to the ‘us’ and ‘them’ in a given situation (Wimmer, 2008a: 975). These two are cognitive schemes for an individual and a social boundary refers to their coincide (Wimmer, 2008a: 975). With such an understanding this project employs the concept of boundary to the analysis at multiple levels of the project. It concedes that, the concept of boundary is useful in explaining the processes of internal stratification and identification among Pakhtuns and simultaneously in explaining the processes of ethnic divisions in Pakistan (among various ethnic groups).

Different strategies of boundaries making can be adopted by the social actors. Besides boundary strategy of ‘expansion’ and ‘contraction’, ‘Transvaluation’ as a strategy (Wimmer, 2008b: 1037-1038), is of particular interest to this project. ‘Transvaluation’ could be seen as re-evaluation effort to reject the accepted standards, it

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<sup>14</sup> See Cohen (1974) for Barth’s criticism and Jenkins (2008a) for his defence

includes the strategy of 'equality' and 'normative inversion' (Wimmer, 2008b: 1037-1038). 'Normative inversion' as a boundary strategy targets the meaning of the boundary and would turn 'symbolic hierarchy' on its head, "such that the category of the excluded and despised comes to designate a chosen people, morally, intellectually and culturally superior to the dominant group" (Wimmer, 2008b: 1037). We can trace the examples of this strategy in some of the literature on ethnic and racial groups in America.<sup>15</sup> An alternative strategy within this 'transvaluation' category could be establishing moral and political equality rather than superiority (Wimmer, 2008b: 1037-1038).

### **Boundary or the 'cultural stuff':**

Some of the issues identified by the literature on processes of identification and boundaries making are relevant to this project. When we discuss identification and ethnicity in social and relational sense we by default are discussing boundaries making and maintenance. Therefore, most of the issues identified here are simultaneously the issues of identification and boundaries making. Jenkins identified the issue of ethnic versus non ethnic in the process of identification and question when would an identification process be ethnic and when non ethnic (2008a: 42-45). Similarly, Wimmer (2008a) in his discussion on issues of boundaries questioned the political saliency of ethnic boundary. He argues that such question is important because "many systems of ethnic classification are multilevel character: they comprise several nested segments of differentiation in contrast, for example, to gender classifications or ranked social estates-all of which might become the main focus of political loyalty" (2008a: 976-977). His explanation of situational logic satisfies the question to an extent (2008a: 977).

Another important aspect of social relations, identification and boundary making is highlighted by the current literature is the importance of 'cultural stuff' that Barth originally discredited (Cornell and Hartman, 1998; Jenkins, 2008a; Wimmer, 2008a). Barth later revisited his earlier thesis in light of contemporary perspectives and

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<sup>15</sup>Espiritu (2001) has demonstrated how Filipino immigrants to USA have been constructing their moral distinctiveness and superiority over the 'morally flawed' 'Americans' (whites). Espiritu sought to explain "how the 'margins' imagine and construct the 'mainstream', in order to assert superiority over it" (2001: 416). Also see Lamont and Molnar (2001) on how the marketing executives in America transform the image of blacks and seek to improve their status hierarchy.

understanding of culture (1994: 13-14). Recognising the importance of culture in his current work, Barth argues that culture is reproduced in a sense that as ‘interpretation of and action in the world’, it is learned from others but become part of experience and thus accumulated as a consequences of such experience (p.14). He also argues, “...central and culturally valued institutions and activities in an ethnic group may be deeply involved in its boundary maintenance by setting internal processes of convergence into motion” (1994: 18).

Jenkins (2008a) therefore, argues that boundaries and the interactions across them are “...intimately and indissolubly bound up with the cultural contents of ethnicity” (p. 126). Jenkins (2008a) and Cornell and Hartmann (1998) taking culture in its ‘meaning’ or ‘understanding’ sense, that social actors have of the world around them, take up the issue of ethnic attachments or bonds. Cornell and Hartmann posit that culture being ‘ideas’, ‘interpretations’ and guide to life and action provides relatively the strongest bond to members of the ethnic group (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 85-89). Jenkins agrees with most of this argument but posit that religion in the case of Northern Ireland combine institutional and cultural bonds which also demonstrates that, ‘cultural stuff’ does matter (2008a: 126-127). Also for Jenkins the categorisation done by ‘us’ and ‘them’ become part of experience and so part of ‘cultural repertoire’. Social actors may prefer one over the other of such cultural repertoire (e.g language or religion) to mobilise, for these markers have greater emotive quality than others (2008a: 171-172). However, it is difficult to clearly put the relationship between ethnicity and culture in social relationship. Of course we know that at least at the ethnic level of organisation members of group refer to cultural features and agree on the broader character of its constituents. However, it become problematic when we explain its relationship to other level of organisation i.e, when members of an ethnic group may identify and categorise each other using some markers. In that case the cultural stuff does not become a whole but a diverse repertoire as Jenkins (2008a) would put, or, it may become a contested tool kit (Werbner, 2002).

Eriksen (2002) has demonstrated how the relationship between culture and ethnicity has been problematic and the debate in the literature is not conclusive on the issue (p. 56-58). Elaborating the relationship he argues that ethnicity and culture have two way relationship and that ethnicity is about communicating culture difference and

that ethnicity being relational, situational is between groups while culture is within (2002: 57-58).

From a different perspective Pnina Werbner, studying Pakistani Diaspora in Manchester focused on the multiplicity of identities, hybridity and contestation within the ethnic community. She argues that, “none of the social unites we evoke-identity, diaspora, community, nation, tradition-are consensus based wholes: all are the product of ongoing debates and political struggles or alliances” (2002: 18). Moreover, she posits that, Pakistanis may unite on larger scale to mobilise on certain issues but for most time engage in ‘internecine conflict of honour’ within, but their mobilisation reproduce, ‘transcendent ethnic identities’ (2002:16) such as Umma, South Asian Punjabi, Pakistani (2002:66). I also demonstrate that the consensus on say culture is contextual among Pakhtuns.

I will demonstrate how ethnicity involves cultural stuff, including belief in common ancestry. Such features are made relevant through a social process of identification, a process that involves drawing similarities and differences simultaneously. Although, ethnicity is communicated across the ethnic boundary with others it also engages with internal processes of classification within the population that claims ethnic membership. In this way there could be multiple boundaries contextually drawn by the larger population, which in successive arrangement would draw internal boundaries among themselves but would dissolve them at higher level. Moreover, ethnic identity through its engagement with internal processes of classification become contested, but such contest, conditioned by the contexts, may transform into consensus i.e at higher level. All these complex processes necessitated that we, first of all, understand the features associated with Pakhtun identity.

## 1.2: Bases of Pakhtun identity

Important constituents of the conceptual framework of this study, are the features and markers associated with Pakhtunness. These markers are well explored through anthropological research in Pakhtun region, along with contested positions on the importance of one marker over the other. This project does not aim at adding to this constellation of markers and features of Pakhtun identity. It rather endorses the diversity

and range of these markers as pointed out in the literature. The project more emphatically problematize Pakhtun identity not through an external versus internal debate (literature on the boundaries), rather through a debate on how among the Pakhtuns, ethnic identification means emphasizing one marker over the other.

### **Pakhto Language:<sup>16</sup>**

Pakhto belongs to the Indo-Iranian language family (Rahman, 1995). It is widely spoken in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, FATA, Baluchistan and Afghanistan. The debate about the Pakhto language being a significant marker of identity is inconclusive. Barth (1981:105) has considered language as '*a necessary and diacritical feature, but in itself not sufficient: we are not dealing simply with a linguistic group*'. He reported a Pakhto proverb as evidence in support of his argument '*He is Pathan who does Pashto, not (merely) the one who speaks Pashto*' (Barth, 1969b:119). In his commendable study on Pakhto proverbs Leonard N Bartlotti (2000) has explained this proverb as the one which in fact recognizes Pashto as an identity marker and then cajoles a Pakhtun for action. Benedicte Grima's (2004) ethnographic report appears to endorse Bartlotti's claims, she writes, "*Pashto, as has been illustrated by myself and others in length, is not just a language but a complex conglomerate of cultural behaviour. One does not merely speak, but one does, one performs, Pashto. As my own linguistic skills grew, so did the behavioural expectations the culture had of me*" (2004: vii).

Some scholars on Pakhtuns have contended that Pakhto is a major or perhaps the most significant aspect of Pakhtunness. Pakhto is '*The most obvious symbol today of Pathan identity and the measure of Pathan pride*' (Caroe 1958: 65). So significant is its importance in the eyes of Pakhtuns that it can be considered one of the diacritical and "indispensable" components of identity (Evans-Von Krebek cited in Bartlotti, 2000: 70). Therefore, '*...not only practically and historically, but symbolically and expressively in oral literature and modern poetry, the Pashto language is closely associated by Pashtuns with Pashtunness*' (Bartlotti, 2000: 71).

It is posited that Pakhtun and Pakhto are "inextricable" and that '*modern trends will force more and more Pakhtuns into twilight zone where only their mother tongue will remain as a symbol of their ethnic identity*' (Evans-Von Krebek cited in Bartlotti,

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<sup>16</sup> Pakhto, Pukhto or Pashto are different names of the language spoken by Pakhtuns.

2000: 71). This observation is interesting in the context that when other markers weaken the language remains the most important marker (cf. Barth, 1969b: 129). To evidence these trends I am reporting a sociological survey of Pakhtun region in Pakistan (Hallberg, 1992) which shows some interesting trends in the usage of language. It reports that Pakhto is exclusively spoken by Pakhtuns in the 4 out of 6 domains identified by the study i.e home, mosque, Jirga and speaking to women (1992: 28). In other two domains, such as school and bazaar, Pakhto is spoken (mostly) along with Urdu (1992: 28-36). The survey concludes that although Pakhtun attitude towards other languages is favourable, their attitude towards Pakhto is overwhelming; *'not only is it virtually the only language of use in most domains, it also is seen as a strong mark of identity and pride'* (1992: 42).<sup>17</sup>

Although the significance of Pakhto language as an identity marker, the language is forgotten by a number of people who still identify themselves as Pakhtuns or claim to have Pakhtun ancestry. These include Pakhtuns in urban centres of Afghanistan such as Kabul, who have undergone *'Persianization in speech and culture'* (Barth, 1969b: 129) or of India (Rahman, 1994: 134) have long forgotten Pakhto language. Similar trends could be seen among the Pakhtun tribes in Hazara district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Ahmed, 1997: 109) and the South of Punjab where ethnic groups identifying themselves with Pakhtun ancestors have forgotten their language and adopted either Punjabi or Saraiki. In all these cases ethnic reference to Pakhtun identity is often made but not through the Pakhto language, rather through Pakhtun tribal ancestry or Pakhtunwali.<sup>18</sup> This raises important questions, if Pakhto language is such an important diacritical feature of Pakhtun identity where would those non-Pakhto speaking people who continue to identify with Pakhtun ethnicity be placed? Conversely, would all those who speak Pakhto but lack other diacritical features such as patrilineal descent or Pakhtunwali be identified as Pakhtuns? These are some of the themes on which this project reflects.

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<sup>17</sup> Despite the official discouragement of the use of Pakhto in Pakistan, for its association with ethno nationalist movement of the 1950s and the 1960s (Rahman, 1996: 145-154), Pakhtuns have demonstrated love for their language. Pakhto music, drama and other literary genre are very popular and promoted through private radio and Tv channels and world wide web (cf. NDCP, 10 March, 2007). Monthly magazines such as *Pakhtun* and *Leekwal* are published from Peshawar. A monthly magazine with the name *Nazar* is published from Batkhela has sections, both in Urdu and Pakhto languages.

<sup>18</sup> see Rahman for the account of an India poet with Pakhtun ancestry being more proud of what he call his *Pathanwali* (1996:134).

### **Patrilineal descent and Tribal identity:**

Pakhtunness is often associated with patrilineal descent from a mythical ancestor and with tribal way of social organisation. It could be imperative for Pakhtuns to identify their lineage through a record of genealogy that traces one's link with the apical ancestor Qais Abdur Rashid; and it is certainly reported the most important aspect of Pakhtunness (Ahmed, 1980: 84; Rittenberg, 1988: 6).<sup>19</sup> Comprehensive genealogical tables, called *Shajara*, are often produced to validate such linkage (Rittenberg, 1988: 26; Barth, 1959b: 24-28). Therefore, it is important not only that a Pakhtun should have a lineage; he should keep a good track of it.<sup>20</sup> The Patrilineal lineage has social and political significance in Pakhtun society (Ahmed, 1980). Patrilineal relations are the focus of skirmishes and feuds within the clan. 'Tarboor' or first cousins symbolises rivalry in Pakhtun society. Moreover, the landownership is also defined by the placement on these genealogies (Barth, 1959b: 24-28; Rittenberg, 1988: 26-27). However, there is lack of consensus on the inclusion of various tribes or clans in these genealogies. Although, in Swat when landownership and Pakhtun status were extended to those who did not have these rights before they were at the same time denied any entry into the genealogical tables (Barth, 1959b: 24-28), Tribes such as *Afridis* and *Ghilzay* were included in the genealogies at some historical instances (Careo, 1958; Glatzer, 2002).

Although the importance of the patrilineal descent, lineage and genealogical records cannot be denied, their contested nature, mythical character and dependence on memories do create problem in modern Pakhtun societies. In Malakand in particular and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in general, people tend to forget their ancestry and therefore, at times invite a contest over Pakhtun status, which is often intertwined with these lineage memories and records. Moreover, segmentary lineage and partilineal descent are mostly associated with ascribed aspect of identification and therefore, contribute in the contestation between ascribed and performed Pakhtunness.

Pakhtun traditionally constitute a segmentary, acephalous and tribal society. Each tribe draws its genealogy from single mythical ancestor which in turn are all

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<sup>19</sup> Professor Nawaz Tair (2008) in his interview with the author stressed this assertion.

<sup>20</sup> Professor Tair's (2008) assertion.

linked with the apical ancestor Qais. The common ancestor had sons, grandsons and great grandsons each being the ancestor of tribes and sub tribes. In this manner Pakhtuns constitute the largest tribal society in the world. Edwards has pointed out that that tribe as a concept in Middle East and South West Asia means ‘a form of social organisation’ that has the characteristics of patrilineal descent from an eponymous ancestor, territorial and political division of the descent groups on the principle of segmentation and complementary opposition, reproduction of these segmentation at each level of social structure and diffusion of political power at each level (1990: 70). Edwards argues that the structure of the tribe is sustained through dynamics or tension such as reciprocal violence. In the case of Pakhtuns this is manifested in the concept of *Tarborwali* (agnatic rivalry-see below) or *Siali* (rivalry). Also the characteristic of tribal organisation is its principles of ‘competition’ and ‘equality’ (1990: 70-72).

However, how much tribal way of organisation is relevant varies from one region to the other. In areas where the centralised State has established its authority, tribal arrangements have weakened or in many cases become redundant. It is on these basis Ahmed (1976: 73-83; 1980: 116-125) has referred to two distinctive and antithetical socio-economic categories of *Nang* (honour) and *Qalang* (*tax, rent*). The former refers to free and ‘unencapsulated’ form of organisation that centres around the concept of *Nang* (honour), the later is an ‘encapsulated’ form where social hierarchies exist. Moreover, according to Ahmed the *Nang* category is characteristic of hilly areas with pastoral economy, untaxed and out of State system, acephalous tribal organisation, egalitarian with Jirga representing the whole tribe, based in the concepts of honour (1976: 82-83). *Qalang*, on other hand have characteristics of plains irrigated areas with feudal economy, taxed and within the larger encapsulating State system and hierarchal social organisation (Ahmed, 1976: 82-83). Ahmed places Swat society in the *Qalang* and Mohmand Agency’s society into the *Nang* category (1980: 118-119) but emphasised that Pakhtun tribes can be at the same time in both these categories (1976: 78).

Anderson (1983; 1978a; 1978b) observing Ghilzai (Pakhtun) tribe in Afghanistan suggested the dynamic character of tribe. He also argues that kinship and ethnicity are bound in a single framework of Quom (1978a). He (1978a: 1983) explicates that Quom represents kinship ties, primordial solidarity, equality in the ranks of tribal segments and its members, and is manifested in tribalism (Tribalism is Quomwali). In this way he tends to find Quom or Quomwali, embedded in kinship, a

primary feature of Pakhtun identity. Edwards, following the tradition of Anderson, argues that tribal organisation can be at its best in ‘inter-tribal environment’ than in ‘close proximity’ to non tribal ethnic groups and ‘within an encapsulating State system’(1990: 71). Some of the discussion in the ‘maintenance of identity’ section would develop on these typologies of social organisation of Pakhtuns and the way shift from one to other may affect identity maintenance. Although the tribal organisation varies form region to region, it is one of the most persuasive markers of Pakhtunness.

### ***Pakhtunwali:***

*Pakhtunwali* variously defined as ‘*the way of the Pathans*’ (Spain, 1962: 25), ‘*the code of honour*’ (Ahmed, 1980) and ‘*the manner and customs of the Afghan tribes, the Afghan code*’ (Raverty cited in Glatzer, 1998: 3). It is in fact a conglomerate of cultural features deemed ideal by Pakhtuns. Often the list of features gets so exhaustive that it appears an inconclusive cultural code. For Barth (1969b) Pakhtun culture is embodied in the three primary institutions of *Melmastia* (hospitality), *Jirga* (council) and *Pardah* (seclusion of women).

*Melmastia* or hospitality is to serve the outside or guest in different ways. To offer meal to a passing stranger, serving and entertaining friends (Barth, 1969b: 120-121) and distributing gifts or rendering food to win political following (1959b: 77). It is the last form of hospitality on which Barth (1959b) focused in his work on the political leadership in Swat. *Hujra* (male guest house), being the site of hospitality is having wider cultural, social (Ahmed, 1976:65; Lindholm and Meeker, 1981: 445, 446, 468) and political functions (Barth, 1959b: 80). The above mentioned literature elaborates that it servers to entertain guests, facilitate to consummate ideal behaviour, host social and cultural activities and perform political function under a khan to distribute gifts and patronage. However, currently its functions are subjected to change due to changing socio-economic situations.

*Jirga* is an important institution of Pakhtun society which refers to the ‘council of elders’ (Ahmed, 1980) or ‘Public assemblies’ (Barth, 1959b: 115) which solve disputes and its decisions are accepted by the parties in conflict.<sup>21</sup> Barth (1959b) reported that Jirgas in Swat are acephalous councils which were constituted of the land

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<sup>21</sup> These councils could be ‘ad hoc meeting’ or an ‘instituted tribunal’ (Barth, 1969b: 121).

owning 'Pakhtuns' (1959: 67,116). However, the multiplicity of forms and roles it performs is widely reported (Ahmed, 1980: 90; Ali and Rahman, 2001: 51; Wardak, 2002). In its dispute settling role in Tribal Areas, it combines Islam and Pakhtun customs to reach a decision and such decisions are binding (Ahmed, 1980: 90-91). However, in its other roles it can decide about such minor issues like the site of mosque to much greater task of negotiating with other tribes and government (Ahmed, 1980: 90). There could also be official Jirgas appointed by Political Agent in Tribal Areas to investigate and adjudicate disputes (Ali and Rahman, 2001: 50-57). Similarly, Jirgas were recently convened as government electing bodies (*Emergency Loya Jirga- 2002*) or constitution making conventions (*Loya Jirga- 2003-2004*) in Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, a series of Jirgas were recently constituted in Pakistan and Afghanistan to facilitate debate and dialogue on the current unrest.

*Pardah* is another feature of Pakhtunwali. Barth insists that it means seclusion of women and through it the 'virility and primacy of the male' in society is ensured (1969b: 122). Ahmed concedes Barth that *Pardah* is part of Pakhtunwali and States that women are even denied the right to share in their father's property or to give consent in her own marriage; surprisingly both of these practices are against Islamic teachings (Ahmed, 1997).

These institutions for Barth facilitate performance on certain basic values which constitute the basis of Pakhtun culture; these include, '*male autonomy and equality, self expression and aggressiveness*' (1969b: 120).

These three central institutions combine to provide Pathans with the organisational mechanisms whereby there they can realise core Pathan values fairly successfully, given the necessary external circumstances (Barth, 1969b: 123).

Lindholm (1982: 211) and Ahmed (1980: 90) identified at least three central features of Pakhtunwali are *Badal*, *Melmastia* and *Nanawatee*. Both Ahmed and Lindholm were studying two different Pakhtun societies i.e Mohmand Tribal Area and Swat, however,

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<sup>22</sup> For details on different forms of Jirga see Wardak (2002).

the consistency and uniformity in these features proves them crucial aspects of Pakhtunwali. Below I elaborate on them briefly.

*Badal*, means ‘revenge’, ‘feud’, ‘vendetta’, ‘reciprocity’ and one of the central features of Pakhtun life. *Melmastia*, means hospitality, although Barth (1959b: 1969b) focused on the political and economic aspect of it, Ahmed touched its social and cultural aspect. Ahmed points out that a Pakhtun to Mohmands is ‘*da melma dost*’ (a friend of guests) and that guests in Mohmand Tribal area are served with greater respect and care; even the proudest of Maliks (leaders) would personally serve tea or meal (1980: 90). Similarly, Edwards find it a quality demonstrated by rich and poor alike (1996: 67) *Nanawatee*, means ‘to go in’ or ‘refuge’. Ahmed elaborates that it is evoked when an enemy ‘goes in’ to sue for peace. In such situation magnanimity must be shown even to one’s staunchest enemy (1980: 90). Lindholm has explained a different aspect of it, *Nanawatee* in Swat could be requested by those who fled their homes and would like to get into the protection of a khan from their enemy; but in such a case they would become clients of the khan and would join his army (1982: 234-235).

Beside these central features, Lindholm extended the list of Pakhtunwali features or values by including ‘*equality, respect, loyalty, pride, bravery, Purdah, pursuit of romantic encounters, the worship of Allah and most importantly the unselfish love for the friend*’ (1982: 211). Ahmed on other hand stresses that the two most important operative features of Pakhtunwali are *Tarborwali* (agnatic rivalry) and *Tor* (female chastity). The central features of *Badal* (revenge) and *Nang* (honour) are both translated into *Tarborwali* (agnatic rivalry) and *Tor* (women chastity) (1980: 91). Recently in an interesting study of elite Pakhtun women, Amineh Ahmed found out that *Gham-Khadi* (sorrow and joy) celebrations are becoming important part of Pakhtunwali and manifest the concept of *badal* in its meaning of ‘reciprocity’ in social relationship (2006: 03, 141).

Pakhtunwali has served as the ideal model for Pakhtun behaviour. “*This model provides a Pathan with self-image, and serves him as a general canon for evaluating behaviour on the part of himself and other Pathans*” (Barth, 1969b:120). Ahmed also argues, ‘*In the ideal, the pursuit of an honourable life, in the eyes of the actor, is equated with a life approximating to the features of Pukhtunwali*’ (1980: 91). Therefore, being ideal Pakhtunwali also is practised with varying degree in different regions of

Pakhtuns. However, being a necessary part of Pakhtun identity, it refers to achieved aspect of Pakhtunness as apposed to ascribed aspect of descent and lineage.

### **Islam and Pakhtun identity:**

There is a consensus in the anthropological and political literature on the centrality of Islam to Pakhtun identity.<sup>23</sup> Barth suggested that, '*a Pathan must be an orthodox Muslim*' (1969b: 119) and Ahmed (1980) has even argued that there is inseparable bond between Pakhtunness and Muslimness.

He is by definition a Muslim just as by birth he obtains the inalienable right to Pukhtunness. His place in society as a Pukhtun and a Muslim is thus secured and defined from the moment of birth (Ahmed, 1980: 107).

These very perception makes Pakhtuns confident and their religion universal and tolerant (Ahmed, 1980: 107).<sup>24</sup> Ahmed observed significant 'Islamic symbolism' in Pakhtun behaviour though little comprehension of those symbols. Moreover, these symbols were to be reactivated as they were linked with social status. The proximity of the Mosque with the Hujra represents this symbolism in Tribal Areas (Ahmed, 1980: 105-115). Pakhtuns were also reported to be extending greater importance to and practice of rituals such as Prayers, Fasting, Pilgrimage (Haj), Zakat (money paid to the poor) and Jihad (Ahmed, 1980: 107-108). Edwards rather bluntly accepts the centrality of Islam to Pakhtun identity but argue that, "it played a passive role in social affairs and assumed a self-evident dimension of individual and cultural identity" (1990: 97).

Barth elaborates that, Pakhtun customs are always imagined to be in line with Islamic preaching. Ahmed supports this position and reports, '*Pukhtunness and Muslimness do not have to coalesce they are within each other, the interiority of the former is assumed in the latter*' (1980:107). Shah endorses these arguments and posit, '*for the Pathan Islam was one of the principal constituents of their self definition, with a Muslim way of life and Pathan tradition being taken as complementary attributes of*

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<sup>23</sup> See Barth (1969b), Ahmed (1980), Glatzer (1998), Shah (1999), Banerjee (2000), Rittenberg (1988) and Spain (1996).

<sup>24</sup> Also see Banerjee (2000) for the argument that Pakhtuns are tolerant to people of other religious groups.

*their identity*' (1999: 34). However, Ahmed argues that where there is contradiction between the customs and the Islamic law, such as denial of inheritance rights to women and charging interests on loans, Pakhtun would recognise it with guilt (1980: 106). Bartolitti would disagree with Ahmed and argue that Islam and Pakhtunwali have *'boundaries and disjunction between them'* (2000: 76) and that Pakhtuns construct symbolic and situational Muslimness.

Edwards (1990) in an interesting study of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, explored the relationship between the cultural and religious aspects of Pakhtunness. He elaborates from an encounter between the Mullahs (religious group) and the tribal Pakhtuns on the issue of music and dance. Mullahs deemed dance and music religiously inappropriate and intervened to stop it, this act of Mullah was resented and reacted by the tribal Pakhtuns. Edwards argues that social actors attempted to establish boundaries between cultural performance based in tribal identity and religious identity (1990: 95-96). Moreover, he argues that, *'in refugee context, the political and financial power wielded by religious authorities has upset the traditional balance of religion and tribe and has created a disjunctive between fundamental aspects of their identity'* (1990: 96).

Edwards posit that in the refugee context, the dichotomisation between *'those who uphold tribal patterns and those who profess primary allegiance to Islam as practical code of social behaviour'* is increasing (1990: 97). He reports that in the refugee environment the balance has swung in favour of religious groups which cherish a different ethical ideal than the tribal ideal of *gheyrat* (defined by him as 'self determination'). This ideal is *taqwa* (piety) which is characterised by 'submission' (to both faith and the religious elite) rather than 'self determination' (*gheyrat*). Therefore, *'both gheyrat and taqwa are ideals of personal conduct that express and help to enforce general notions of social propriety'* (Edwards, 1990: 97).

The significance and closeness of Islam to Pakhtun identity is reflected through its consistent use in the domain of local, national or regional politics. Looking into the ethno-nationalist Khudai Khidmatgar (KK) movement of Ghafar Khan, Banerjee finds it imperative for any political or social movement to refer to Islam. She argues, *'One of the reasons for the KK's great success was the extent to which its ideology was grounded in both Islam and Pukhtunwali'* (2000: 160). Perhaps it was because Islam is also an effective unitary force as it was used as an instrument by the religious leaders to

unite Pakhtuns in times of crisis (Rittenberg, 1988).<sup>25</sup> Edwards (1996) argue that there are three contradictory moral codes in Pakhtun society i.e. Honour, Islam and Rule (State); manifested in the institutions of Tribe, religious leaders, and the State. Least concerned with the institutional presentation of these codes Edwards worked on how these three are incompatible, yet tried to be reconciled in vain (in Afghanistan). Recently the rise and fall of the religious parties alliance MMA (Mutahida Majlis-i-Amal) in Pakistan was keenly observed by scholars to see the use of Islamic symbols or rhetoric in electoral politics in Pakhtun regions. Enormous discussion in the literature on the religious ferment in the region focuses on the relationship between Pakhtunwali, Islam and the tribal way of living in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

It is noteworthy here to suggest that features and notions of Pakhtunwali are not fixed and static. Despite external and internal socio-economic and political pressures, Pakhtunwali features survive, However, this does not mean that they have been changing and reshaping. Ahmed argues that despite the pressure from the encapsulating system (State of Pakistan) Pakhtunwali is still alive among Mohmand Pakhtuns perhaps through *'the rephrasing of its idiom or reordering of its priorities'* (Ahmed, 1980:348-349). Banerjee also concludes that the *'notions of Pakhtunness therefore are not static but rather the subject of negotiation and innovation'* (2000:14-15). Bartlotti in his study argued that Pakhtuns through proverbs *'reconstruct and negotiate notions associated with Pashtunness and Muslimness'*. He argues, *'Pashtunwali as a symbolic system is malleable. It can be used and shaped, manipulated, constructed, deconstructed, and contested...'* (2000: 348).

The above details explicate the entire gamut of identity features associated with Pakhtunness. This study does not concern itself with the validity or relevant importance of one feature over the other, despite the fact that substantial details are provided below (chapter 3) about such a process in Malakand. The study has focused primarily on the contextual construction of Pakhtunness by Pakhtuns in their emphasis of one marker over or the other in various contexts. Therefore, the ontological question of 'who is Pakhtun' is implied in the statement that Pakhtun identity is based in an elaborated repertoire, a 'tool kit', that includes diverse elements such as descent, tribal lineage,

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<sup>25</sup> Also see Haroon (2007), Edwards (1996), Glatzer (2002).

language, Pakhtunwali and religion that can be identified with Pakhtunness by Pakhtuns in different contexts.

### 1.3: Theoretical framework focused:

Anthropological literature addresses different aspects of Pakhtun identification and their social organization. Literature, extensively focusing on internal classification aspect (Barth, 1959b; 1981; Lindholme, 1982, Anderson, 1975) and literature focusing on inter-ethnic relations and boundaries maintenance aspect (Barth, 1996a;1969b; Edwards, 1990; Anderson, 1978a) can be distinguished, despite representing the same phenomenon of Pakhtun ethnicity. These two aspects ask different kinds of questions and do not necessarily relate these questions through an integrated approach entailing a vivid interplay of internal and external. While the former aspect, through its focus on divisive tendencies signify the importance of the cultural stuff or internal content of ethnicity, the later focus on boundary and external processes that are carried out in relation with other ethnic collectivities. Also boundary maintenance literature on Pakhtun, focus on identity maintenance in ecological variation and distribution (i.e tribal, multiethnic, etc). The internal classification aspect attempt to delineate the cultural and social values from the organizational forms; and therefore, brings in issues of equality-hierarchy, etc. Such trends in the Anthropological literature on Pakhtuns refers to some broader debate and contestation in social and cultural Anthropology on how ethnicity be conceived and the broader paradox, to focus on ‘cultural stuff’ or the ‘boundary’. Below I elaborate on these themes.

#### **Internal processes and their complexity:**

Barth (1959b; 1981) and Lindholm (1982), studying Pakhtuns in Swat, elaborate extensively on the social classification and stratification. They suggested that, although, the primary social cleavages were predicated on ‘patron-client’, ‘free-ruled’ (Barth, 1981: 152) or ‘superior-inferior’ (Lindholm, 1982: 109) the entire population was divided in a range of hierarchical status categories. They identified ‘Pakhtun’ (or ‘Pukhtun’) as landowning category with patrilineal descent and tribal segmentary. They were occupying the leadership role with non-Pakhtun religious leaders. The rest of the population was divided in hierarchical manner mostly occupational categories with

caste like features. These categories were identified as non Pakhtun. They were economically and socially dependent and bound in patron-client (voluntary) contract with 'Pakhtuns'. However, the entire Pakhto speaking population in Swat was termed Pathan by Barth (1959b). Where the analytical difference between 'Pakhtun' and 'Pathan' as postulated by Barth is ambiguous, so is the relationship of social change with hierarchical categorization. Although Barth's own revisit to the area after almost two decades (1954 and 1974-79) provides some reflection on the changes in the region but did not envision a comprehensive impact of such change on social stratification during his field work for he assume that values on the basis of which such hierarchies were built remained intact and enjoyed broader legitimacy.

Both Barth (1959b; 1981) and Lindholm (1982) argue that, despite broader social economic changes, hierarchical classification remained intact in Swat. Most importantly the office of the khan or leader among the Pakhtuns continue to hold aspiration for the lower categories, as they value the qualities and requirements of the office/status. In fact if there was discontent (Barth's reference to peasants in Thana) against Khans's status it was constructed into the failure (of the ancestors) of the lower category. Through these findings Barth and Lindholm have constructed an equation of land, identity and status. Later anthropological enquiries conceded what these studies suggested, and argued that Pakhtun category to be of those who hold tribal lineage (Anderson, 1983; 1975 also see Edwards, 1990 for taken for granted Barth's equation).

Anderson found different reason of this equation in his study of Ghilzai Pakhtuns in Afghanistan. He brought in kinship as the most prominent and primary identity marker that would make non kinsmen, 'strangers', non Pakhtuns and 'clients'. Anderson argues that, among Ghilzai khans were 'social creditors' who not only 'feed people' but 'tie the knot of the tribe' (1978b); they were neither 'merely first among equals' nor 'quite a feudal lords' (1983: 132). Therefore, we need to understand why khan being more than just a social creditor in case of Swat (Barth, 1959b) affected by socio economic changes and what are the consequences of such an impact on other categories. How these developments have consequences for identity. Anthropological literature signify that any study of Pakhtun must focus on these internal processes that are in complex relations with Pakhtun identity. I will revisit some of the literature discussed above and relate it to the case study I have chosen to signify the problematic nature of the above analysis and to suggest a new perspective to future researchers.

### **Inter-ethnic processes and identification:**

Focusing on the external aspect, this section explicates the tribal-ethnic question and the embedded boundary maintenance issue. First, I will discuss tribal and ethnic question and for that I will draw the background from anthropological emphasis of one over the other; and second, I will explain the variation in Pakhtun forms. Then I argue that it is also imperative to see the question of identity maintenance among Pakhtun under such variation.

As most of the Anthropological studies of colonial time were the studies of ‘a single tribal society’ which represented the distance of ‘civilized’ from ‘non civilized’ and provided a theoretical framework of ‘non civilized’ social organization (Jenkins, 2008a: 17-18). However, since 1960 the term ‘tribal’ has been replaced by ‘ethnic group’ which retained its meaning as distinct culture bearing collectivity, although became more exclusive than the previous exclusive (uncivilized other) ‘tribal’ (Jenkins, 2008a and Eriksen, 2002). However, since Barth’s formulation in 1969, the discrete and distinct character of the group is replaced by the phenomenon of boundaries that ethnic groups constitute. Ethnicity and its related concepts of ethnic group and identification is still useful to understand the complexity of the modern society and the flux and change inherited in it (cf. Eriksen, 2002: 10). Moreover, the advantage of using ethnic group or identity is that we may avoid drawing sharp distinction between us and the people we study (as inherent in colonial or earlier anthropological literature) and can still conveniently relate to Western and Non western cases (Eriksen, 2002: 10-11).

The choice between ethnic and tribe may become difficult in the case, where tribal marker is still associated with identity, even though symbolically, and where tribal and ethnic may inter-mesh in a single framework such as ‘*Quom*’ (Anderson, 1978a: 1982). However, this unconscious anthropological emphasis can be seen in the literature on Pakhtuns in post colonial period. Anderson’s study of Ghilzai tribe across various ecological and intertribal settings and Akbar (1980) study of Mohmands across Settled Areas and Tribal Areas were primarily the studies of the single tribes, although they refer to inter-ethnic contexts. Barth (1959b) on other hand did not primarily focused on Yousafzai for their was greater diversity in the case of Swat where Yousafzai, Kohistani and Gojars and a large number of dependent occupational categories were sharing the same geographical place in a kind of multi-ethnic situation (Edwards, 1990). Therefore,

where these differences in approach to Pakhtun society are of relative importance they also refer to the diversity in forms and organization in absolute terms.

Anthropological literature on Pakhtun has discussed how Pakhtuns maintain their identity despite wider variation in Pakhtun conditions. Barth argues that despite cultural and social diversity in different regions, Pakhtuns have a self image of 'distinctive ethnic unit' for they '*select certain cultural traits, and make these the unambiguous criteria for ascription to the ethnic group*' (1969b: 117-119). As discussed above they include patrilineal descent, Islam and Pakhtun customs, based in the institutions of *Melmastia*, *Jirga* and *Purdah* and manifested in the core values of 'male autonomy', 'eaghty', 'self expression', 'aggressiveness' (Barth, 1969b: 120). Barth has also insisted that the three cultural institutions provide organisational mechanism and '*facilitate the maintenance of shared values and identity*' (Barth, 1969b: 123). Barth elaborates that within these values the central feature of Pakhtun identity is autonomy (political and personal) and to maintain his identity a Pakhtun has to perfect it 'moderately successfully' otherwise he will discard it for other identities or change it by changing the criterion (1969b: 132). Barth identifies Swat and Peshawar District (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) into the region where the influence of the centralised State has made it impossible for the entire population to sustain political autonomy so central to Pakhtun identity (1969b: 131-133). Therefore, he suggests that the consequence in such areas is, '*the reinterpretation of the minimal requirements for sustaining Pathan identity*' (Barth, 1969b: 133).

Some of the debate in the literature, focus on the whether Pakhtun identity is maintained in tribal or non tribal (multi-ethnic) environment. Ahmed after differentiating between *Nang* and *Qalang* categories, asserts that *Nang* social forms are closer to the ideal of Pakhtunwali and the movement from *Nang* to *Qalang* is always unidirectional, in a sense from 'hill to plain', 'pastoral to agricultural economy' and from 'tribal social category' to 'peasant-agricultural category' (1976: 81).

Anderson (1983) has explained the tribal and non tribal situation of Pakhtuns through certain terms which in dialectical manner explain to them their world. These include,

1. *Quom* and *Gund*: *Quom* refers to unity in kinship and patrilineal descent represented by tribe (tribalism is *Quomwali*). *Quom* denotes similarity, 'replicate whole' and equality conceived through primordial unity or homogeneity. *Gund*, in opposition to

*Quom*, represents factionalism that is constructed into situational alliances in differences (heterogeneity) and denote 'complementary whole' (1983: 125-126: 1978a).

2. *Atrap* and *Shahr*: *Atrap* refers to 'country side', continuity in space and time and lack of differentiation. *Shahr* represents city, dimensionality, confinement and partial identity. City is where a 'whole man comes a part in different roles' and 'where situationally defined encounters with people of diverse origin' manifest individuality in contrast to 'the part which replicates the whole' i.e in tribal or *Atrapi* situation (1983: 126). He argues, "The Shahr comes deep into the country side in the form of every stranger who overstays his welcome" (Anderson, 1983: 144). However, Anderson (1983) argues that, it is the capacity of the stranger (outsider) to affect Pakhtun that urbanises the context for Pakhtuns. Therefore, Mullah and *Pirs* are contained by denying them participation in tribal affairs and they along with *Nai* (barbers) are taken in joint clientage by the khels. Other occupational categories are attached to one or other khan in a contract as clients (1983: 143-144).

3. *Yaghistan* and *Hukumat*: *Yaghistan* alludes to autonomous, free and equal. *Hukumat* means government, ruled and hierarchies. This represents the relationship between tribe and government in terms of their activities (1983: 125-127). The dilemma of Pakhtun society is to balance the relationship between *Yaghistan* and *Hukumat* (1978b: 182).

Anderson argues that tribe and tribal formation is a dynamic phenomenon; it is at a time 'given' and 'made'; it is the 'definer' and 'to be defined'. It is through the tribal formation that Pakhtun derives the above terms and it is through those terms that they conceive tribe and relate it to other social formations (1983: 122-123). Tribe and State are understood by Ghilzai through the above frame. These terms serve as 'social epistemology' for Pakhtuns (1983: 122-123). Ontologically (in terms of existence and 'being' Pakhtun), the above propositions are expressed as metaphor that are used across different domains such as *Nang-Qalang*, tribal-settled, etc (Anderson, 1983: 127-128).

Edwards (1990) on other hand argue that the distinction is rather clearer in inter-tribal versus inter-ethnic situations. He argues that tribal organisation and Pakhtun ethnicity can best be retained in intertribal situation and not in inter-ethnic situations

(1990: 72-73). Edwards suggest that Barth's suggested institutions that maintain the core values of Pakhtun identity may actually, at different instances, unhitch from the core values and facilitate the processes of 'incorporation and diminution of Pakhtun ethnicity' (1990: 77-78).

Edwards argues that instead of identity features, the status of Pakhtun depend on the 'perception by themselves and other that the circumstances of their existence live up to the ethos of self-determination' (1990: 78). It is in this context he argued that in multiethnic situation Pakhtuns are required to set the terms of engagement with other ethnic groups and denial of that, as the nature of multiethnic society demonstrate, generates a tension where they lose their identity (Edwards, 1990: 77-78). In this way also the tribal and multiethnic situation are related. As tribal situation is the precondition of 'self-determination', its dissolution in multiethnic society means the demise of personal autonomy and 'self-determination' (Edwards, 1990: 78-80). Edwards work (1990; 1996) is significant to vividly relate identification debate with social cleavages, and (inter) tribal and ethnic debates. Edwards (1990) studying Afghan refugees in Pakistan concluded that ethnicity is contextual. Moreover, the nexus of all value for Pakhtun is *Ghairat*, which means 'self-determination' and 'self definition' and which lays down conditions in which self description can be realized (1990: 79).

They [Pashtuns] define themselves as ones who define themselves: the act of defining is itself the definition. As long as a Pakhtun is able to exert a degree of independence and to maintain his personal autonomy of action-which is to say, as long as he can keep from being subsumed within an externally imposed definition, then he can consider himself, in a fundamental sense, a Pakhtun (Edwards, 1990: 66).

Barth (1969b) and Edwards (1990) have been emphasising the boundaries making and maintenance of identity vis-a-vis other ethnic groups. Barth particularly stressed on these boundaries in different ecological conditions and social forms, Edwards like Ahmed sought to explain the dilemma of maintaining ethnic identity in multi ethnic societies. Similarly, literature on social stratification among Pakhtun merely discuss internal division as social cleavages without any impact on the external or ethnic identification. I identify a different aspect of this identification by insisting that some of

this attention must shift to internal processes within Pakhtun ethnicity and explain the ways in which internal cleavages and contestations on identification interpret diacritical features and the inclusion and exclusion in ethnic identity. Additionally, I have to focus on what Edwards (1990) argue ‘contextual ethnicity’ when I elaborate on the ways the cultural institutions in Malakand reflect core values, and the interpretation of these institutions in the idioms informed by the categorisation process. Therefore, both these aspects of approaches have insights that guide this research work. These internal and external aspects can be related to the broader literature on ethnicity and identification to further shape the central research questions of the thesis.

### **‘Ethnicity etcetera’ : Anthropological approaches:**

In the above discussion the relationship of ethnic and non-ethnic, external or internal, what is described by Jenkins (2008a) as ‘ethnicity etcetera’ is implicit. Before the boundaries work of Barth (1969a), Moerman (1960) working on the Lue ethnic group in Thailand raised questions about the anthropologists choice of criteria (such as language, cultural traits etc) of ethnic membership. He argues that such an efforts is futile and that instead they should use the criteria suggested by the people they study. Moerman, through his study in Thailand, argues that, “Someone is Lue by virtue of believing and calling himself Lue and an acting in way that validate his Lueness” (1965: 1222). Although these analysis of Moerman are useful in the sense that he problematized the boundedness of the groups with criteria suggested by anthropologists, he could not suggest analytical tools to see when and how ethnic and non-ethnic distinguishes from each other (cf. Jenkins, 2008a: 42).

Jenkins (2008a) rightly asked the question while discussing the case of Wales in Britain. He argues that ethnicity seems hierarchical and segmentary as it is situational (2008a: 42). For Jenkins (2008a), the hierarchical arrangement of Welsh identification would be East Swansea versus West Swansea, Swansea versus Cardiff, South-east Wales versus South-west Wales, South Wales versus North Wales, Wales versus British and British versus Europe (p. 42-43). He questioned, “When does an identity in the segmentary hierarchy of comparison and contrast become ‘local’ or ‘communal’ rather than ethnic?” (2008a: 42). His suggestion to understand this hierarchy is to see them in the context of ‘nominal’ and ‘virtual’ identities (2008a: p.43). He (2008b) explains the nominal alludes to name or label with which an individual is identified and the virtual is

the consequential experience of that labeling over some time. Meaning, once labeled, individuals go through an experience and cumulative process over time to make it consequential. Such process can be facilitated by institutional legitimacy. Although nominal and virtual may not always agree, the agreement between them can lead to internalization of labels (2008b: 99). Jenkins suggest that the hierarchy of Welsh identification is the hierarchy of 'nominal identification' that, "overlap an intermesh with each other in complicated way, depending upon the virtualities of each other" (2008a: 43). The difference between local, communal and ethnic lies in the consequences (experience) of each, which means in "rights and responsibilities, or access to social and economic resources, or social recognition" (Jenkins, 2008a: 43). Also Jenkins argue that collective identification in terms of socially constructing differences and similarities (or us and them) is primary to social relations and therefore also manifested in ethnicity 'with some reference to culture' (2008a: 45). With this basic understanding, the local, communal and national are historically and contextually constructed 'on the basic ethnic theme, allotropes of ethnic identification' (2008a: 45).

Jenkins analysis are very useful in, first, to ask the right kind of question; what is different between ethnic and non-ethnic and to a degree gave a satisfactory answer by exploring the hierarchy within the segmentary ethnic identification. However, we still need to understand what forms of collectivities are actually produced by these identification processes, particularly when these collectivities would involve cultural content, contextually. Second, what sort of relations these different hierarchical identifications (although involve the same processes of us and them) have with each other and what if they involve contest at one level that has consequences for other levels. I propose that such questions will be best understood if we differentiate intra-ethnic or sub-ethnic and ethnic or inter-ethnic. By doing so I mean that it is important to see not just what is ethnic and non ethnic but also how the subtext or internal processes within multiple layers of identification connected with each other. Moreover, such differentiation would not be very different from what Jenkins postulated i.e segmentary ethnicity.

Jenkin is right to assume that ethnic identity is segmentary and hierarchical. Jenkins (2008a) arguments cannot be very fruitful to study the processes of categorization and identification at different levels of ethnic collectivity, say at Swansea, Cardiff, Wales, British levels; and how would these processes consequential

for the same processes at other levels? What would be the consequence of disagreement or contest at different levels? Where consensus is achieved? Particularly, when he himself suggested disagreement between categorization and identification, and between nominal and virtual. To some extent Jenkins suggest complexity of these processes of identification and the obvious disharmony. However, I intend to focus more on contestation and consequences of these contestations which would explain such complexity. Therefore, I turn to Pnina Werbner (2002) who explains such intricacies from a different perspective.

Pnina Werbner (2002) in her excellent analysis of Pakistani Diaspora in Manchester (UK) explains the complexity of multiple identification and hybridity. Her work elaborates how Pakistanis in Manchester belong to multiple diasporas (Asian, Muslim, Pakistani, Punjabi) or 'hybrid diasporas' and create 'invisible spaces' where they debate and argue diverse issues related to their identity (p.17-18). Therefore, she argues,

None of the social utilities we evoke - identity, diaspora, community, nation, tradition - are consensus based whole; all are the products of ongoing debates and political struggles or alliances (Werbner, 2002; 18).

Werbner work is also significant to provide insight into the internal divisions and mobilization. She elaborates that passionate struggle for honor and dignity of Pakistanis in Manchester cannot be explained exclusively with inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic framework, for there are many overlapping struggles at least at lower faction level, at middle level of community and nation recognition and finally at upper level in mobilization against Satanic Verses (2002: 19-20). She also argues that imagined identities such as nation, community, Islamic Ummah and Punjabi-South Asian cultural diaspora are rhetorically produced by the 'local subaltern politicians' to mobilize their support (2002: 20). She suggests that despite internal clashes within the ethnic community (Pakistanis in Britain) there is 'transcendent unity', "...centered upon overarching values, culture icons and organization the home country, the prophet of Islam, the central communal mosque, and so forth" (2002: 66).

I take insights from her work particularly on her emphasis that identities are not necessarily consensus based and that it is the product of, among others, 'on going

debates'. However, I suggest that we need to focus on the multiplicity of ways in which different identity markers could be employed by social actors in a categorization process within the community, despite relevant consensus on the basic content of the identity. Therefore, in the case of Pakhtuns where identity markers could be recognized by all, they could be reinterpreted in local context to generate a contest over the broader Pakhtun identity. The local context is shaped by social conflict embedded in previous social stratification (cf. Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982), which also signifies, post Barth refocus on the internal content or 'cultural stuff'. Therefore, this project includes focus on the processes that constitute the part of the internal content of the ethnic group as identified by Jenkins (2008a).

Moreover, an important aspect of multiple identification among Pakhtuns is their sense of belonging to Pakistan and Islam. I proceed with a general understanding that Pakhtuns extend their identification from intra ethnic and inter ethnic to other domains that involve national and religious identities. The scholars working on the relationship of ethnicity, religion and nationalism in Pakistan, have been broadly divided on the role of elite and discursively generated normative concerns. Although both of these perspectives provide insights into the role of State, elite manipulation and ways in which national identity is forged and projected, they highlight the complexity of the relationship between ethnicity and religion in Pakistan. I do emphasize the importance of multiplicity, contestation (Werbner, 2002) and segmentary identification (Jenkins, 2008a) and extend this framework to Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan and Islam. Taking this fundamental framework I debate on the disagreement among various perspectives on Pakistani nationalism and identity. I found the division between elite perspective and discursive perspective useful in explaining State project of nation formation and Pakhtun's perspective of Pakistani and Muslim identity. Thus through Pakhtun's perspective. I will be able to reflect on the multiplicity of identities and segmentation in ethnicity. In doing so I am also sensitive to the processes carried out by the State in relation to ethnic groups. It is such State run process that signifies the importance of Pakhtuns' religious identity which is more rigorously highlighted by the current literature concerned with Islamic revivalism and militancy in the region.

## Conclusion

I demonstrated how ethnicity is defined in variety of ways and how the debate on its content includes issues related to the choice of emphasis between cultural and kinship and the combined emphasis to the social boundary it generates. Also I argue that where this diversity has revealed the complexity of ethnic phenomenon it has also contributed to our understanding of such complexity. Therefore, I have chosen the concepts of ethnicity to provide analytical framework that will guide this research project and will help in focusing the appropriate questions. Ethnicity is understood in this thesis in its socially constructed sense and is seen to include claims of both culture and putative descent signified in social and, to an extent, political relations. Moreover, ethnicity is best explored through the processes of identification and boundary making (as identified by the literature) have dissonance in this work. Particularly the issue of ethnic and non ethnic or segmentary ethnicity, the issue focus on boundary or cultural content and the relationship of ethnicity and culture.

The theoretical position undertaken in this study is close to the social constructionist's understanding of ethnicity, social collectivities, identity and boundaries. Focusing on the social processes of constructing 'similarities' and 'differences' and drawing boundaries between 'us' and 'them', this work does not envisage 'objective' differences and 'reified' groups. Moreover, it applies the concept of boundary to delineate social stratification within the locality (Malakand) and to the broader ethnic differentiation in Pakistan.

I have discussed the literature focusing on Pakhtun identity and its constituent markers. I have identified these markers or diacritical features in holistic manner but indicated internal disputation on the relevant emphasis on these markers. Such disputation also highlights, to an extent, the contested nature of the identity for inclusion and exclusion remain problematic in the presence of significant diversity and variation in Pakhtun form. However, there is a general consensus on these features to an extent that they delineate Pakhtun from non Pakhtun. These markers include Pakhto language, patrilineal descent, Pakhtunwali (cultural code) and Islam. Moreover, a conscious attempt is not to essentialize or reify these markers but to concede that they are flexible and variable and that Pakhtun use them as cultural repertoire with varying degree of emphasis in identification process. Shaping a theoretical framework for this research

work I have elaborated on internal processes within the ethnic group (Pakhtuns) and their relationship with external processes (Pakhtuns versus non Pakhtuns). I have therefore, focused on the multiple, hierarchical, contested and contextual identification among Pakhtuns.

## Chapter 2

### Methodology

Anthropological debate about the cultural content, boundary, segmentary ethnicity and contested identities, provides useful insights and contribute to focusing on the research questions in this thesis. Taking insights from these debates I adopt an approach that focuses on internal and external aspects of identification i.e focusing on both the cultural content and boundary at same time. I see ethnicity as segmentary and contextual. Considering this approach, I ask primarily; *How do Pakhtuns identify themselves?* To answer this fundamental question I have chosen Malakand which provides an excellent case study for its hybrid administrative structure due to structural reforms, an overwhelming Pakhtun population, social diversity and current political unrest. I have also employed multiple data collection tools such as semi structured interviews, participatory observation, focus group interviews and usage of historical documents.

This chapter explains the focus of research by shaping research questions based on the theoretical framework explained in previous chapter. I will briefly State the research questions and proposed answers to those questions. In the next section of the chapter I draw a picture of the field I have chosen to investigate, that includes details and justification about specific research sites. I then formulate a brief research design to indicate methods, I have chosen to collect data and also to comment briefly on my access to the field, interviews and the general experience of the field.

#### 2.1: Research questions and proposed answers

In the tradition of Moerman (1965), for whom the fundamental question of enquiry was, ‘Who are the Lue?’ motivated by his own dilemma to answer a question, “Whom did you study in the field?” (1965: 1215), I suggest a question that is more directed at the processes, *how do Pakhtuns identify themselves?* Such a question does not imply unidirectional identification process; rather manifest both internal and external aspects of identification. For how we define ourselves include how people define us. Therefore, the emphasis is on categorization (external) and self identification (internal) processes

under the broader identification process. Second, I ask, *is there a multi-layered identification process? And, if there is such a process how the layers are related?* This question require us to enquiry into the multiple ways in which Pakhtun could identify themselves. Third, *to what extent is the interplay of ethnicity and religion reflected through such processes?* This question requires us to probe into a perennial problem extensively articulated in the literature on Pakistan and Pakhtuns. Following is a detail sketch of the questions and proposed answers to them.

My own understanding of the relationship between ethnic and intra-ethnic is the relationship between ‘similarity’ and ‘differences’ (us and them) that can cut across the intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic boundary. I question, *for Pakhtuns, who identify themselves as an ethnic group, do the internal cleavages (explained above) refer to internal processes of identification and categorization? Are these isolated processes? Are these processes related to similar processes at inter ethnic levels? Do they use markers such as landownership or Patrilineal descent at intra and inter ethnic levels? What particular binding feature besides the cultural markers are perceived at inter group level?*

In order to understand the internal process within a population that claim ethnic identity for itself, we need to, at least for analytical purpose, differentiate between ethnic and intra-ethnic. This is also required by the observable social tension that was significant enough, at one historical stage, to mobilize a large population, demanding rights (citizenship, economic, social and recognition). I also identified how some, otherwise excellent, research work (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982) in the region ignored to elaborate on the internal processes related to such classification. However, such work identified hierarchical castes that have been organized with fair chance of upward social mobility for the members of the lower castes or categories. I intend to focus on the complexity of such social classification and rather concentrate on the processes of identification within the larger society that mostly identifies with a single ethnic group. Therefore, earlier work has identified social classification in the region signifying the relevance of studying the intra-ethnic situation, I intend to take it further by identifying identification processes (intra-ethnic) and relate them to the broader processes of identification at ethnic group level that also include nation and religion.

These enquiries are significant in a way that, in relation to tribal situation inter-ethnic situation has the tendency to make identity ‘murky’ and the central features of

competition (between the segments of the tribe) and the equality give way to hierarchies and distorted opposition (Edwards, 1990: 73). However, I propose that in inter-ethnic situation, identity is sought through re-establishment of equality by challenging hierarchies.<sup>26</sup> I would argue that these demands were articulated in the image of tribal ideals particularly egalitarianism or equality. The use of this ideal in a struggle for recognition in itself is significant, since such equality in tribal organisation is between agnatic or segmentary clan members and accompanied by reciprocal competition (Edwards, 1990: 70-71).

Although I am aware that the proposed differentiation between inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic would be less helpful to explain the hierarchical, multiple, overlapping identification ( cf. Werbner, 2002) we still need to elaborate on the processes that are significant within the ethnic collectivity and that they are consequential for ethnic identification. Moreover, I do not intend to delineate and draw a fine line between intra and inter ethnic processes for I suggest that these levels are inter-connected and have consequences for each other. I may choose the line identified by Barth (1994) in his recent work on boundaries and ethnicity and see it in micro (interpersonal), median (inter-group) and macro (State) levels of analysis. However, such differentiation become difficult for micro and median are linked closely in our work and median can be multiple medians for I suggest collectivities (of how less stable character they may be) within collectivities or boundaries within boundaries. Although, all these approaches are relevant to an extent, but in more holistic way I structure my argument in a way that it reflects a persistent and evolving sense of multiple belonging.

Therefore, from this focus on intra and inter ethnic I relate my work with the State's effort of nation making and with the broader identification with religion. I do so because religion primarily has been reported by anthropologists to constitute the part of Pakhtun identity features and at the same time centered in the State's nation making project. Therefore, the project in the broadest sense involve identification among Pakhtun at intra ethnic, inter ethnic, national levels. In other words it is a project to explore multiple processes of identification among Pakhtun that drawn on the processes of similarities and differences.

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<sup>26</sup> By inter-ethnic I refer to Edwards's identification of Swat as 'multiethnic' and 'proto-state' (1990: 75) and also the fact that Malakand is inhabited by people who have tribal organization, immigrants and other non-Pakhtun groups such as Gojars.

Moreover, in this study I focus primarily on ethnic and other identification in routine or day to day understanding, negotiation and accommodation and has left political mobilization, saliency of ethnic movements largely unattended. The reason for this focus is my own engagement with the literature on the issue of ethnicity in Pakistan which I found fairly rather exceedingly focused on ethnic movements or ethnic mobilization and ignore identification as processes that engages at micro, median and macro levels (cf. Barth, 1994). However, this does not imply the relative significance of ethnic movements for I suggest one approach to the study such mobilization would be to relate these identification process with ethnic mobilization and although I have not attempted it. I also think it will have a greater contribution to our comprehension of the ethnicity as a recurring phenomenon rather than a diminishing one, as some political analysts have predicted about Pakhtun in Pakistan.

I have discussed in previous chapter that literature on nation making in Pakistan discuss and contest on the interplay between nationalism and Islam. It also relates such interplay with ethnic diversity in the State. Arguments presented in this literature indicate a fault line to bifurcate those who see significant role of elite manipulation and those who see the discursive and normative influences on the nation making. Across this division the literature address the same kind of issues such as nation making, role of religion and accommodating ethnic diversity. Most of the literature approaches these issues through discussion on ethno-nationalist movements, State integration, government structure (federal, provincial autonomy) and resources distribution. However, I propose an approach that is a based in Pakhtuns' perspective; Pakhtun identification with the State. Therefore, the questions of concern to this project are not 'State centered' rather pinpoint the processes run by ethnic groups such as Pakhtuns. However, this approach does not imply that State generated processes are avoided to focus on Pakhtun processes exclusively. Instead, questions and propositions suggested by this thesis include State's project of nation making in relation to Pakhtun identification process. I ask, *do Pakhtun construct a sense of Pakistaniat? does their identification involve Pakistaniat? How is such identification different from the State's nation making and imagination? Does religion being unifying and divisive phenomenon affect Pakhtun identification with Pakistan?* The last question, takes us to another important aspect of Pakhtun identification.

This thesis, through the religious aspect of Pakhtun identification, investigates into the interplay of religion and ethnicity. Also through current focus on this interplay in the context of religious unrest in the region, it is imperative to look into the religious reformation of Pakhtun and its relation to Pakhtun ethno-nationalism. Although, the current literature mostly focus on the revivalist tendencies in the region and religious contestation I approach the above issue through investigating Pakhtun identification with Islam and its relationship with State processes of nation making. I question, *Do Pakhtun identify with a particular sect of Islam? How is the centrality of Islam to their ethnic identity related to the centrality of Islam to Pakistani identity? Does the State's nation making has an impact on Pakhtun religious identification?*

I propose that Pakhtuns do not identify with a particular sect despite religious change in the society. I also suggest that Islam remains central to Pakhtun identity and the State nationalism predicated on religion has a broader impact on Pakhtun. However, none of the arguments in the literature concerning religion as unifying or divisive phenomenon completely satisfy the case of Pakhtun identification with Pakistan.

I will therefore, provide a different theoretical perspective on the issue of nation making and identification. I propose that Pakistan continues to be a nation in the making with its national harmony determined by the shift from exclusivity in Islam and discouragement of ethnic expressions to more plural, diverse and nonrestrictive Islamic national identity. Moreover, where such perspective discredit the essentialist and restrictive approach to ethnicity and project the dynamic nature of identities, it also disagree with the argument in the literature (Verkaaik, 2004; 2007; Shafqat, 2007) that Pakistan has successfully pushed ethnic groups towards assimilation into a nation that is being consistently located in Islam alone. I suggest that ethnic groups such as Pakhtuns have been identifying themselves primarily with their ethnicity (although such ethnicity is contested) within Pakistani nation that has been perceived as a multi ethnic nation. In this manner my work may also contribute in bridging the gulf between scholars who insist that nation formation efforts have so far been ineffective and therefore, its vibrant ethnicities may threaten its solidarity (Jaffrelot, 2002; Cohen, 2005; Harrison, 2009) and those who have predicted that State nationalism and its Islamic identity has been successful in co-opting ethnic groups (Verkaaik, 2007; Shafqat, 2007).

My approach is to combine State centered and ethnic group centered approaches in the context of identification. I will elaborate how through these processes we may

explain the paradox of nation making in Pakistan but also the complexity of the relationship between ethnicity and religion. I also insist that choosing generative processes rather than forms as center of focus I will be avoiding the reification that is criticized in State centered approaches and will bring in State in the analysis that has been found missing in some of the anthropological literature on Pakhtuns.<sup>27</sup>

## 2.2: Case study

In this section I first explain my choice of Pakhtun, in general focus on the processes of identification in Pakistan. I will then elaborate on my choice of Malakand as a field of investigation. This will include a brief account of the region, its historical, social and political distinctiveness, with the justification for its choice. This is followed by brief sketch of the two towns within Malakand that hosted this research and explanation of why I made this choice.

There are multiple reasons why I decided to study Pakhtuns. First, my Pakhtun credentials and my access to the area through the network of acquaintances would make this study possible. Second, it is to indicate the oscillation of focus in the literature on ethnicity and nationalism in Pakistan. Since 1980s this swing has been towards the emerging ethnic group i.e Muhajirs and away from other ethnic groups such as Pakhtuns. However, currently (since 1990s) the pendulum swing is again towards Pakhtun with exceeding emphasis on the relationship between Islamic resurgence and their ethno-nationalism. Third, to expose that the perennial and contested literature on ethno nationalism that either demonstrate integration (if not assimilation) or irredentism has been taking simple view of otherwise a complicated phenomenon. Fourth, to explore the often taken for granted socio economic changes in areas which are subjected to structural reforms either from the State's own needs or expedited by the reaction to those reforms. All this expositions put Pakhtun at the center of the problem, as they are assumed to have hot or cold, thick or thin ethnic (and other) sentiments and thus are attributed off and on significance. This pendulum oscillation require the rereading of Swinson's assertion about Pakhtuns, "They may be hated or loved but never can they be ignored" (1969: 21). It is thus to bring back Pakhtun in spot light with an element of consistency in emphasis. This is done by problematizing their relation with Islam and

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<sup>27</sup> Barth (1959b) is criticized for such negligence by Ahmed (1976).

Pakistan, probing dynamic process manifested in their own transformation and by enquiring all this through the process of multi-layered identification. Nevertheless, this approach to the ethnic issue of Pakistan would not over blow the importance of Pakhtuns at the cost of other ethnic groups but to suggest consistency through which all ethnic groups can be approached.

### **Justification for the case of Malakand:**

Malakand is chosen as a case study for various reasons. First, it is a district that is inhabited by people who overwhelmingly identify themselves Pakhtuns and thus provide a lay man justification for this study of Pakhtuns. Second, Malakand is a distinctive place in the region that has shown remarkable transformation both through a number of reforms but also through the socio-economic change in consequences of such reforms. Also this transformation is in the context of evolution from Tribal Area into (nearly) a Settled Area, thereby providing a prototype for other such Tribal Areas. However, it also represents tension between centrally imposed reforms and popular dissatisfaction. As the focus of this project is on Pakhtun identification, the socio-economic changes and the reforms provide an excellent context to see such identification through this period of flux.

Third, Malakand has been witnessing the religious fervor and probably was the first in region to have hosted a radical movement demanding Sharia in involving means other than electoral struggle. It continues to be vulnerable to tendencies that threaten the very legal and political system in the region. Fourth, various anthropological studies in the proximity of Malakand (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982) have signified the hierarchical social stratification and the issues related to identity. It is the reading of these brilliant ethnographic details and anthropological analysis that fascinate and allure a reader to revisit the region marginally touched by these studies.

Finally, Malakand offers us two distinctive cases of transformed society in their own distinctive ways. Batkhela being transformed from a village of insignificant past to a thriving market town where diversity is cherished through incessant migration. Thana, on other hand with its glorious past has preserved its distinctiveness by transforming itself into a kind of educational hub and securing place in public and private services sector of Pakistan. Thus the flux in the character of these towns represent the generative processes and dynamism consequently signifying their importance.

**Political and historical Profile of Malakand:**

Malakand Tribal Area or Agency before, 1969 included the States of Chitral, Swat and Dir, along with Malakand Protected Area and Bajaur. However, currently Malakand District known as Malakand Protected Area is divided into sub districts or tehsils of Sam Ranizai and Swat Ranizai.<sup>28</sup>

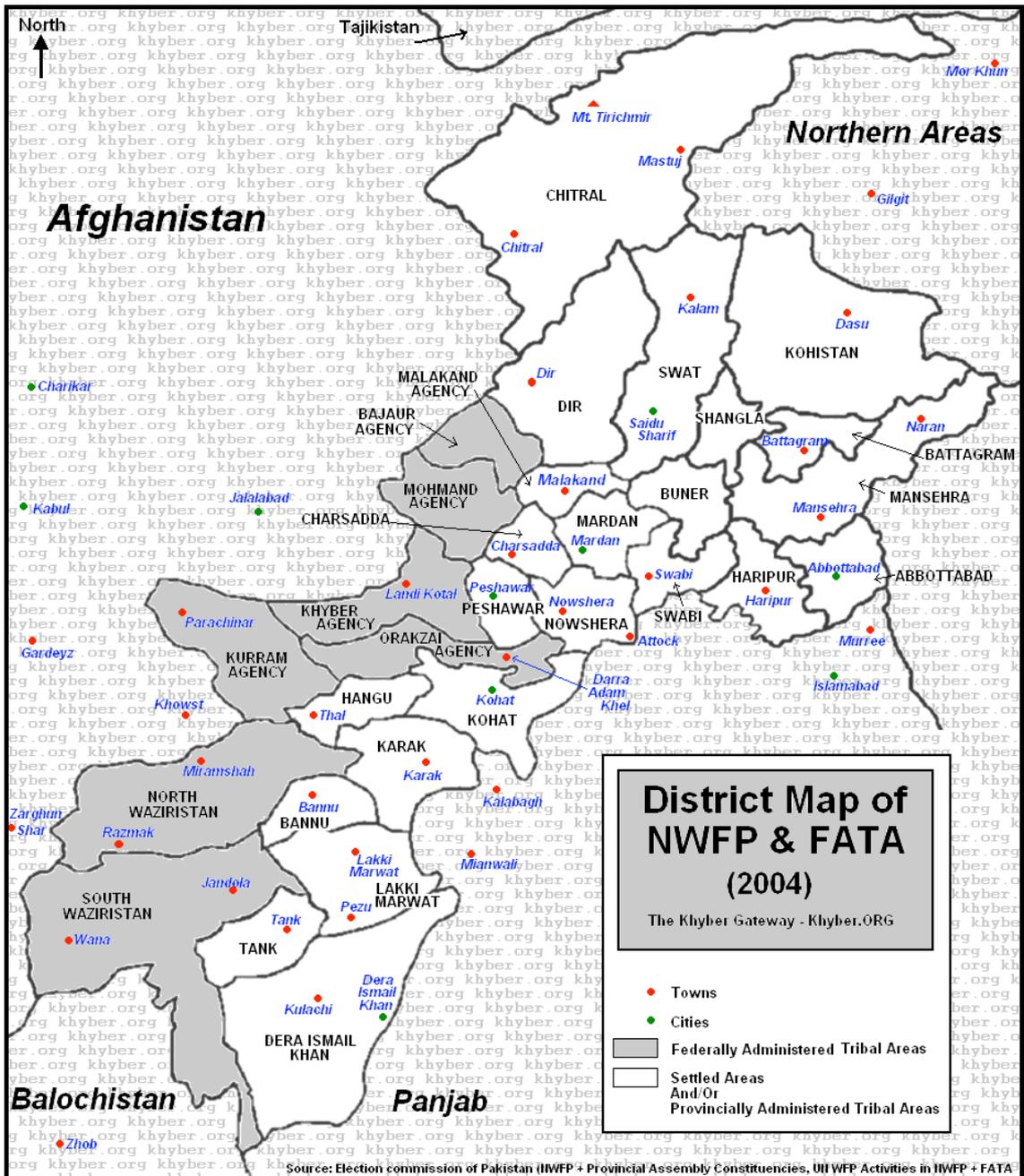
The tehsil headquarter of Sam Ranizai is at Dargai while that of Swat Ranizai is at Batkhela. The administrative head of the district is Nazim who is assisted by DCO (District Coordinating Officer) formerly known as Political Agent and stationed at the district headquarter in Malakand. The total population of Malakand in 1998 was 450,000 and the current projection is of 610,023.<sup>29</sup> Overwhelming number of people identify themselves as Pakhtuns, 98.2% speak Pakhto and 99.6% practice Islam (almost all Sunni Islam).<sup>30</sup> Although Malakand has a mosaic of people, Yousafzai have been the most prominent for their conquest of the region and thus constituting the ruling elite. Yousafzai living in Malakand are from Ranizai and Baizai clans. Baizai live in the village of Thana and Palai, while Ranizai are extended from Alladand to Totakaan villages (Government of Pakistan, 2000; 4-5).

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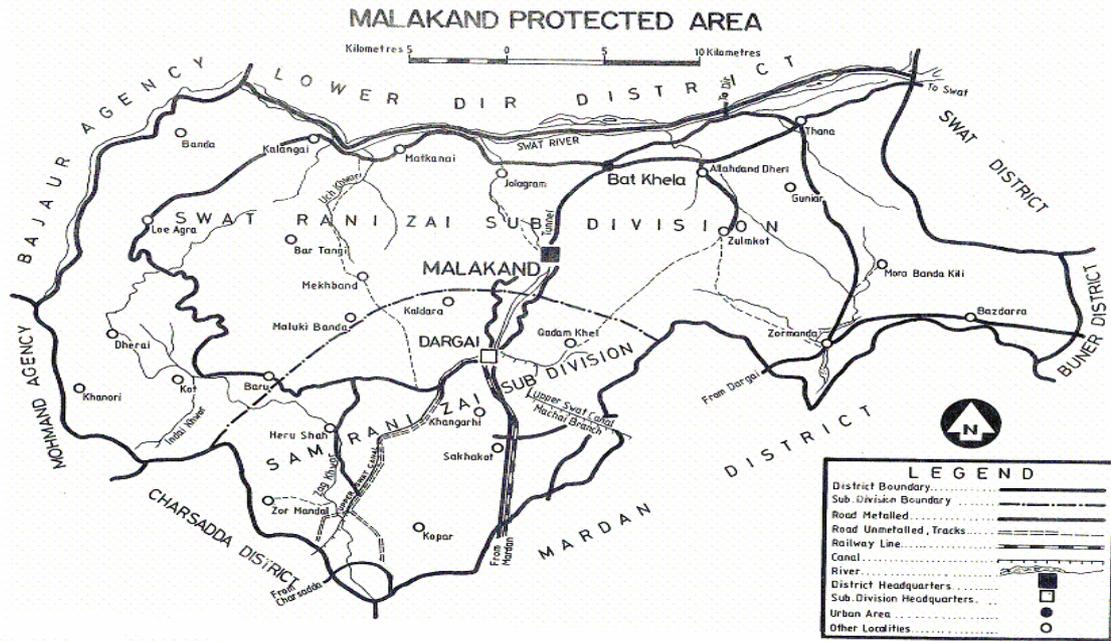
<sup>28</sup> In this thesis I use the name Malakand for the district of Malakand, however, when the context is historical it refers to the entire Malakand Agency before 1969.

<sup>29</sup> see 1998 census (Government of Pakistan, 2000). The recent projection is done by NCHD, National commission for health and development.

<sup>30</sup> Figures from 1998 census (Government of Pakistan, 2000).

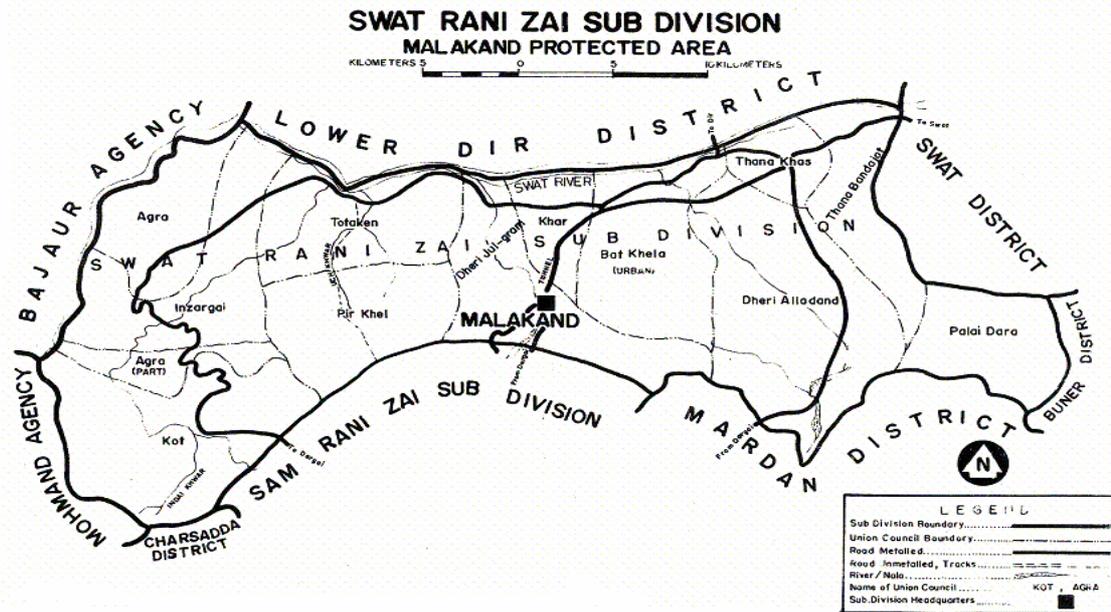


Map 1: District Map of NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and FATA  
(Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, cited Khyber.org, 2010)



Map 2: Administrative division of Malakand

Source: District Census Report of Malakand, 1998 (Government of Pakistan, 2000).<sup>31</sup>



Map 3: Administrative division of Swat Rani Zai sub division Malakand

Source: District Census Report of Malakand, 1998 (Government of Pakistan, 2000).

<sup>31</sup> Map of Malakand Division, first published by Survey of Pakistan in 1988 and reproduced by Census Report of Malakand, 1998.

### **Historical sketch of the Malakand:**

The history of Malakand is recorded probably in more details since the arrival of Yousafzai tribe in the region. Yousafzai was a powerful tribe, originally inhabiting the area currently in Afghanistan. Most of their chiefs were massacred by the ruler of Kabul in the later half of 15<sup>th</sup> century AD. They migrated in the leadership of Malik Ahmed to the plains of Peshawar valley.<sup>32</sup> After settling in there for some time they were attracted by the fertile valley of Swat<sup>33</sup>. Passing through Malakand Pass they surprised and defeated the Swati rulers of the region somewhere close to 1515<sup>34</sup>. Once conquered the whole valley of Malakand and Swat, the issue of land settlement was solved by a reputed religious figure Sheikh Mali. He invented a system of land distribution often debated in historical and anthropological records on the region (cf. Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1979: 487-488; Rome, 2003). The lands allotted to Pakhtun tribes were known as *Daftar* and lands allotted to religious men as *Serai*, the system itself was known as *Wesh* (Rome, 2003).<sup>35</sup>

It was a periodical land redistribution system (known as *Garzindah Wesh*, meaning ‘redistribution’ in Pakhto) where land was exchanged in the related segments of the tribe at regular intervals of 5, to 10 years<sup>36</sup>. With this settlement and distribution Yousafzai also entered into a social contract with the conquered people; and by acquiring the status of ruling class they constituted a stratified, hierarchical social system (cf. Barth, 1959b and Lindholm, 1982).

Yousafzais had intermittent relationship with the Mughal rulers of India. However, when British were extending their rule and influence in India during the early

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<sup>32</sup> The ruler of Kabul was the uncle of Mughal King Babur. Malik Ahmed was one of the surviving leaders of the Yousafzai tribe and remained the chief of the tribe through out their journey and conquests. He is buried in Malakand in the village of Alladand.

<sup>33</sup> These details are based on the chronicles collected by Olaf Caroe in his comprehensive historical record of Pakhtuns (1958). Caroe argues that these chronicles are not a very valid source of information as they are not scientific and don't show dates. He even doubts whether these migrations would have happened at all (1958: 176). Therefore, these chronicles have mythical character although they are dully attested from Yousafzai and non Yousafzai Pakhtuns of Malakand.

<sup>34</sup> This date is suggested by Caroe (1958: 181). Bellew (1864[1977]: 64) also suggests almost the same time.

<sup>35</sup> *Daftar* means ‘register’ in Persian and *Serai* means allotted in Pakhto. For details on this system of distribution see Bellew (1864: 193-200)

<sup>36</sup> Practiced in Swat till the creation of Swat State. See Lindholm (1979) and Rome (2003).

19th century the entire region inhabited by Pakhtun tribes was hosting a Jihad of Syed Ahmad of Rai Bareilly (1826-1831) against the Sikh rulers of the region (see Jalal, 2008). Later, in 1849 British established themselves as rulers in the valley of Peshawar, but they never intended, at least at that time, to penetrate deep into Malakand or the valley of Swat. Their interests lay in the State of Chitral, close to the border of Afghanistan and across the Wakhan to Russia. Russian advances in the region and the behavior of tribal Pakhtuns were a source of concern for British Empire. Moreover, they wanted a safe passage to Chitral through Malakand.

The frontier was the key defence against the ‘Russian Expansionism in the East’ which was becoming almost a national paranoia in England” (Spain, 1977: 06).

British concerns increased since 1892 when a scramble for the throne of the Chitral State alarmed them (Caroe, 1956: 383-385). A military campaign was launched in 1895 to establish British influence in Chitral<sup>37</sup>. This time the British adopted a different route to reach Chitral, the Malakand-Dir-Chitral route. They, therefore, needed to secure Malakand to approach Chitral. The campaign was successful and a new agency of Malakand was established formally known as ‘The Agency of Dir, Swat and Chitral’.<sup>38</sup> This status was different from the settled districts of Frontier region for the strategic reasons and would always be remembered later on with the name Tribal Areas. The British at the time had established three more such agencies or Tribal Areas such as Waziristan, Khyber and Kurram. The First officer in charge of the Malakand Agency was Harold Deane.

Soon after these developments in 1897 an armed resistance was launched by the people of Malakand and Swat<sup>39</sup>. This resistance was motivated and led by the religious

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<sup>37</sup> See attached map: 1.

<sup>38</sup> Yousafi remarks the Swat Ranizai and Baizai (clans in Batkhela and Thana respectively) did not participate overwhelmingly in 1895 campaign in fact the chiefs of the region signed agreements with the British and they were promised a biannual allowance. However, they overwhelmingly took part in 1897 campaign. Agreements were signed after this campaign (Yousafi, 1960: 281-82).

<sup>39</sup> For detail account of the British military campaign in Malakand see Churcill (2005[1898]), Mills (1996[1897]) and Khan (1995). For Urdu sources see Khan (1986) and Yousafi (1960).

leader Mullah Mastan<sup>40</sup> known to the British as ‘Mad Mullah’. This was not the first armed attempt from the people of the region against the British administration. The first one was led by more charismatic leader and more consequential in its scope i.e. Ambela<sup>41</sup> battle (1863). Ambela was well before the conquest of Malakand and its results were a peace agreement in the region for almost 10 years. Ambela was led by a religious leader well reputed and revered in the entire of Pakhtun country from Afghanistan to India Known as Akhund of Swat, Abdul Ghafur<sup>42</sup>.

British evolved a system of ‘loose control’ (Hussain, 2005: 4) over Tribal Areas which could be conceived as a kind of compromise between local autonomy and imperial control. The compromise itself was reached through treaties between the British government and the local tribal chiefs. In this way it was a distinct form of government. Salient features of this form of control included, the creation of the office of Political Agent, Frontier Crimes Regulation, *Malaki* system and *Riwaj* (customs). Political Agent was to ensure compliance of the treaty, keep peace through a number of inducements and punitive measures, negotiate between the government and the tribes and ensure the presence of the government in the area. He also had, a sort of, police force known as *Levis* or *Khasadars* on his disposal (Khan, A.H. 2005b: 96). Political Agent of Malakand had also to deal with the tribal area of Malakand as well as the princely States of Dir, Swat and Chitral (Khan, H. 2005c:108). Frontier Crimes Regulations or FCR were the laws tailored in 1901 (earlier version in 1872) by the British to suppress crime rather than administering justice (Ali and Rahman, 2001: 53). These laws were a bunch of severe punishments to facilitate Political Agent to keep peace in Tribal Areas. They included collective punishment, no right of Habeas Corpus, etc. However, it was under FCR that the Political Agent appoint a local council known as Jirga to adjudicate civil and criminal cases. Besides FCR, the institution of *Maliki* was created to facilitate British rule. Maliks were tribal chiefs being paid by the British government through various ways to ensure good conduct from the tribes. *Riwaj* being an important component of this rule. It broadly means the customs, traditions and

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<sup>40</sup> His original name was Saad ullah khan and he belonged to Rega (Buner-Malakand division). He was known with different names among Pakhtuns such as Mullah Mastan and Sartor Mullah while British called him ‘Mad Mullah’ (Khan, 1995: 24-25).

<sup>41</sup> A detail of this campaign is given by the first ruler of Swat in his autobiography (Sahib, 1962). For details on Islamic movements in the region see Sana Haroon (2007).

<sup>42</sup> Known locally as ‘Saidu Baba’. His grandson later established the State of Swat.

conventions of Pakhtuns. Jirga was to interpret this *Riwaj* which had advantage of legitimacy of centuries old usage.

All these features administratively and politically distinguish Tribal Areas from Settled Areas of the North West British India. A North West Frontier Province (NWFP) was created in 1901 with five settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan; and kept directly under Governor General through a Chief Commissioner (Khan, A.H. 2005b: 88). Later it was granted the status of full province in 1931. Therefore, the province had different governance dispensation than the Tribal Areas, which were always treated as special case.

In 1947 when Pakistan was created the tribes in the Tribal Areas were impressed upon by Jinnah and Muslim League to re-enter into treaties with the State of Pakistan in return for the continuation of British Policies and incentives (Khan, 2005c: 25-27). Therefore, such treaties were signed immediately in 1947 between tribal leaders and the government of Pakistan, which recognized that Tribal Areas part of Pakistan and guarantee policy continuation (British) in administering these Tribal Areas. In 1951-52 the government of Pakistan reentered into agreements with tribal chiefs to acquire greater control (Khan, R. 2005d: 27-28). Till 1955 the governor of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (previously NWFP) was to serve as agent of the Governor General of Pakistan to enjoy authority on the area; however, from 1955 to 1970 this control was exercised by the government of West Pakistan (during One Unit administration from 1955-1970). However, through out this period laws made by the elected Parliament were not applicable to Tribal Areas and the President of Pakistan through his agent (in the province) would govern the region. Major developments took place since 1969 when the government decided to merge the princely States of Dir, Swat and Chitral to Pakistan, which were formerly part of the Malakand Agency.<sup>43</sup>

In January 1971 the government of Pakistan implemented certain laws into the region that were functional in the settled districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; these include. Police Act, Evidence Act, Jurisdictions of the Supreme Court, etc.<sup>44</sup> Soon after The Interim Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1972 (Articles 260 and

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<sup>43</sup> The merger of these States was announced in July, 1969 (Rome, 2008: 286). See also the official regulation of such merger as, “The Dir, Chitral And Swat (administration) Regulation, 1969” (Ali, 2009). These States were previously part of the Malakand Agency (Khan, H. 2005c: 105).

<sup>44</sup> This information is based on the letters written by the local chiefs to the President, Governor of the province and constituent Assembly, and Khan (undated).

261) created a new category of Tribal Area i.e Provincially Administered Tribal Area (PATA) besides Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), which included Malakand Protected Area, districts of Swat, Dir, Chitral, Tribal Areas of Hazara district and former State of Amb. Later The constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, retained this arrangement through Article 246 and 247. Article 247 of the constitution explains that the executive authority of the Provincial government should extend to PATA but the provincial assembly cannot legislate for it unless the governor of the province so approve under the direction of the President (The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973). However, since the merger of Dir, Swat and Chitral States in Pakistan, the administrative status of Malakand Protected Area has been complicated (Khan, H. 2005c: 105). Dir, Swat and Chitral have been made districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province within PATA, Bajaur which was previously part of the Malakand Agency was made a separate Agency and included in FATA, and Malakand Protected Area has been something between regular district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Agency (Khan, H. 2005c: 105).

The status of PATA enjoyed by Malakand Protected area has been a distinct governance system that manifest “hybridity of ‘settled’ and tribal area laws, as the people of the area enjoyed the right to vote, and normal court system and other laws and institutions prevailing in the rest of the country were in place here” (Ali and Rehman, 2001: 54). A number of regulations and laws have been extended to PATA which includes Malakand Protected Area since 1970, which drastically changed its status.<sup>45</sup> Prominent among them are known as PATA regulations, that include; Regulation I of Provincially Administered Tribal Areas Criminal Law (Special Provisions) Regulation and Regulation II of Provincially Administered Tribal Areas Civil Procedures (Special Provisions) Regulation, 26 July, 1975 (Sultan-i-Rome, 2009: 12-13). These regulations were generally resented and therefore challenged and declared null void by Peshawar High Court in February, 1990 (Sultan-i-Rome, 2009: 13). Subsequently, the provincial government challenged the decision in Supreme Court of Pakistan which upheld the decision of the High Court in February 1994.

In this legal battle and confusion an important religious organization became active to demand Sharia instead of regular laws of the State. Tahreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-

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<sup>45</sup> All these laws are passed as regulations under the article 246 and 247 of the constitution of Pakistan. For various regulations introduced by the government in Malakand see Ali (2009).

e-Muhammadi (TNSM) was established in district Dir of Malakand Division in 1989.<sup>46</sup> It created unrest in Malakand in May, 1994 which resulted in the loss of some life, and consequently an agreement with the government was reached to implement Islamic law. Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (Nifaz-e-Nizam-e-Shariah) Regulation, 1994 was promulgated which attempted to implement the agreement with TNSM. However, due to TNSM's dissatisfaction another regulation was introduced, called Shari-Nizam-e-Adl Regulation, 1999 and it repealed the previous regulation of 1994 (Sultan-e-Rome, 2009: 14). Sultan-e-Rome argues that these regulations did not satisfy the people and TNSM (2009: 15).

In post 9/11 scenario, a break away faction of the TNSM under the leadership of Mullah Fazlullah joined the Tahrik Taliban Pakistan (Sultan-e-Rome, 2009: 27-28).<sup>47</sup> It is after the government's action against this faction that created one of the worst confrontation between the State and the Islamic militants in Pakistan's history. The government has currently issued a new regulation known as *Nizam-e-Adl* Regulation, 2009 'to provide for Nifaz-e-Nizam-e-Sharia through courts' in PATA (Daily Times, 15 April, 2009). This regulation is not yet implemented for the situation remains tense in the presence of the army and militants in the region. Currently, Malakand is a PATA district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and enjoys its 'hybridity' for it has Local Government system like the settle districts, Levies instead of Regular Police force, exemption from certain taxation, etc. The Devolution of Power Plan<sup>48</sup> 2001 took an extra step to bring more reforms and abolished divisions and elevated districts as highest units of local government.

### **Research field:**

Arguments presented in this thesis are based on the data collected from two places in Malakand, i.e Batkhela and Thana. following are the details of these areas.

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<sup>46</sup> Officially this organization was known as *Ibtidai-Tanzeem-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi* and its leader has been a resident of Dir, named Sufi Muhammad (Marwat and Toru, 2005: 10). Also see, Sultan-e-Rome (2009: 26-28).

<sup>47</sup> TNSM led by Sufi Muhammad did not agree with the armed struggle of this faction, although, he primarily agrees with their aim of enforcing Sharia in the entire region (Sultan-e-Rome, 2009: 28).

<sup>48</sup> Local Government Plan introduced by President Musharaf.

## 1. Batkhela:

Batkhela is the Tehsil headquarter of Swat Ranizai and the only recognized urban area of the Malakand district (Government of Pakistan, 2000). It has its own uniqueness for various reasons. First, Batkhela is probably the only place in Malakand that has rapidly extended its economic base to trade, commerce and businesses. This has not only added to create economic opportunities for its inhabitants but significantly improved its status in the region. It was once a small village on the main road from Nowshera-Madran-Chitral Road and historically overshadowed by the regal presence of Thana in its proximity (11 km). Perhaps that is the reason, most of the historical and anthropological literature gives it but a passing reference.<sup>49</sup> Its remarkable transformation has improved its significant vis a vis Thana. Second, in Batkhela all such transformation has brought in certain consequences. Its own status has changed from rural to urban in at least official usage.<sup>50</sup> Batkhela has recently (since 1970) witnessed a huge influx of immigrants from diverse regions and backgrounds, which has transformed the demographic landscape of the town. This influx has created a general resentment against the strangeness of these immigrants. Batkhela has been the locus of social and economic tension in the region manifested in the rise of Awami-khel movement, Kisanyan activism, TNSM blockage of 1994 and hosting its leadership in the detention of Sufi Muhammad.

The total population of Batkhela according to 1998 census is 43, 179, with literacy ratio of 39.3 (Government of Pakistan, 2000). Although 1998 census shows that Agriculture, fishing, forestry and hunting is the largest sector of economy in terms of employment, the combined share of whole sale, retail trade, restaurants, hotels, construction, community and social services is 62.2 % of the employment in Batkhela. The census demonstrates that 99% of the people in Batkhela speak Pakhto and 99.4% are Muslims by religion (Government of Pakistan, 2000).

Batkhela is divided into old Batkhela and new. Old Batkhela which is often known as central Batkhela is mostly inhabited by the Yousafzai clans and the rest of the Batkhela is inhabited by the immigrants and other communities. Yousafzai of the Batkhela claim to be from the Ranizai clan and they include sub-clans of Ibrahim khel,

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<sup>49</sup> See Churchill (2005: 68-73), Bellew (1977: 40) and Barth (1959b).

<sup>50</sup> It has the status of municipality and has its municipal committee (Government of Pakistan, 2000).

Umerkhel, Madey Khel and Bali khel.<sup>51</sup> There is a pocket of population in the mid of cultivated track parallel to Swat River towards the West on the road to Jolagram, inhabited by the peasants community. The population is spreading with high pace and so is the construction of new colonies and localities, mostly on the back of the market and main road.

Batkhela also hosts a number of private and public sector education institutions where students from the entire region get education. Besides education, people from surrounding areas also visit Batkhela for medical treatment as district (headquarter) hospital is located in Batkhela and there a number of private clinics and hospitals in the town. Important government offices including tehsil administration, courts, National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), different NGOs, etc. Also most of the banks, transport station, veterinary hospital, general post office are located in Batkhela. However, the most important feature of Batkhela's economic and social life is its thriving market. Locally known as Batkhela bazar, this market is stretched on both sides of the Nowshera-Chakdara-Chitral road for almost two kilometers (Government of Pakistan, 2000) and has a range of business mostly of consumer goods in retail and wholesale. It also includes hotels, restaurants, technical services, financial institutions, etc. The Batkhela bazar not only serve the local population but the entire region from Malakand Pass to Chitral. It is due to this market that Batkhela has secured a reputation of trade center of the Malakand or market town.

Most of the research work is conducted in Batkhela for it has been the locus of social unrest through out the recent history ( since 1960s) of the region. It was here that Awami-khel organization was founded, it was here that landless peasants refused to hand over rents to the landlords and adopted violent means, it was here that TNSM received hospitality during its blockage of road in 1994 and stationed its leadership for some time. Batkhela also represent much greater diversity than Thana in its social fabric. It is also a place where most people could talk to me openly about some of the historical tension in different strata of the society. Moreover, in Batkhela I got diverse perspectives from a range of professional and amateurs, from a laborer in the market to a businessman, from a professional doctor to a literary organization, from a peasant to a

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<sup>51</sup> see also Yousafi (1960: 376) and Khan (1984: 396-422).

landlord from a religious leader of TNSM to the former office bearers of Awami-khel. Therefore, most of my fieldwork was conducted in Batkhela. Thana was kept as comparative case study where I could reflect on dormancy of the above mentioned organizations and approaching social change through multifarious means such as education and services. However, both these cases have similarities in a sense that they had similar hierarchical societies which are transforming, the lineage landowners in both these areas are cousins on the Yousafzai tribal charter. Moreover, the tension and concerns among different strata vis a vis others remain the same in Thana and Batkhela. Shared history and experiences under similar administrative and political setup create similar political and economic conditions. Therefore, most of the analysis in this thesis are valid for both these areas.

## 2. Thana:

Thana is situated at, approximately, 11 km distance from Batkhela and historically the most prominent town in the area. It fits well in the Barth's thesis (1959b) of factional politics, for the presence of two powerful ruling khans who had been influential both in the affairs of the Malakand Agency and in the politics of Dir and Swat States, signified its importance. These khans were awarded the title of Khan Bahadur, place in the provincial durbar and an annual allowance of up to Rs 3000 by the British government for their services to the British Empire. These khans hailed from Bazi khel and Baba khel clans (Khalid Khan, interview, 2008) and were leaders of two different factions that either supported the ruler of Dir or Swat in their mutual clashes. It was in the presence of these powerful figures that Thana had asserted its influence through out the history of Yousafzai in Malakand.

The Yousafzai of the Thana claim to be from Baizai clan and identify following sub clans in Thana; Bazikhel, Ali khel, Kator khel, Babakhel, Ismael khel, Khan kor khel, Shah Ahmed khel.<sup>52</sup> These clans own most of the land in Thana and have been less inclined to other economic activities except government services. It also has huge population which do not claim their ancestry from one of the above clans and which are divided in different occupations. Currently Thana is divided for political and administrative purposes into Thana Jadeed, Thana Khas, Thana Bandajat.

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<sup>52</sup> see also Barth (1959b: 27).

Currently Thana has retained its agrarian base but there is substantial increase in the share of services sector and limited increase in trade and commerce. Thana has its own bazar which caters the need of the Thana and its surrounding villages. However, it is less prominent in comparison to Batkhela. Thana had monopoly over education sector of the Malakand. Its secondary school had the privilege of being one of the oldest in the entire North Western region. However, recently educational institutions have been opened in many other parts of Malakand and Batkhela has a number of public and private institutions to cater its growing population.

Growing literacy or education is the most remarkable thing ever happened to Thana. In 1998 Thana Khas had 50.7% of literacy rate which is higher than the national average of 43.92 and much higher than the FATA (17.4%) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (35.41%). Such remarkable trend has its own consequences for Thana people, most of whom tend to join services sector. The educated people look for jobs in diverse areas i.e from education to law enforcing agencies, from practicing law to medicine, etc. There are number of ex-army officers of higher ranks, bankers, doctors, engineers, professors, civil servants etc, from Thana who create an extensive network of these servicemen in the entire country. Most importantly, the fruits of this achievement were equally distributed among different strata of the society. Education and services have brought benefit to the broadest population and not limited to particular strata or group. There are countless stories of how ordinary men with no prior social status shined by securing a place for themselves in regional and national services by becoming doctors, engineers, lawyers, army officer or civil servant. Such achievement of Thana is often related to Batkhela's achievement in business, commerce and trade. Therefore, previously the presence of the powerful chiefs made Thana prominent, but currently the outstanding achievement in education and services sector adds to its influence.

Despite, all this Thana has witnessed some unrest during 1970s in the form of peasants insurrection. However, that was a brief encounter that did not sustain itself for long. Moreover, Awami-khel and TNSM had limited influence in Thana. Although people from Thana did participate in these movements, it was not substantial enough to have caused larger unrest in the town. Therefore, my focus in this thesis is more on Batkhela for its greater diversity, significant social tension which in itself brought transformation in its character.

### 2.3: Research design

This study is carried out through a comprehensive research design which includes; the background of the field work, how I access the area and my informants, who are my informants and how they are helpful in carrying out this research, and finally explaining decisions on the methods to collect data.

#### **Background of the field work:**

An important factor in the field work was the timing of this project. Post 9/11 situation is of social and political unrest in Pakistan in general and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular. The MMA government in the province was about to complete its tenure in office and religious organizations such as Taliban in the entire Tribal Area putting up resistance against the State. Sufi Muhammad under the banner of TNSM gathered 10,000 people from Swat, Malakand, Dir and Bajaur and crossed the border to support Taliban against the NATO forces. He was imprisoned by the security agencies in Pakistan on his way back to Pakistan. In his absence Maulana Fazal ullah (his son-in-law) emerged in Swat by establishing relations with Taliban in the Tribal Areas. He also spread hatred against the government in the area through radio transmission. It was in 2007 that regular clashes started between security forces of Pakistan and the Taliban of Fazal ullah group. The clashes continue to cause enormous damage in form of casualties and deaths.

Malakand in close proximity with Swat was not unaffected by these events, occasional attacks in the army convey, isolated incidents of bomb blasts in (music) CD shops, alcohol and drugs selling shops occurred through out Malakand. The situation remained quite tense due to the heavy presence of army in the region and covert activity of Taliban in Batkhela and Thana. However, later when I finished my field work and returned to York, I was told by my friends that situation further deteriorated in Thana and Batkhela due to military operation and frequent curfews in the region.

It was in this background that I had to plan my field work. The only source to rely on was to get consistent guidance and information from my friends in the field. It was through them I received information about the situation in the field. I was told to plan short visits to the region instead of single (longer) stay as most ethnographers

would prefer. I have to do so to avoid exposing myself to elements that could undermine my research work or pose any threat to me. I therefore, planned two short visits of almost a month each and one longer visit of two months. The first visit was a preliminary visit (December-January, 2007-2008) in the background of elections. It was during this visit that an unfortunate assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto occurred. During this visit, I gathered most of the data from candidates contesting elections who reflected on the general issues of local concern. However, I also focused on the possibility of conducting interviews with informants and gathering background information on the region through narrations of my informants. My second visit in April, 2008 was the most intensive session of field work. I tried to conclude most of interviews in this session. My third and final visit was the longest one (Oct-Nov, 2008). In this session I extended my field interviews to informants out of Malakand and in Peshawar. These informants were not directly related to Malakand but provided broader perspective on the Pakhtun society and the ethnic issues in Pakistan. Besides these interviews in Peshawar, I revisited Malakand to do some follow up interviews and some new interviews that I could not cover in the second session.

#### **Access to the field and informants:**

My introduction to the field is not through a chance or accident, it was through my experience of being born and raised near the field. My home town is within the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and through out my educational upbringing and professional career I have come across a number of people from the field I am studying. This has enabled me to make life long friendships within the area. Through this friendship I had a better view and insight of the people and the field. My education as well as teaching in the most respected and major educational institutions of the province enabled me to experience a mix of cultures and traditions from a broad range of tribes and clans of Pakhtun lands stretching from the North West to the south of Pakistan. I had an opportunity to ponder over a variety of case studies that could help me in unfolding my research questions. Malakand was obviously the choice I made after giving a thought to those possible cases.

The choice of the two sites of the research field such as Batkhela and Thana was less because they represent the urban and rural divide in Malakand but the fact that the people of these places demonstrate relative difference in their approach to life. The

behavior of my friends at both these places instigated me to question why the friends from Thana were taking greater pride in their achievement in education and found themselves more inclined to jobs in government departments? And why my friends from Batkhela found themselves less inclined towards government jobs. This in no way refer to intellectual abilities of the two people or their approach to education. For I found the most vibrant literary and intellectual culture in Batkhela, but probably to highlight that the presence of Batkhela bazar amidst the people have influenced their approach to life. This approach to life is tacitly recognized by the people in these town. Moreover, this diversity would help me in locating answers to my questions of identification and boundary making in contrasting ecology (cf Ahmed 1980).

My access to the area is made easy by the friendship I have and the students I have taught. Interestingly this friendship is not limited to one particular area or a social category within the region but to a wide range of people. I claim all this on the account that all of my friends from the region had different backgrounds. Furthermore, I also made new friends in the course of my field work, particularly, in Batkhela through the friendship circles (see ch. 4). Besides, the most important feature of Pakhtun society that facilitated me was '*Melmastia*' (Hospitality). This feature enabled me to visit the area much before this research project was conceived. These early visits enabled me to gain familiarity that later helped me in shaping this project. Therefore, it is through friendship and *Melmastia* that I gained initial insights into my research field and it would be through these two I proceed to the field.

### **Field work experiences:**

Before embarking for my field work I had to contact my friends in the field and they readily accepted to assist me in my research work. They helped me in shaping the sample and lists of interviewee for this thesis. Additionally I have a number of friends within the journalists, literary and academic community of the area who were of greater help in collecting data from their respective community. Therefore, I took extra care to approach my informant from a particular community through a friend who is from that particular community.

In Batkhela I chose to stay with a friend who happen to be from the Yousafzai clans but at the same time his family is among the most successful and well established business families in Batkhela. In this way my friend and his family is well respected in

both categories i.e businessmen and landlords. Moreover, the most important factor was that I was guaranteed protection, for the influence this family had in Batkhela and to some extent in Thana was contributory. In Thana I stayed for a short while with the family of a friend which again was influential and respected in Thana. Moreover, the family again was from one of the sub clans of Yousafzai and the head of the family was by profession an agriculturist and lawyers at the same time. The family was extremely useful in accessing influential people in Thana. I also used some of my links in Batkhela to contact some non Yousafzai categories in Thana.

I also learned through my experience in the field that to explain your research topic to your informants become extremely difficult, even to the educated. Therefore, I conveyed that I was working on the people of the region and their social and economic conditions. My informants thought I was investigating the political history of the region and from that context the people living in the region. Most of the communication with informants was smooth due to my command over Pakhto language. However, where I needed the assistance of my friends I did use them to communicate well.

The most crucial aspect of my field experience was my positionality as an insider and outsider. These positions not only explain how I was received in the field but also enabled me to give different perspectives an insider and outside. Being Pakhtun, my ethnic background was not different from most of the informants in the field and therefore, did not make me a complete stranger as would have happened with Barth and Lindholm. Therefore, my position as an insider allowed me to settle quickly in the field and communicate and report Pakhtuns' perspective with ease. Moreover, to my surprise the informants felt more delighted to the fact that a researcher from their own ethnic background is investigating.

The informants were also aware of my status as an outsider to the region, for I belonged to a different part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and therefore did not share the remarkable experience of transformation with my informants. Furthermore, my association with a foreign university and location (being stationed) in Europe also added to my status as an outsider and thus providing me an opportunity to have an outsider's perspective. The response to such a position was a mix one. Where it created excitement in the people that I was representing a foreign university and foreign interest in the local people, it also generated suspicions in some cases whether I was working with ulterior motives often associated with western concern in the region. Although, in general the

response from the informants in the field was very supportive as I got few refusals, I still had to deal with some silences in the field related to religious transformation and political unrest.

The people in the field were conscious of the fact that religious and political unrest in the region was of primary importance to the world and particularly to the media. Most of the responses related to the religious change and its relationship with Pakhtun identity were informed by the media reports implicating the local population. While, some of the respondents were upfront and articulate other were cautious and calculating. Such a mix response influenced analysis on the dynamic of religious change below (chapter 7) where I could have commented on the dynamic nature of religious change. Moreover, I was also restricted by the precarious security situation in the region and limited resources to involve substantial sample of madrasa students and to observe popular religious observances. Most of my analysis indicate the significant religious change and reformation in the area but is less exhaustive of the dynamic of such a change. I suggest that such an area will be an interesting attempt for future research.

#### **Limitations of the study:**

This study with all its effort has certain limitations. First, the field work was to be shortened for precarious security situation in the region. This would be done on the advice of my friends who considered themselves responsible for my security. At times when I had a will to stay without their consent, I was coerced to realized that I would risk the danger of losing their support which I so disparately needed. Moreover, it also demonstrated that my guest status was not only to facilitate me but to fulfill their own cherished feature of Pakhtunwali i.e *Melmastia*; which included my protection in the field.

The second limitation was the heavy presence of the security forces in Malakand during my field work. When I had the opportunity to interview some top ranking civilian official in Malakand, I also encountered a situation that revealed the dominance of military over civilian bureaucracy in these conditions of war. I was promised access to the official documents, reports and correspondences on Malakand in the library and archives of the former Political Agent in Malakand. However, despite several attempts the librarian could not let me in through the heavy barricades erected by the military stationed in the proximity. Therefore, my access to those documents and archival

material would have certainly contributed to shaping historical context of this thesis. Unavailability of such material left me with no choice but to rely mostly on the local accounts.

Third, I had initially planned to interview female informants in the field with this realization that it would save me from presenting an exclusively male perspective; particularly, when Ahmed (1980) took help from his wife to gather information from female members of the population. However, when in the field I discussed this issue with friends I could not get an encouraging reply. This is because female continue to be highly inaccessible in the region despite increasing literacy rate among male and female members of the population. This difficulty is not just faced by interviewer from opposite gender but by some of the female researchers working among Pakhtun who could find it hard to penetrate into women lives (Grima, 1998: 88-107) or encounter Purdah system determining their field practices (Ahmed, 2006: 43-44).

### **Research Methods:**

The initial sample of informants was based on the anthropological studies conducted in the region (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982) and my own preliminary field visit. I could roughly divide the population into landowning khans, the occupational categories and the immigrants to Batkhela and Thana. I have focused on Pakhtuns in Malakand particularly and mostly skipped other groups previously reported to identify themselves as non-Pakhtuns such as Gojars or Kohistanis (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982) for I wanted to focus on the internal processes, problematize them and see the significance of their relationship with broader ethnic and national identities in the State that is multi-ethnic. I wanted to do so in the non local context where these inter-ethnic processes could not be dominated by other smaller groups (i.e Gojars) but by the broader national (Pakistani) context and ethnic groups that strive for political and cultural dominance over other groups. In this way I bring in State in the perspective which Barth is criticized to have left out (Ahmed, 1979).

During my preliminary field work I realized the most useful methods could be a mix of participatory observation, semi structured or unstructured interviews. Ahmed (1980) conducted his research in the Mohmand tribe with a formal questionnaire distributed among a carefully shaped sample. Banerjee (2000), Amineh Ahmed (2006) and Bartlotti (2000) on other hand used their semi structured or semi standardized

interviews to get information and I most certainly relied on this method to ask the broader field question of: *Who is a Pakhtun? How would you describe people living in Batkhela or Thana? How you see the social, political and economic changes visiting your city or village recently? How they see Pakhtuns in Pakistan?* All interviews were audio taped with the permission of the interviewee. Edwards (1996) used stories narrated by his informants which I found is a useful method to elicit information from the elderly informants who provided valuable historical perspective and explain in form of narrations (cf. Ahmed, 1980). An important source of information was an informal chat, conversation or discussion (cf. Bartlotti, 2000), gossips on meals, tea, or walk or in the friendship circles. All these observation were not audio tapped. I did more than 40 taped interviews at Batkhela, Thana and Peshawar, including the follow up interviews.

I also came up with the idea to use focus group interviews when I was invited to a literary organization in Batkhela. This would be the first test of method used in anthropological studies on Pakhtuns. I therefore, did two focus groups interviews in two literary organizations in Batkhela and Thana. In Batkhela I did MAL and in Thana I did *Thana Adabi Tolena*. Both these associations particularly MAL had professionals such as doctors, engineers, technicians, journalists, amateur poets, teachers, etc as its members. Therefore it was more like a circle of individuals interested in promoting literary activities and most of these literary activities were in Pakhto language, poetry, etc. Discussion in these focus groups was informal but semi structured which generated free expression of opinion. Being learned people their response to questions regarding the processes carried out in Malakand certainly generated more questions (cf. Berg, 2007; 144-146). Moreover, it was in these focus groups and in informal discussions and chats that cross arguments would clarify some of the ambiguities.

Besides interviews, focus groups, participatory observation this work benefited from a range of historical documents I collected from the field. Particularly, the personal collection of interview of Muhammad Khan (leader of Awami-khel) pamphlets published by Awami-khel, letters written by the khans of Malakand to the President of Pakistan, governor of the province and legislative body, regarding the reforms in Malakand. I also collected British published report on the important people the area titled who is who? I was also able to get hold of locally prepared genealogical tables of Yousafzai clans inhabiting Malakand. Besides all these documents I got hold of number of official documents such as 1998 census report of district Malakand, various

regulations published by provincial government. I also studies a number of journals and magazines published in vernacular to get a sense of what explanation and arguments are offered by the journalists and writers for the current political crises in the region.

### Conclusion

The focus of this research work is on the Pakhtun identification. It proposes that such process is multilayered and therefore, has internal and external aspects. Moreover, it suggests that these layers are related to each other and reflect the interplay of ethnicity, religion and identity. To enquire such a formulation it has chosen Malakand district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as research field. It has emphasized that Thana and Batkhela within Malakand provide excellent sites for research for their recent transformation and diversity. My field work was at the time of religious and political unrest in the region which impelled me to use my friendship network in the region and conduct research work in stages. This facilitated me to conduct research work in an area that has greater potential to provide empirical evidence in support of the arguments made in this thesis. Moreover, besides semi structured interviews, participatory observation, I used focus group interviews as a method of data collection.

## Chapter 3

### **Collective Identification and Categorization in Malakand**

Currently, people in Malakand categorize each other as *Khanan* and *Ghariban*.<sup>53</sup> Previously, the literature (Barth, 1959b; 1981; Lindholm, 1982) elaborated on social stratification in Swat and argued that although, the fundamental division was of ‘patron’-‘client’, ‘free’-‘ruled’ (Barth, 1981:152) or ‘superior’-‘inferior’ (Lindholm, 1982:109), people were divided in a range of hierarchical status categories. The patron or superior category was identified as ‘Pakhtun’ or ‘Pukhtun’ and the rest as ‘non-Pakhtun’ or ‘non-Pukhtun’ (Barth, 1959b; Lindholm, 1982). In this chapter I argue that through historical developments, hierarchical categories, with a degree of continuity, have transformed in two oppositional categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban*. Moreover, the previous patron-client, superior-inferior statuses are undergoing a change and social organization has become confrontational between *Khanan* and *Ghariban*. Discussing the historical developments and pattern of change in categorization process, this chapter elaborates on the processes of collective identification in Malakand. Subsequent chapters will illustrate confrontation between these broader categories on the contested meaning of categorical boundaries (chapter 5), which then shapes into a broader contest over ethnic identity (chapter 6). Therefore, through this chapter I intend to set the argument for dynamic intra-ethnic processes, pursued in detail by the following chapters.

The pioneering work of Fredrik Barth (1959a,b) on Swat focused primarily on political system, internal stratification and patron-client relationship within a population that identified itself as ‘Pathan’. Later (1981) he tried to study continuities and discontinuities in what was reported earlier. However, Barth (1981) could not grasp the depth of change brought forth by the entry of centralized states and the collapse of traditional edifice of authority in the region. He could not reflect on the reorganization

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<sup>53</sup> *Khanan* and *Ghariban* refer to collective identities. The singular of these are *khan* and *gharib* (literary meaning poor). see below for further details. I have borrowed words ‘Pakhtun’ (Barth, 1959b; 1981) and ‘Pukhtun’ (Lindholm, 1982) from literature to refer to *Khanan* category. However, I use the term Pashtun for the entire population instead of Barth’s term ‘Pathan’. People in Malakand use the word ‘Pukhtun’ to refer to ethnic identity and differ on inclusion and exclusion in it.

of categories, breaking of hierarchical statuses with consequences for the internal boundaries, although his purview grasped the discontent among various client categories and the emerging organization such as labour unions and peasants movement. Later Lindholm (1982) working in a Swati village could only see in this discontent a desire and opportunity for the members of client categories to replace the patron category and enact the continuity of the system. I intend to address rather broader changes in the region and their consequences for the processes of collective identification.

Taking insights from Jenkins (2000; 2008a;2008b) this chapter discusses collective identification enacted in social interaction. Identification involves synthesis of relationships similarity and differences (Jenkins, 2008b:18).

Our understanding of who we are and who other people are, and, reciprocally, other people's understanding of themselves and of others (which includes us) (Jenkins, 2008b: 18).

Jenkins also stresses the importance of identification in our life. He insists that, '*we cannot live routine lives without identification*' and '*would not be able to relate to each other meaningfully consistently*' (Jenkins, 2008b: 27). Moreover, the internal and external dialectics of self or 'group identification' and 'categorization' shapes collective identification. The former being external shapes the internal identification and vice versa (Jenkins, 2008b: chapter 9). In this chapter I will demonstrate that these internal external processes of collective social identification in Malakand are crucial aspects of social life and generate context for the broader contest over ethnic identification (chapter 6). However, the emphasis would be on the categorization process which contributes to shaping 'group identification' or self identification.

My focus in this chapter would be to reflect on various social, economic and political changes and their consequences for the collective identification in Malakand. I demonstrate how the processes of identification shape in time and space and how they are meaningful to social actors. I locate these processes in social interaction and argue that they create conflictual situation for the social actors. In this way I draw a broader

picture that relates comprehensive change with the processes of identification in the region, something I posit, is ignored by the existing literature.

This chapter will first take up the anomalies in the available literature on the social categorization in the region and then will elaborate historical processes generating change in Malakand and affecting the processes of categorization. I will then elucidate current processes of categorization in relation to the historical developments. Categorization involves time and space (Lamont and Molnar, 2002); therefore, to make their identification meaningful and get sense of the historical processes the people in Malakand also categorize time into two successive periods, such as Jirga Period (*Da Jirgey pa wakh*) and Post Jirga period (*Da Jirgey na Pas*). I adopt their categorization of time and structure this chapter around these historical periods, so that I relate the change with the processes as perceived by the social actors. These two periods being successive are also interconnected, the former sets the context for the later.

### 3.1: *Jirga* Period (*Da Jirgey pa wakh*)

Various studies have reflected on the social stratification in the region with some consistency (Bellew, 1864; Barth, 1959b, Lindholm, 1982). Such stratification demonstrates the dominant presence of Yousafzai tribe in the region and various other occupational categories as dependents. Occupational categories are thus, interdependent in a patron-client relationship and ranked hierarchy. However, I argue that, despite analytical value of this proposed intelligible and uncomplicated categorical arrangement, as understood by the literature, it cannot explain the complexity of social classification in Malakand.<sup>54</sup> I suggest that the literature could not explain the social and economic changes that have gradually produced complexity in social classification in Malakand. Therefore, by studying the processes of categorization in relation to broader social, economic and political changes I intend to expose anomalies in the existing literature. Moreover, discussion in this part would explain how historical processes have produced conditions, that in self explanatory manner would show non feasibility of categorical hierarchies of the past.

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<sup>54</sup>Although Barth in his later study (1981: chapter 7) did take up a dynamic approach to focus on the changing circumstances and life experiences of various 'castes' in Swat.

### **Anomalies in social categorization:**

It is imperative to study categorization and boundaries making as incessant processes through historical account, as only then can we identify aberrations in the earlier categorical schemes identified by the anthropological literature. I therefore, explain social classification reported by earlier anthropological literature and then take up a position to question how social and economic changes require us to revisit such schemes of social classification.

The entire population of the region (Malakand and Swat) was socially stratified into various occupational categories, termed 'castes' by Barth (1959b: 16-22).<sup>55</sup>

The hierarchical type of category is usually called qoum-people, religious or ethnic group, caste. The different qoums of Swat constitutes patrilineal, hereditary, ranked occupational groups, conceptually endogamous... Sociologically they might be classified as estates or castes...Caste in present context is important because of the way it defines a ranked hierarchy groups, and the relations between these groups in local communities (1959b: 16-17).

Barth (1959a; 1959b) and Lindholm (1982) report that religious group locally known as *Stanadars* being the descendants of the prophet or saints are on the top of the categorical arrangement. They are followed by 'Pukhtuns' who identify themselves with Yousafzai tribe and are patrilineal, segmentary group. These two in patron roles live along numerous landless dependents or client groups called 'vassals' by Bellew (1864: 180-190).<sup>56</sup> Yousafzai clans of 'Pakhtuns' inhabit Malakand since their conquest (1585) and provided leadership (along with the Saints) to the whole population. They were organized by their ethnic identity embodied in the institutions of *Jirga* (council), *Hujra* (men house, hospitality) and *Purdah* (seclusion of women). 'Pakhtuns', in their

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<sup>55</sup> Malakand has been traditionally associated with the Swat region and despite its separate legal and political status in British India was considered lower part of the Swat valley and therefore included by Barth in his study of Swat 'Pathans' (Barth, 1959b: 08) .

<sup>56</sup> Except mullahs as Quran readers who are given land by the 'Pukhtuns' (Lindholm, 1982: 93).

leadership role, had to demonstrate the qualities of strength and bravery along with patronage for the clients, to retain their leadership status. They also had to trace genealogical links with the epical ancestor (Yousaf) and maintain their 'actual land ownership' (Barth, 1959b: 21). The loss of these two meant loss of 'Pakhtun' status and downward movement in the hierarchy (Lindholm, 1982; Barth, 1959b). The agnatic rivalry among 'Pakhtuns' (Lindholm, 1982) and their consistent efforts to make and break political alliances contributed to violence and factions (Barth, 1959b). Saints in these situations mediate and settle disputes among the warring parties (Barth, 1959b).

Land has been an important commodity for the 'Pakhtun' chief. It has not been just an economic possession, but also a guarantee of his membership in the local *Jirga*, his confirmation in tribal lineage and his social status.

Land rights are granted through the patrilineal genealogy, and one who has no land is, in effect, no longer a Pakhtun. Land and personal identity are deeply intertwined in local thought, and efforts to increase one's own holding from the leitmotif of Pakhtun life (Lindholm, 1982: 56-57).

Through a complicated system of land ownership in Malakand and Swat a 'Pakhtun' landowner possessed land through his 'share' in the larger 'estate' of his descent group, called '*Daftar*' (Barth, 1959b). Traditionally, land was allotted to the descent segments for a certain period; and after the lapse of that period the land was re-allotted to another descent segment for another period. Share in the land allotted to descent segments confirmed the 'Pakhtun' status and membership in *Jirga*. Selling his share to a member of his own segmentary descent group would mean the sale of not just the land but also of the right to *Jirga* membership and 'Pakhtun' status (Barth, 1959b). Often the agnatic rivalry (*Tarburwali*) is for the control of land (Lindholm, 1982: 66). However, land could not be sold to a person out of the descent group. This system slowly and gradually changed and the permanent allotment took place to various segments of descent group.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, the 'Pakhtun' from a segmentary descent group could sell his land to a

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<sup>57</sup> In Swat it was abolished by its first ruler in five long years 1924-1929 see Sahib (1962).

non-group member (landless non-Pukhtun) but he cannot transfer his 'share' (which includes his 'Pukhtun' status and membership in *Jirga*) to the buyer. This will be done through the conversion of land from *dafteri* land (inherited estate) to *serai* land (private property of a non-Pukhtun). The seller, however, cannot demand land on the basis of his "share"; and if he loses his entire 'share' to his descent group or to non member through its conversion to *serai* land, he will lose his membership of the jirga as well as his 'Pakhtun' group membership (Barth, 1959b: 64-67).

Moreover, land was also the source of further distinction between a 'Pukhtun' and a 'Khan'. Lindholm in his study of a village in upper Swat identified that those with larger holdings of land are known as 'Khans', they are like elite among the 'Pukhtuns', and those who have small holdings are known as 'Pukhtuns'. Similarly the landless are known as *fakir* meaning laborers (1982: 74). Barth (1959b) uses the title 'Pathan' for the entire population of the region. He writes, "*The Pashto-speaking people of the Swat valley belongs to a group loosely called Yousafzai Pathans or Afghans. This category includes all the descendants of a common distant ancestor, Yusuf, and those persons who are politically dependent on them*" (1959b: 05). He reserved the title of 'Pukhtun' for the chiefs or the leadership category among these 'Pathans' (1959b: 16-30). However, generally among Pakhtuns (unlike what Barth has suggested) the most common titles are Pashtun or Pukhtun and rarely Pathan.<sup>58</sup> Barth's analytical difference between 'Pathan' and 'Pukhtun' leaves a larger population as 'Pathan' but not 'Pakhtun'. These non 'Pukhtun' Pathans are further divided into 'castes' hierarchy of dependency and are clients of the 'Pakhtuns'. Such clients are not a fraction of the total population, instead the number of aristocratic Pukhtuns range from 'one half to one tenth of the population'. In Swat Valley, in an area of ten miles on the west bank of Swat River controlled by *Nikbi khel* lineage, out of 40,000 people only 8000 were 'Pukhtuns' (Barth, 1959a: 7-8). Moreover, in Batkhela these Yousafzai landowners were joined by a huge number of immigrants who now constitute roughly 80% of the total population.

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<sup>58</sup> Although Barth insisted that the whole population of 'Pathans' acted on cultural features defining Pakhtun identity but see the society divided into different castes having different expectations. His label of 'Pathan' and "Pakhtun" are problematic to analyze the major division in society i.e. patrons (Pakhtun) and clients (non-Pakhtun). Such labels had greater consequences for the entire population in Malakand when a contest would shape around who is a Pakhtun? (chapter 6).

Categories placed lower in the hierarchy are reported to be the dependents, the Yousafzais brought along (when they were on conquest), the defeated local people and those weaker Yousafzais who have lost their land and 'Pukhtun' status (Lindholm, 1979: 490; 1982). Every individual was ascribed to certain category which determined his occupation, political role and his 'marital and affinal relations'. Therefore, 'sharp social boundaries' existed between these groups as highlighted by their social stratification (Barth, 1959b: 16-22). They included peasants, tenants, artisans and other skilled people. Despite their high number these non-Pukhtuns were politically less organized, and had always considered landowner 'Pukhtuns' "unnecessary imposition" (Barth, 1959b: 68-69). The occupational categories were in dependent positions but were free to associate themselves with one or other 'Pakhtun' chief. The 'Pakhtun' chief had to distribute gifts, bribes and other benefits among his followers including these non-landowners to keep them on his side. It was difficult for the poor skilled people to be away from these chiefs as they depended heavily on their economic support. Moreover, among the followers of chief were land contract holders, services contract holders (craftsmen-skilled people) and the house tenants. The first two categories were more dependent on their chief while the last one was less inclined to be a follower, though they were still controlled by the chief through the threat of eviction (Barth, 1959b: 77-90). The landless had no right to property or claim political participation in the egalitarian council called *Hujra*.

Lindholm (1982) has reported change in such occupational specialization and categorization. He argues, '*But as the economy of Swat has begun to enter mass market, a number of specialities have been all but eliminated by competition*' (1982: 96). With such economic change the high degree of occupational categorization has vanished. Many categories have simply disappeared and new categories are emerging such as *misri* ('who fixes mechanical implements') *ustaz* (teachers) and '*Dokandars*' (shopkeepers). Moreover, the previous category of muleteers (*Parachas*) have accumulated wealth, purchased lands and call themselves 'Pukhtuns'. Such changes also refer to horizontal mobility within the hierarchy, 'Pukhtuns' after loss of land can move downward and become landless peasants and muleteers (*Parachas*) after buying land acquire the status of 'Pukhtun' (Lindholm, 1982: 96-99).<sup>59</sup> However, this

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<sup>59</sup> Buying and selling of land started with the reforms introduced by the State in Swat in 1930s.

mobility seems problematic currently due to increasing tension between elderly and young generations among the Pukhtuns. The later deny that the status of 'Pukhtun' is in land rather they insist, '*being Pukhtun is a matter of blood, and not land*' (Lindholm, 1982: 109).

Lindholm (1982) argues that despite 'proletarianization' of the poor, money economy, tension or occasional clashes between clients and patron, class struggle or class interpretation cannot apply to Swat. It is because the client does not question the 'value system of the society'.

The social premises which motivate the elite are the same premises by which the poor would like to live. The hope of the poor is simply to become exactly like the Pukhtun landlords who dominate them (Lindholm, 1982: 110).

However, Lindholm pointed out the growing tension among the Pukhtuns and the refusal of younger generation among them to accept such mobility of lower categories and acquisition of 'Pukhtun' status. Whether such denial from 'Pukhtuns' and increasing pressure from non Pukhtun for inclusion would create a conflict in future is not foreseen by Lindholm.

Only through transformation of consciousness and an awareness of class solidarity could real change come about, but this does not seem likely at the moment (Lindholm, 1982: 110).

Barth has also pointed out that below the religious group, '*the intervening groups are differentiated by wealth and power alone*' (1959b: 18). The source of such power and wealth in agrarian society like Swat is land.

In Swat, land, wealth and power are all one and the same, and there is no question that some men and some lineages have more than others (Lindholm, 1982: 90).

Internal feuds among the 'Pukhtuns' in form of agnatic rivalry (*Tarboorwali*) to control land not only 'structures society on violence' but also confirms that land is a precious commodity which ensures the continuity of status (Pukhtun), power and wealth; '*A man's identity, his pride and his land are united*' (Lindholm 90-91). It raises an important question, whether this equation of land, power and identity will be maintained in the face of growing economic changes, some of which are identified by Lindholm (the *Paracha* case). Does accumulation of wealth by non 'Pukhtun' categories will redefine this categorical hierarchy? Will power be relocated from land to some other sources of wealth or will land become a source of contention between all categories. Will the 'social value system' which associates land ownership with status (Lindholm, 1982) continue to enjoy broader acceptance in such situations. All these questions require revisiting the relationship of identity, land and statuses. These are themes shaping the remaining part of this chapter and the next.

The traditional social system based on social status categories defined in terms of descent, land ownership and occupation was already at time of Barth and Lindholme analyses, being affected by historical developments. Principle among these developments were related processes of migration into Malakand and the growth of commerce and trade, notably in the Batkhela Bazar.

### **Migration to Malakand:**

The period of 1950's and 1960's was characterized by large scale migration in Malakand (particularly in Batkhela).<sup>60</sup> Lindholm has reported that immigrants in a Swati village were those who had left their home as they were chased by their enemies and finally took refuge with the village 'khans'. Such asylum seekers were recruits of the armies constituted by the 'khans' and now serving as laborers. In both these positions they were dependent on and part of khan's ward (Lindholm, 1982: 235). Migration to Malakand is not limited to such asylum seekers and it is not a single event

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<sup>60</sup> Migration to Malakand continues and its pace has substantially increased since 1970's.

in history. There is a mosaic of immigrants who have migrated through a gradual process over decades and going back as far as 1920 in some cases. It mostly included individual or family migrations.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, we assume that the impetus to this migration process could be the consequence of migration of Hindu community to India after partition (1947). Hindus being businessmen, traders and moneylenders in the area (Bellew, 1864) produced a niche with their migration to India. Local landowner Pakhtuns considered business a non-Pakhtun activity and remained associated with agricultural. However, people from other areas who took refuge in the region would have chosen to opt for business. Despite the gradual nature of such migration, people identify periods of pace in migration, such as the current phase of migration (1970s) encouraged by the opening up of the political system. Interestingly, immigrants gave different reasons of their migration but insisted that post 1970 migration is largely because of flourishing businesses in Batkhela Market.

Migration itself is categorized differently by these immigrants. A distinction is made between those who migrated from areas within the boundaries of Malakand Agency such as *Thana* or *Aladand Dheri* and those who migrated from different regions including the States of Dir, Swat, Chitral, Bajaur and other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>62</sup> Interestingly, these categories of migration are conceived differently. Immigrants of the former category did not recognize their act as migration rather they insist that they just moved their families from one place of the region to the other due to unfavorable conditions. They did not discontinue their relations with the places they have left, however, they identify themselves strongly with Batkhela rather than with their previous villages. Moreover, those who migrated from places other than Malakand had mostly lost their links with their ancestral villages. In this way relationship with space varies among these immigrants. The reasons of their migration also varies. Respondents disclosed the following major reasons of their ancestors' migration; agnatic rivalries, loss of land, atrocities committed by the rulers of the Dir, Swat and Chitral States, better education opportunities, businesses, crimes committed, etc. The

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<sup>61</sup> It was also reported that there were migrations of the whole clan such as *Swatians*. However, this is fairly controversial. Some say they are the descendants of those who have been conquered and pushed to Hazara region by Yusufzai in 16th century, some say they have migrated to Batkhela later as whole in a clan (Abdali Khan, interview, 2008).

<sup>62</sup> There are migrants who claimed that they have come from of a variety of districts including Nowshera and Mardan.

number of immigrants settled in Batkhela are greater than any other part of Malakand. In 1947, Batkhela was a small village and the local market was located out of the village compound on the road between Malakand and Swat. The earlier immigrants had to adjust to their new situation which was characterized by restricted property, citizenship and political rights and society organized in segmentary lineage clans (landowners), implying that they have to occupy the social status of a client. Most of these immigrants were poor therefore, they had to rely on the landowning segmentary lineages for economic support. They had this understanding that the political and economic system was not favorable but their hope was in the growing market which they thought was an economic opportunity. This social and political situation or to be more correct this context (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 155-160), in their perception, was very highly biased in favor of the landowners who were represented by the institution of *Jirga*.

Coming to a place where landownership was still restricted to the established clans and the social and economic niches available were of client status and places available at the lower level of occupational hierarchy, immigrants had limited choices. However, with their diverse backgrounds these immigrants did not join any particular occupational category but rather spread in different economic activities. Those with sufficient means started their own businesses, those with no such means initiated ordinary labour in the town and market, some even joined the lower level occupational categories such as peasantry, etc. The landowner clans would deny them landownership as well as the status of Pakhtun (chapter 5 and 6) despite the claims of these immigrants that they had been from different tribal lineages (inhabited in other parts of the region). Immigrants were entered into house and shop tenancy contracts and therefore placed lower in occupational hierarchy in a non Pakhtun and client status. An understanding was reached between the landowning Pakhtuns and the political administration of the Malakand Agency to let local customs (known as *Riwaj*) function which will ensure the autonomous status of the region within British India and later Pakistan. These customary laws were later (1964) compiled into a document titled *Riwaj-Nama*.<sup>63</sup> This

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<sup>63</sup> These customs were locally known as *Riwaj* and was orally transmitted by the landlord *Jirga* members. However, I was told that a former Political Agent Zafar Khan insisted and finally produced this *Riwaj* into a written document. Such efforts were resisted by the landowners. The need to produce this document was felt when the political agent came to know that contradictory clauses were referred to in similar cases. Moreover, I was told by Afrasiyab Khan (2008), a high ranking Awami-khel office bearer that his organization used the written document as a propaganda tool in press. This further annoyed the *Khanan*.

historical document categorized local population into Agriculturists (those who own lands-included lineage clans and religious class) and non Agriculturists. It also clearly stated that immigrants from different regions could not buy land from the local people. It also established preemption rights of the Agriculturists over local non-agriculturists. The reason behind this restriction, as described by *Riwaj-Nama*, was the scarce land and the *Riwaj* (Custom) followed by the people for generations (Khan, 1964: 38). We can assume, these immigrants, were viewed by the local Pakhtuns, as a potential threat to their political interests associated with land ownership.

### **The emergence of *Bazar* (market):**

Business opportunities grew with the growth of the bazar (market) in Batkhela. Initially, businesses in the market were limited to selling retail goods but later it evolved into wholesale businesses. Location of the market close to the intersection of the roads to Dir, Swat, Chitral, Bajaur and Malakand increased its importance. Soon the market spread on both sides of the Malakand Road, which spread its thriving business to the far-flung areas of Chitral, Dir, Swat and even Bajaur. Batkhela soon established monopoly on the retail and wholesale distribution of consumer goods in the entire region. These developments generated another set of significant social and economic changes. The economy gradually spread its base by decreasing reliance on agriculture and including trade and businesses which opened new opportunities for all including landowners and non landowners.

Earlier, the economy of Batkhela and Thana was primarily agrarian. The entire population was either directly or indirectly dependent on the agriculture sector. Land in Batkhela was divided into *Shorgera* (Agricultural land), *Ghareza* (mountainous) and *Damana* (non agricultural). The last category was further divided into land for residential purpose and land for market or commercial purpose. Political and social statuses were associated with the kind of land. With the freezing of re-allotment in Malakand (date unknown), clans in Batkhela were left with a particular kind of land. Before the development of Market and flux in migration those in the possession of *Damana* were in better situation than those with *Shorgera*. However, after the pace in migration and increase in market activity, clans in possession of *Damana* land became

more powerful than the others. This changing power dynamics within the landowning category was caused by increase in the value of *Damana*.

The development of the market in Batkhela brought economic and social change. Substantial part of the economy is constituted of the businesses in the market and therefore characterized by receding reliance on agriculture. The Market is a source of income to a substantial part of the population. It provides new opportunities for the landless people, and decreased their dependence on the Pakhtun landowners. However, these developments also benefited landowners. The value of their land (Market and residential) increased dramatically. Moreover, earlier, most of these landlords were having subsistent level of agricultural production but with increase in the value of market property and rents helped them accumulate wealth.<sup>64</sup> Businesses in the market are mostly occupied by immigrants, but the ownership (almost 50%) of the market remains with landowner clans.

The market in Batkhela also produced and consolidate the status and category of the immigrants as *Raghelay Khalaq* (those who migrated) and *Dokandar* (Shop keepers). Interestingly *Dokandar* is relatively high on the occupational hierarchy drawn by Barth through his study of the region (1959: 17). The landlords comprehended these people through their profession of *Dokandari* (shop keeping) and their status as non local, immigrants. The only available scheme of classification in form of categorical charter of occupational hierarchy would put them at the place of *Dokandar* category. However, landowners of Batkhela tailored a category which reflected both their immigrant status and profession of *Dokandari* and by doing so they would perhaps differentiate them from the existing *Dokandar* category. Such process also testifies that market in Batkhela is a 'site of identity construction' and offers categorical scheme in its division of labor, which Cornell and Hartmann succinctly puts, "Every society's division of labor offers a ready-made categorical scheme" (1998:160).

Social and ethnic boundaries in such a situation are reinforced by occupational and residential concentration (c.f Cornell and Hartmann, 1998). Residential concentration has been changing since the demographic change in the town of Batkhela

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<sup>64</sup> This was the situation of Batkhela only. In Thana there were very powerful landowners who had greater wealth on their disposal due to their agricultural production. Moreover, they were also getting *Majab* (subsidies) from the government since the British conquest (Barth, 1959b: 77-78).

and, in social demographic sense, due to the transformation of the village into a town. There were known quarters in Batkhela for different clans of the landlords and their dependents. Every quarter had *Hujra* and mosque. Nevertheless, slowly and gradually these quarters became a small part of the sprawling town. Currently, these quarters are a part of the central Batkhela (known as old Batkhela), while the town has spread to include Upper and Lower Batkhela with mix population.

An important arena where identity construction or maintenance is carried out is the arena of social institutions. Marriage is one such institution, which has far-reaching consequences. Intermarriages between social categories affect the boundaries making processes. In Malakand, intermarriages between various status categories were rare and predominantly relations were endogamous. Such “normative prohibition” designates people to eligible and ineligible categories or involves respective worthiness of groups, which results in boundaries reinforcement (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 171).

The overall conditions produced by these changes are differently interpreted in local narratives. Such interpretations are the consequence of the experiences different categories had of that particular time. For some the jirga time was a period of persecution, inequality and enslavement. It was colonial construct and devoid of Pakhtun values of egalitarianism and moral integrity. For others it was an ideal time of order, harmony and tribal values. It was this diametrically opposed interpretations that shaped a struggle between various categories to protect or dissolve the system.

### **The transition:**

The historical period between 1960 and 1980 can be categorized as transitional period in Malakand. Developments during this period were partly the product of social and economic changes taking place in the earlier period and partly the political change at the center of the State of Pakistan. This period corresponds to the rise and fall of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a charismatic political leader of Pakistan Peoples Party. His rise and fall had greater impact on Malakand than any other ruler, the country had ever been. However, more importantly, political changes in the region were preceded by growing local consciousness and effort to bring change in political setup.

This was the period when the market in Batkhela progressed dramatically. This development was parallel to the growing consciousness among the landless people about their rights partly informed by Bhutto's political activism. It was in this background that in mid 1960s an indigenous struggle was launched by the non landowner categories of Malakand under the leadership of Muhammad Khan against the political and social system in the region. First, they launched an association of businessmen known as *Bazar Anjuman*, to provide a platform for articulating their concerns and grievances.<sup>65</sup> Initially issues of concern were, rent increase, preemption, displacement, etc. Later it was replaced with Awami-khel organization, which was well organized, much articulate and more comprehensive in its scope. It was led by Muhammad Khan and masterminded by Pir Gul, both of immigrant status.

This movement constructed local history in its own particularistic way and linked social identification issues with the issue of rights, deprivation and prejudices against the majority by a minority. Awami-khel simultaneously consolidated the boundary between landowners and non landowners and blurred boundaries among the diverse non-landowning categories through a process of inclusivity. Although its most active membership was still among the immigrants (businessmen), the local categories other than immigrants extended their support covertly and overtly. Awami-khel achieved its goals when its objectives and interests converged with that of the State. A series of political and administrative reforms were introduced in Malakand from 1970s onward, through which the traditional system was abolished and political rights of citizenship, adult franchise and political participation were granted to everyone.

Parallel to these developments, was the rise of another very important movement known as *Kisanyan* (peasants) movement launched by the peasants of the region against the landowners.<sup>66</sup> Such movement in Malakand was not an isolated event and occurred in other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Bangash, 1972; Pakistan Forum Investigation

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<sup>65</sup> Barth emphasized that the discontent among the clients in Swat could organize only when alternative organizational model existed. He identified labor unions during Bhutto's tenure to have acted as organizational alternatives (1981: 148-150). However in Malakand such unions were preceded by *Bazar Anjuman*. This organization later transformed itself into a more broader organization of Awami-khel.

<sup>66</sup> This movement was linked to a national movement of laborers and peasants. The national movement was lead by a political party known as Mazdoor-Kisan party (workers-peasants party). Its leader from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Afzal Bangash in a speech to party convention in Lahore termed the clashes between *Kisanyan* and landlords as a class struggle (Bangash, 1972)

Report, 1972; Lindholm, 1996). In Swat it had greater ramifications as it involved the rise of non Pakhtun *Gojar* community against the powerful landlords (Lindhom, 1996; Barth, 1981). Such movement was informed by Z. A Bhutto's land reform rhetoric and was more violent in its methodology. *Kisanyans* attempted to claim lands, refuse to hand over the produce of the land on the pretext that they had ownership rights over the land. Armed clashes between Pakhtun landlords and their peasants followed. This brought the Pakhtun landowners in direct clash with their peasants. Consequently, categorical boundary became more salient between peasants and the landowners. Violent clashes between these two categories resulted in the loss of property and life. *Kisanyans* were more active in Batkhela where the landholding limit was low while they were less active in Thana where landholding was much greater and where landowners were more powerful. These events organized *kisanyans* into the most organized and articulated group among the others. Violent means were one of the reasons why the movement never merged with Awami-khel, which largely kept its struggle non violent. However, *Kisanyan* movement did extend its support to the cause of Awami-khel for both identified the landlords as usurpers. With the fall of Z. A. Bhutto the influence of these *kisanyans* decreased substantially. However, they still work as an interest group or 'ethnic association' (c.f Cornell and Hartmann, 1998) when 'Pakhtun' landlords challenge their interests.

Significant contribution to social change was made by the flow of remittances from the Middle East in late 1970's and mid 1980's. Such remittances were the consequence of Z. A. Bhutto's policy of encouraging labour export to Middle East in response to oil boom in Arabian peninsula. Local population particularly the landless categories benefited substantially from the money sent by their family members and consequently, generated social change. These changes also demonstrate how state policy can effect a social change in the Tribal Areas. The cash sent was invested in buying property, now open because of legal reforms, in businesses and buying consumer goods, etc. These remittances also improved standard of life especially for the poor. Also, the influx of this money meant more market activity in the region, more construction activity in housing sector and more investment in real estate. It generated more wealth for the business class, which was mostly constituted by immigrants. The spiral of economic change that such developments generated was multidimensional. Where such

change provided opportunities to immigrants businessmen, who accumulated wealth and purchased property in market, it also pushed landlords towards businesses. The landlords who were forced by their economic situation to start businesses were those who have lost substantial land property at the hands of immigrants. However, there were landlords who made wealth through their property in the market area, kept their ownership intact and at the same time joined businesses. They were beneficiaries in both ways. Moreover, *Kisanyan* (peasants) also accumulated wealth through these remittances and heavily invested in agricultural land. I was told by the representatives of this community that currently, every household of *kisanyan* has one or two younger members in Middle East. Therefore, categorical occupational roles under go a change in the face of these changes.

Barth argues that changes in clientship and patronage in 1960's Swat '*was one where landowners as political leaders were drastically weakened, but came out strengthened their superiority and security vis-a-vis tenants*' (1981: 143-144). However, Barth saw these changes in a society which was still agrarian but where non-landowners such as shopkeepers, muleteers and goldsmith were amassing wealth. The landowners were no more traditional political leaders competing for power through their wealth, while the State provided them security of their landownership.<sup>67</sup> The landless also gained 'freedoms' from 'personal arbitrariness and tyranny' (1981: 143-144). Moreover, the integration of the State of swat with the State of Pakistan brought down the 'whole traditional edifice of authority' (Barth, 1981: 146). However, in Malakand, landlords have been continuously losing their land assets through subdivisions and socio-economic need. Consequently, they have become more conscious of the changing situation and growing power and influence of immigrant category, and increasingly reluctant to sell their property despite increasing social and economic pressures to do so. Roughly 50% of the market property is still owned by the *Khanan*, although they are less than 10% of total population of Batkhela. To search for alternative source of income these landlords have now either joined government services or started businesses. Such initiatives are taken in face of extreme pressure from fellow clan

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<sup>67</sup> Previously landlords were responsible for the security of their land and ward. However, with the establishment of Swat State this task was taken over by the state.

members who still categorize business as non Pakhtun activity and admire those who have avoided businesses and limited themselves to agriculture.

Discussing various anthropological studies conducted in the region and recent social, political and economic changes visiting Malakand, I sought to explain that it is imperative to explore the historical context of the processes of categorization and boundaries making. The above discussion also suggests that categorization and boundaries making would take new shape in new situations. It underscores the need to reflect on the extent of change in these forms and patterns. Moreover, by exploring such processes and probing the ways social actors classify each other and manipulate ethnicity in changing situations, the dynamism in ethnicity can be exposed. Next section of the chapter will focus on significant processes of identification, categorization and boundaries making currently carried out in Malakand and will reflect on the extent of change in such processes.

### 3.2: Post Jirga Period (*Da Jirgey na Pas*)

Social, economic and political conditions of Malakand have affected the processes of categorization and identification. Currently, these processes demonstrate enormous effort put in by the social actors to get sense of the changing situation around them. In this way they have also shown consistency with the past by categorizing each other (drawing from previous patron-client categories) despite changing conditions which make previous caste like hierarchies non viable.

#### **‘Group identification’ and ‘Categorization’:**

Currently, the people of Malakand, in their social interaction categorize each other as *Khanan*<sup>68</sup> and *Ghariban*.<sup>69</sup> Previously the whole population was categorized into

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<sup>68</sup> *Khanan* is the plural of *Khan*. *Khan* is a title used extensively in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the Pakhtun landowner. However, it symbolizes feudalism as well as richness. A person is *khan* because he has *Jaidad* (property). *Khan* is also considered the title for the leader who is in commanding position due to his *Jaidad* and demonstration of Pakhtunwali by keeping *Hujra*. *Malik* is a chief of Pakhtun who is having land but is lower in status (cf. Barth, 1959b)] than the *Khan*. In Thana when I referred to the *khans* of Batkhela, the informants objected and said *Khans* are only in Thana, however, there are *Maliks* in Batkhela. They pointed out that these *Maliks* of Batkhela were members of *Jirga* but they could not compete with the *khans* of Thana in *Jaidad* and political influence since the very earlier time of Yousafzai settlement. Astonishingly, this opinion was held by the administrative officers in Malakand.

<sup>69</sup> *Ghariban* is the plural of *Gharib* meaning poor. Previously this word was alternated by the word *Faqir* (destitute) or *Hamsaya* (one who is in protection). The entire ‘non-Pakhtun’ (landless) population was previously called *Faqir-nama*. Bellew (1864:180-184) also confirms the usage of these words for the population other than ‘Afghans’.

hierarchal 'caste' groups (Barth, 1959b; Lindholme, 1982), which appears to have changed into more mutually oppositional categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban*.<sup>70</sup> These two categories may get other labels, in social interaction, such as *Khankhel*<sup>71</sup> and *Awami-khel*, or *Pakhtun* and *non-Pakhtun* respectively. While the first and most broadly used categorical labels of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* literally denote two classes of rich and poor, the later types of labels, refer to the tribal or ethnic identification. Surprisingly, class features do not define these two categories as there is substantial number of poor among the ranks of *Khanan* (rich class) and there are considerably rich among the ranks of *Ghariban* (poor) and the previous widespread believe in status exploitation, at least in Batkhela, is receding. The inherent aberrations in these titles make them metaphoric. However, in general sense these titles entail the social and political statuses associated with the Jirga time; and therefore, suggest continuity with the past. Ironically, such categorization is retained and internalized by those, who were previously opposed to it with a subjective sense of achievement and limited sense of occupational similarity. On numerous occasions, I heard prominent politicians, businesspersons and others addressing the lineage landlords as *Khan* in comparison to them calling themselves with variation as *Ghariban*, *Awami-khel* or simply '*aam khalaq*' (common people); while lineage landlords consistently called them as *Ghariban*, immigrants or non pukhtun. It appears that negotiating these status titles and the embedded categorization have been less an issue for both continue to keep the reciprocated oppositional relation intact. It also gives an impression that there is a broader consensus in these two categories, largely, on the use of these labels. At times people may avoid using these labels publicly, though they may not when the gathering and context is political.

Identification processes cannot be unilateral and as we demonstrated that various categories in Malakand have categorized each other in mutually related but oppositional pattern. It is however, imperative to show more vividly that how, and to what extent, such categorization is internalized and therefore, influenced self identification. It is

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<sup>70</sup> Although Lindholm referred to categorical hierarchies in Swat, he has reflected on how 'Pakhtuns' and the larger population are organized in superior-inferior relations and both define each other through such contrasting relations. He also elaborated on the openness of the system to all to compete and acquire these statuses (1982: 109). Barth also emphasized on the hierarchal arrangement of 'castes' but insisted, "...the most fundamental criterion of hierarchy in Swat may be that differentiating patrons from clients, or the conceptually 'free' from the 'ruled'..." (Barth, 1981: 152).

<sup>71</sup> These two labels are also used at times in Malakand.

argued that the broader consensus in the population is on the existence of two categories *Khanan* and *Ghariban*. Such consensus also means that *Khanan* see themselves as landowning, tribal status group which is organized in segmentary clans and having a lineage tracing back to the epical ancestor Yousaf. In comparison to such identification the *Ghariban*, both immigrants and ‘native’ occupational categories, have identified broadly with a landless<sup>72</sup>, non-lineage<sup>73</sup> and mostly business people. With these differences and similarities, these two also have a subjective sense of similarities within the collectivity. *Khanan* have subjective belief in their tribal and kinship solidarity while *Ghariban* have a subjective sense of achievement rooted in historical struggle against *Khanan*. These senses are necessary conditions of collective identification, as Jenkins put it, ‘people must have something intersubjective significant in common-no matter how vague, apparently unimportant or apparently illusory- before we can talk about their membership of a collectivity’(2008b: 102). Through such ‘external and internal dialectics’ (Jenkins, 2008b) categorical boundaries are drawn and maintained by social actors in Malakand. Moreover, the force and social relevance to these processes is given by the mutually oppositional nature of the categories and the boundary therefore communicates different meanings through contested interpretations (see below). Such oppositional character is maintained despite discernible sub divisions within these categories.

Another configuration of categories cut across the above broader categories and connects more with the changing demographic and economic conditions and situations. *Zaathi Khalaq* or *Zaai Khalaq* (indigenous or local people) is a label used by the *Khanan* (lineage landlords) for themselves and for their dependent occupational categories living and sharing the same space and time: while *Ragheley Khalaq* (migrated people) for immigrants. Being embedded in time, and not statuses, these categories are less oppositional in nature and therefore, contested. *Ghariban* challenge these labels on the pretext that every one in Malakand has migrated, it is just the matter of time that Yousafzai *Khanan* have come earlier. *Khanan* on the other hand refer to their arrival as conquerors and therefore, have right to the land and resources. *Ragheley*

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<sup>72</sup> Does not necessarily means non landowners, as many do own land such as *Kisanyan*, but the hereditary lineage based landownership.

<sup>73</sup> It refers to the fact that members of this category are organized into segmentary lineage and have forgotten or have no record of their descent lineage.

*Khalaq* (migrants) are further categorized into *Makhkey Ragheley Khalaq* (earlier migrants) and *Wrosto Ragheley Khalaq* (later migrants). The later category refers to people who have migrated after the socio-economic and political change in the region. Such contests also demonstrates the usefulness of mutual oppositional categorization. Oppositional categorization (based in historical social statuses) creates consensus and non oppositional or less oppositional categorization is less meaningful and often contested.

Sub-categorization in Malakand is often evident despite its less classificatory value and organizational ability. There is an almost deliberate effort at times from social actors to keep subcategories dormant to emphasize the salience of broader oppositional categories. Often this conscious endeavor makes subcategories mere labels. Nevertheless, during such sub-categorization, different markers such as tribe, profession, or geographical location are activated. Sub-categorization or divisions among the *Khanan* is tribal in nature and involves social organization based in segmentary tribal *khels* (clans), such as *Ibrahim Khel*, *Umer Khel*, *Madey Khel* in Batkhela and *Bazikhel*, *Ali Khel*, *Khan Kor Khel* etc in Thana. Similarly, often among *Ghariban* indigenous occupational categories and *Ragheley Khalaq* (immigrants) are differentiated. Immigrants are further categorized based on their business and place of origin. The occupational categories (called castes by Barth, 1959b) are less visible due to demographic changes (immigrants being too numerous in Batkhela) and economic changes. Due to attached stigma to their statuses (mostly the lower level categories such as hairdressers, weavers, leatherworkers, etc) they have either changed their professions, joined government services (those who are educated, particularly in Thana) or joined immigrants in businesses. With such changes in their economic conditions these people are disappearing. In Thana I was particularly told that many from *nai* (barber) category have opened their salons in the market and no longer depend on the landlords. The growth of the markets and large scale migration has required these groups to serve now a larger population and thus greater opportunities to earn money.

Migrants, being too numerous, make it difficult for Khans or others to remember identities (villages or places they have migrated from) they carry. Where their place of origin and previous categorical placement is too well known, Khans tailor a new category for to them; reflecting both their immigrant and previous categorical status.

For example, there are prominent business families in Batkhela that migrated from nearby Thana and Alladand, and were known to be from lower occupational categories (such as leatherworkers, weavers and mullahs). They are therefore, categorized both as immigrants but also (previously) leatherworkers, weavers and mullahs and are consistently reminded of their previous status in social interaction.<sup>74</sup> Interestingly some earlier migrants also buy into these kinds of categorizations i.e. a leading businessman Hafeez ullah (2008) while differentiated such families from themselves would say, '*this was their earlier Qasab (occupation)*'. Immigrants are also categorized, on the basis of their place of origin, into *Mardanyan* (people from Mardan district), *Dirojee* (people from Dir), *Bajaurian* (people from Bajaur), *Talashiyan* (people from Talash), *Chatraliyan* (people from Chatral) and *Swatiyan* (people from Swat), etc. These references are challenged at times because all immigrants have a strong sense of belonging to the place where they have lived their entire life (that is Batkhela). Though, some of them still keep their previous links and association, they still prefer to identify themselves with Batkhela.<sup>75</sup> Such sense of belonging is also in reaction to the khans who do not consider these people indigenous.

One configuration of sub-categorization is based primarily in Batkhela market. Being associated with the market such categorization is based in businesses. Families are associated with particular businesses and therefore they are referred to with those businesses. Such categorization is useful in carrying out business relations and become meaningful in situations characterized by market.

Among *Ghariban*, *Kisanyan* (peasants) is the only sub-category which has transformed from the earlier *Zamindar* (Barth, 1959b:17) category, by their recourse to violence.<sup>76</sup> It is also the only subcategory which has the potential to stand against khan

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<sup>74</sup> Inayat ullah khan (2008) told me that a member of one such business family was reminded, sarcastically, by our elder in a gathering stating 'my grandmother, God bless her, used to admire the cobbler skills of your father'. Therefore, reminding him his previous status.

<sup>75</sup> Dr. Anwar Alam (2008) and his family still keeps their links with Dir from where his family migrated decades ago. He said that his family prefers even to burry their dead in Dir. He disclosed that his extended family still lives in a village of Dir. However he said he would prefer to associate himself with Batkhela where he is born, raised and educated. Therefore, in hierarchies of available identities and categories he would prefer to associate with Batkhela identity.

<sup>76</sup> A particular clash between these farmers and the landlords in Thana is remembered as *kisani* problem. I heard many landlords saying *os kisani neshta ta* (*kisani* does not exist these days). Nevertheless, in Batkhela it is a continuous phenomenon.

out of the oppositional *khan-gharib* categories. However, *Kisanyan* have broadly identified with the *Ghariban* category. As mentioned earlier *Kisanyan* were inspired by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's (1969-1979) political rhetoric; and used violent means to achieve their goals. Organized in an association these *Kisanyans* in Batkhela, have raised arms against khans on different occasions. They negotiate their share in land selling price with khans. Failure of negotiation may erupt into armed conflict between the parties. Khans in Batkhela always complain against *Kisanyan* and see them exploiters for they exploit their deteriorating economic conditions (in face of increasing demands of *Gham Khadi*).<sup>77</sup> On the other hand these khans refer to improving economic conditions of *Kisanyan* (due to remittances and investment in land) and their status transformation from landless peasants to landowning peasants.<sup>78</sup> However, these peasants identify themselves and are categorized by others as *Kisanyan*.<sup>79</sup> Land selling trend is greater in Batkhela than it is in Thana. The *khans* in Batkhela are more concerned with *Kisanyan* than the immigrants now, primarily because immigrants challenged their social and political prerogatives while *Kisanyan* challenged the source of those prerogatives as well as identity such as land.

Categorization in Malakand is also situational and contextual. As explained earlier there are number of ways sub-categorical labels are attached to people inhabiting Batkhela. It is situation and context which highlights a particular sub-categorical identity to be enacted. A Khan will be a 'Yousafzai Pakhtun' or 'Khan' when compared with the immigrants or other occupational categories, while among the 'Yousafzai Pakhtuns' of his town he will be Umerkhel, Madykhel, etc. Similarly, immigrant in the company of *Khanan* will be an immigrant and 'non-Pakhtun', but when he is compared with other of his category, he is either *Diroje*, *Bajauri* (regional identity), or in the

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<sup>77</sup> Often these *khanan* are left with a small piece of land to sell and *Kisanyan* insist on their share. However, I was told by Saif ullah, that they negotiate their share and extend concessions in such cases. Unlike Batkhela in Thana no such practice exists although landholding is much higher in Thana.

<sup>78</sup> Much of the remittances are invested by *Kisanyan* in buying agricultural land. An active member of their association, Saif ullah (2008) explained this change in these words, "*Malikaans* (owners) are becoming *Ghariban* (poor) and *Ghariban* are becoming *Malikaan*". It is also noteworthy that business class is less interested in buying agriculture land, which is mostly bought by *Kisanyans*. *Khanan* left with *Jaidad* (property) prefer to maintain the land in market area than agricultural land, because of its higher economic and social value. An aged khan, Asfandyar Khan told me, '*Khani* (khan status) is in market land'.

<sup>79</sup> Saif ullah (2008) told me that in a public gathering the provincial minister from *Jamat-Islami* who happens to be khan, expressed that he is owns lesser land than that particular *Kisanyan* (singular of *Kisanyan*) but still he is called Khan while the other is referred to as *kisanay* or *Gaharib*.

market he will be the cloth or leather dealer. For a *Kisaney*, the most salient identity will be his own category of *Kisaney* or *Gharib*, although it has practically lost its character of landless farmer.

Political reforms (1970s) introduced in Malakand have considerable impact on the leadership roles, factional interests, and electoral politics. Political reforms introduced electoral politics by extending adult franchise to entire population and opened opportunities for previously disqualified strata of the society (*Ghariban*) to choose their representatives and run elections. Moreover, generally these reforms increased the State presence in the region. A closer look at the electoral politics and the pattern of leadership emerging in the region elaborates on the processes of categorization and identification.

Political parties are locally perceived to represent the interests of different categories. Although the elected representative of Pakistan People's Party is a khan from Thana, the customary political rhetoric of PPP has been serving the poor; therefore, perceived as voted into power by the working or labor class.<sup>80</sup> Awami National Party (ANP-Pakhtun nationalist party) on the other hand is locally represented by another khan from Batkhela and popularly known as the party of khans. Locally ANP is perceived to be the party of scoundrels, *gundas* (extortionists) *badmashans* (who exert pressure and threaten others) and exploiters.<sup>81</sup> Jamaat Islami has an image of religious party, however, I have observed that its leadership and active supporters, without any ideological inclination (see chapter 7), are mostly the influential business families in Batkhela. Recently, an intense debate within Jamaat Islami in Batkhela was about a local khan who secured provincial ministry (representing Jamaat) and was accused to have used his position to favor his kinsmen.

*Khan-Gharib* or *Pakhtun-Gharib* idioms have even shaped the political debate in Malakand. In Batkhela, particularly political rhetoric and discourse would prominently involve symbolic reference to the exploiters who exploit *Ghariban*. The metaphor of *Gharib* is so overwhelmingly associated with the previous power relations that wealthy

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<sup>80</sup> Labor here means those who do a variety of menial work in the market and not industrial labor.

<sup>81</sup> I was told by the political workers of Jamat Islami, PPP and even general public that its leadership employ such elements to influence voters.

businessmen (calling themselves *Gharbian*) get through and let the poor *Khanan* fall into the definition of *Gharib*. Similarly, 'Pakhtun' and *Gharib* labels carry so heavy a baggage that when ANP raises slogan of Pakhtuns it is perceived as the slogan of the khan (called exclusively Pakhtun- in previous power relations) for the khan.

Moreover, the categorization is not limited to the people inhabiting these two towns. In backdrop of all these developments the towns of Batkhela and Thana have developed different kinds of images, which subject these two places to categorization. Such categorization is again informed by the larger social categorization. Batkhela with its sprawling business and trade and its huge immigrated population has been categorized by Thana people, a place and society which has a business spirit and therefore subordinate status to Thana which is identified with political, agricultural and literary spirit. The people of these places are often recognized to reflect these two spirits. Batkhela people categorize Thana people aristocratic, conservative and *majab khware* (those who are paid by the State) and identify themselves as liberal, egalitarian and hospitable.<sup>82</sup> Thana people categorize Batkhela people to be *Dokandar* (shop keepers), illiterate and rootless (non local and too diverse) and identify themselves educated, enlightened, indigenous and having leadership qualities.

After discussing the historical developments, related socio-economic changes and the categorization processes in current time I intend to elaborate a bit on the relationship between historical discontent of the *Ghariban* and their simultaneous identification with the same values (Barth, 1981). Barth recognized the discontent between the 'patron' and 'client' categories in his earlier work (1959b). In his later work (1981: chapter 7) he focussed more on the character of this discontent (being both class and cultural). He argues that discontent was not only with the 'poverty and toil', subjugation and maltreatment, but also because of kowtowing before anybody's authority against Pakhtun ideals of pride, autonomy and assertion. Therefore, he insists that such discontent can only be understood if studied from cultural perspective and not class (1981: 147). He adds,

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<sup>82</sup> Powerful landlords have been paid by British administration in response to their loyalty to British India and later the practice continued by the state of Pakistan. Therefore, Batkhela people construct them to be people who have compromised their autonomy and honor.

The zest with which such persons plunge into the role, the care with which they orchestrate their performance to exhibit recklessness, autonomy, assurance and tactical shrewdness, indicate that these are properties which the person values and wishes to embody. In a life situation where such modes of expression were frustrated or could only rarely and imperfectly be realized, yet where others were given the opportunity to excel, one has no reason to doubt the strength of discontent, or the intensity of awareness of it (Barth, 1981: 147).

Barth added an interesting comparison of contradictions such as discontent and admiration or identification, elaborates on Swat society. He explains that there was discontent among the clients, as explained earlier, but there was also admiration for the strength, greatness, glory and assertiveness of the khans with an added sense of justice in mutual beneficial patron-client relationship. Therefore, there was ‘marked identification with existing leadership and institutions, and dissatisfaction with them’. He adds, “*The dissatisfaction was however, conceptualized not as an awareness of common interests with other unfortunates with a vision that suppression could be eliminated, but rather as a frustration of one’s own drive to achieve influence, wealth and rank*” (1981: 150-151).

Lindholm elaborated on it further by asserting that the clients accepted the same ‘value system’ and were aspiring to be and live like the ‘Pukhtun’ landlords (1982: 110).

Some of my informants from *Khanan* put this argument in a context that manifests the social classification and the changing from of statuses. A young khan, Yousaf Khan (2008) in Batkhela said, ‘*If Pakhtun status was a skin on sale at Batkhela market it would have been, certainly, worth hundreds of thousands*’.

The statement was meaningful enough to indicate that the status of Pakhtun was still aspired for. Nevertheless, it has two implied consequences first, the status has lost its achieved character (cf. Barth 1959b) and is shaping into an ascribed status. This implication would of course weaken the arguments made by Lindholm and Barth regarding the hierarchal mobility and aspiration for the rank of ‘Pakhtun’. Second, it will have greater consequences for the argument I make in the next section and the coming chapter, probing why would *Ghariban* discredit behavior emanating from

ascribed status of *Khanan*. If they have to discredit such behavior why they would seek the status which would produce the same despised behavior as Lindholm argues they did previously. I therefore, argue that the *Khanan* status after becoming ascribed has also become unachievable and certainly to my understanding is not sought by *Ghariban*, rather confronted with reorganization of statuses and abolishing of hierarchies (see also chapter 5). Only then it was possible to conceive the meaning of the boundaries between *Khanan* and *Ghariban*.

Barth (1981) recognized that clients had discontent for deprivation and failure to be autonomous, proud and assertive; but they kept abusing their elders for such conditions and were looking for an opportunity to achieve the rank and status of khans (p. 150-151). However, I assume that there was no such desire on the part of these clients, the desire was of equality and not the rank and status of a khan. Malakand case demonstrate such desire on the part of *Ghariban*. Moreover, difficulty in hierarchal mobility is demonstrated by various cases where categorical ascription is not affected by wealth, power or changing economic conditions. *Kisanyan* have become landowners, immigrants have accumulated greater wealth, occupational categories are vanishing and previous landlords have successively lost their lands, however, despite losing some hierarchal character, the categorical ascription (*Khanan* and *Ghariban*) continues to draw from previous categorical scheme. Nevertheless, in significant way categorical ascription became oppositional in character.

Barth insists that the castes in Swat think of themselves as ‘highly distinct and subject to different distinctive standards and expectations’ but share ‘most basic cultural premises and value orientations’ (1981:153). I have to see how the two categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* think of themselves as different and how they simultaneously, share the same cultural values. Do they keep different standards and expectations as was the case with castes in Swat? Why would they judge each other with the same behavioral values and standards after the demise of traditional social organization? All these questions shape the following chapter which focuses on how both categories keep the performance expectations from each other taking from the broader Pakhtun cultural values; but would also identify the social conduct of each other being disoriented.

## Conclusion

Higher degree of immigration, development of Batkhela market and related economic changes, the inflow of remittances from abroad, the emergence of *Awami-khel* movement and Bhutto's ascend to power and finally successive political administrative reforms (since 1970) have generated changes that have shaped collective identification in Malakand. These changes have necessitated to probe intra-ethnic processes or internal processes largely ignored by the literature. Focusing on these internal processes, I have argued that Pakhtuns in Malakand categorize each other internally and maintain categorical boundary. The two most prominent categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* emerge from such processes. These two categories are related to each other through reciprocated identification of 'us' and 'them'.

Through this succinct account I have attempted to demonstrate that social and economic changes since 1970 have greater repercussions for the entire population. I have demonstrated the ways in which social actors in Malakand have reorganized into categories in reciprocated and oppositional manner. Hierarchical structure of categories is successively transforming into an organization in a dynamic way where continuity with the past is established by drawing from previous categorical arrangement. However, the transformed categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* keep mutually antagonistic relationship despite losing previous patron-client character. The earlier social statuses which were held by a 'value system' shared by both patron and clients (Lindholm, 1982; Barth, 1981) are becoming irrelevant in Malakand example. The following chapter will elaborate on how such antagonistic relationship is maintained through conveying of meanings across the boundary. It will also reflect how the contested meaning of the categorical boundary is consequential for aspired 'value system'.

## Chapter 4

### **Categories, boundary and contested meanings**

In this chapter I postulate that *Khanan* and *Ghariban* interact through social institutions. In this interaction they typify certain patterns of behavior and social conduct. The behavioral pattern associated with *Khanan* in Malakand is 'self pride' and 'ego' and that with *Ghariban* is a 'sense of achievement'. The behavioral attribute of *Khanan* is predicated on ascribed status in descent, lineage, landownership and glorious past. The 'sense of achievement' in *Ghariban* is the product of their struggle against the 'perverted' and 'exploitative system' (previous Tribal system in Malakand- see ch. 6) and success in businesses. Such behavior is also reflected through the cultural institutions they maintain. Furthermore, meanings conveyed by behavioral patterns across the categorical boundary are contested. While *Khanan's* 'self pride' and 'ego' is constructed as 'arrogance', 'attempted dominance', 'usurpation' and 'condescending', *Ghariban* 'sense of achievement' is constructed as 'thanklessness', 'betrayal' and 'devoid of Pakhtun ideals'. Such processes are also informed by the experiences and memories of the past. Moreover, without an organized effort, equality or inversion of hierarchy (components of 'transvaluation') frustrate the initiation of hierarchies in Malakand.

Barth (1969a) focus on inter-ethnic boundaries has been broadly considered the hallmark of anthropological inquiry of the recent time. Although his work represented a shift in the anthropological approach to ethnic groups, I argue that the case of Pakhtuns in Malakand require to focus on intra-ethnic processes that gets complex with socio-economic changes. Moreover, these intra-ethnic processes are also consequential for broader ethnic identity (see chapter 6). In illustrating the boundary making and contested meaning between social categories I will emphasize that Pakhtuns meaningfully get sense of the changing social and political world.

I will first discuss succinctly some institutional contexts of boundary making in Malakand. I will then take up how *Khanan* and *Ghariban* typify behavioral pattern and demonstrate that in social conduct reflected through them. Some prominent cultural

institutions are focused on to see the typified conduct. Finally the discussion will focus on contested meanings conveyed by the social behavior and informed by historical experience. It will finally be related to the process of equality and inversion in hierarchy initiated by *Ghariban*.

#### 4.1: Institutional contexts of boundary making

Social classification as discussed in previous chapter generate boundary which are then acted out in social world. Such acting out is an endorsing process. Social actors interact in ‘institutionalized contexts’ (Jenkins, 2000: 14) which are also ‘identity construction sites’ where ‘boundaries are established’ (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 153-154). To study the behavioral aspect of boundary making as Wimmer (2008) emphasized we need to elaborate on some of these construction sites. Intermarriages, *gham-khadi* (sorrow and joy celebrations) and friendships are some of the social institutional arrangements identified in this study, which shape interaction.

Intermarriages are not common, if not rare between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* categories. Social and economic changes have pressurized *Khanan* to give their daughters in marriage to *Ghariban*, who have either accumulated greater wealth or secured high ranking jobs in government. Although, such pressures yield at few occasions, but never become a norm, for the associated *Peghor* (taunt) turns such action into a social taboo (see below).

*Hindu me de mere ye kho khwarak mey de khwage ye*<sup>83</sup>

‘Let my husband be a Hindu, for I should eat well’. (Explanation: It is considered highly unfavorable to marry a person who is outside the religion Islam such as a Hindu, and to do so for the money is even more despicable. This proverb explains the behavior of a person who gets to the depth of disgrace by choosing material gains).

Therefore, endogamy continues to be a prominent social practice shaping social relations between various categories.

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<sup>83</sup> Shared by Professor Nawaz Tair (2008).

*Gham-Khadi* (Sorrow and Joy) celebrations have become an important principle of Pakhtunwali (Ahmed, 2006: 03). Amineh Ahmed (2006) argues that it connects participants into an ongoing social form '*tlal-rathlal*' also demonstrating 'reciprocity' which endorses social relationship (p. 43) and manifest Pukhtun form of exchange such as *badal* meaning revenge (p. 141). Lindholm observes,

*"Significantly, the Pukhtun say of a family with whom they have a close relationship: we go to their weddings (khadi) and funerals (ghem)"* (1982: 131).

*Khanan* revealed at several occasions about their relationship with *Ghariban* in these words,

*"We do gham-khadi with Ghariban but do not intermarry"*.

However, such *gham-khadi* is limited to friendship circles, neighborhoods and male members of the *Ghariban*. Interestingly the performance on *gham-khadi* is also gendered performance. Both categories invite only the male members of the other category to these celebrations. This posits that *gham-khadi* being an institution where categories are produced through gendered relationship.

Lindholm argues that friendships being an ideal among Pakhtuns, cannot be found among the equals (kin) or dependents (inferiors). Although he observed that often those who are inferiors are made friends by the khans, friendship as an ideal demands a person who should be out of the his social setting and should involve complete surrender, trust and 'love' (1982: chapter 7). Friendship in Malakand is diverse and established across the categorical boundary but thoroughly evaluated. Friends are drawn from various institutions such as kinship, businesses, schools, literary circles, services, etc. Such networks, in the absence of any substantial kin rivalry and violence have become heterogeneous. However, the heterogeneity of these friendship does not mean that they are free from scrutiny. Friendship ties are often scrutinized through family intervention. Although friendship circles are not sharply defined by the existing categories but well informed by social categorization. Based in mutual respect, friendship circles are active arena where categorical behavior is demonstrated. But this may not mean mutual respect extended to equals; friends can be unequals but supportive. The conundrum that ideal friendship cannot be with the equals or

dependents (Lindholm, 1982, chapter 7), remains intact but the rule of mutual respect and support guides it. *Hujra* is a site where friendship meetings take place. As they are mostly maintained by *Khanan* such sites not only host friendships but generate cognitive processes confirming the social statuses and boundaries.

Finally, kinship being an important and enduring source of 'primary identification' individuals may learn at childhood (Jenkins, 2008b: 86-87) and carry during adulthood. Kinship ties bind *Khanan* into a tribal network, or relational category, providing, socially the most visible categorical ascription of 'them' and their own identification as 'us'. *Ghariban* on other hand through its non lineage organization, diverse economic activity, diverse origin have been united by their relation to the *Khanan* category. Such relations, as discussed above, are not of interdependence, patron-client but antagonistic. They have also through their experience of change in the region accumulated a sense of belonging to a category characterized by non traditional, market activity and the town (Batkhela). In social interaction surname 'khan' carries the kinship membership. The fact that most of *Khanan* category add surname of khan and call (in Batkhela only) each other with a little stress on their surname to invoke the cognitive processes of; *who is that person? how should he behave?* Naming is central to kinship and significant contributor to selfhood (Jenkins, 2008b: 86) but its usage in daily interaction in Batkhela alludes to its centrality in drawing boundaries. From prominent political personalities, to commoners among *Khanan* in Batkhela use the surname khan. Interestingly, *Ghariban* often call a person from *Khanan* category as 'khan' or with little extension '*khanjee*' in their interaction with them.<sup>84</sup> Adding surnames by public figures relative to previous occupational statuses are also in use in Malakand.<sup>85</sup>

Barth's emphasis in his later work (1981) on the changing life circumstances and life experiences and argue that they are dynamic processes affecting social and political

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<sup>84</sup> At times where there is surname of 'khan' associated with the name of a *Gharib*, it is avoided by the *Khanan*. Muhammad Khan (leader of Awami-khel) was referred to, on numerous occasions by the *Khanan* as Muhammad only. Awami-khel supporters interpreted this behavior insulting and pointed out that it was very common to address Muhammad Khan in this manner when he was alive. Prominent public representatives (local councilors) among *Ghariban* are not addressed with the surname 'Khan' such as Irfan Nazim (2008), Asad Nazim (2008), etc. while such public representatives from *Khanan* such as Arbaz Khan (2008) are always addressed with their surname 'khan'.

<sup>85</sup> Abu Zar (2008) uses Syed and Raheem (2008) uses Qasab surnames.

organization. He argues that despite earlier distinctiveness of the castes, currently they can be explained not through their distinctive values but through the changing life circumstances and life experiences of its members. Previously castes were characterized by shared opportunities and shared life situation for its members and therefore 'highly' distinctive and meaningful identification (self and others). However, when life circumstances changed life experiences of castes members also differed from each other; therefore, castes and categories become less salient and less clear to actors. It is thus, life circumstances and life experiences which shape caste features and require investigation. From the example of leadership castes Pakhtuns and Saints, he concluded that the 'bifurcation and complementarity of leadership roles' is the product of life conditions and not something which Pakhtuns seek for as if it derived from Pakhtun 'theory or ideology of legitimacy or government'. Moreover, when conditions changed this 'organization of leadership roles become less clear and marked' but the system is not sought after (p. 157-164).

The emphasis in both Lindholm (1982) and Barth's (1981) work is on the shared values by the whole population in Pakhtun regions, such sharing of values is consistent in time and space. Although both recognized the decreasing differences in various 'caste' or occupational categories and blurring of boundaries, they have not forcefully elaborated on the breaking of hierarchical statuses, saliency of boundary between previous patron and client categories through reorganization of subcategories. With such internal processes roles expectations are not associated with statuses for statuses are no more hierarchal and the behavior continues to be judged through the very basic features of Pakhtun culture.

Barth and Lindholm would continuously see the change with in the system thought to be based in Pakhtun ideals and values. I argue that the changing circumstances and categorization processes can be comprehended if we more vividly, differentiate between cultural values such as autonomy and assertiveness and the system organized on such values. The values remain intact but these social and political organization reshapes. We also need to differentiate between cultural values and institutions. Moreover, the cultural institutions such as *Melmastia*, *Hujra*, *Pardah* etc need revisiting to know how they dispense the cultural values of autonomy and equality, etc (cf. Edwards, 1990).

In this manner we may explain the length and breadth of change in more comprehensive way than previously suggested (cf. Barth 1981: Lindholm, 1982). For grasping the extent of change I have focused on the boundary making within ethnic group and their interpretation in social interaction. In Malakand the 'discontent' among the *Ghariban* was dissociated not from the values of social organization but from the systems of organization. I insist that by reorganization of categories, abolishing of hierarchy and keeping categorical position despite acquiring or losing wealth strongly demonstrate that cultural values, cultural institutions and social system identified by Barth and Lindholm, needs revisiting. I concede that the endeavor to accumulate wealth and status through mobility upward in hierarchy of castes (individual or collective) has been irrelevant in Malakand. Data from Malakand refers to adjustments to social and political changes and discontinuities in social organization envisaged by previous anthropological studies. Such readjustments and discontinuities have consequences for social values as well. It is also imperative to mention here that in a mutually reinforcing manner social conduct and particular behavioral patterns are generated by categorization process that also involve institutional interaction and behavioral pattern in turn consolidate categorical boundary. These themes are explained in the coming section of this chapter.

#### 4.2: Behavioral Patterns and boundary meaning

Jenkins argues that, '*Similarity and differences reflect each other across a shared boundary. At the boundary, we discover what we are in what we are not, and vice versa* (2008b: 103). Categorization and identification processes generate boundary between various categories. Such boundary making is facilitated by institutional configuration and distinctive behavioral attributes. In this section of the chapter, discussion will focus on these pattern of behavior demonstrated and interpreted by the members of different categories. I argue that boundaries are less status oriented in the absence of castes and hierarchies but more rigorously maintained through meaning system that is informed by social conduct. These meanings emanate from behavioral patterns typified by *Khanan* and *Ghariban* and become source of contention when interpreted variously by the other side. Moreover, these behavior patterns interact with cultural institutions in a dynamic way to elaborate the importance of the relationship between cultural values and

institutions. They validate what Cornell and Hartman (1995) argued that culture too is the site of identity construction (p. 173-189).

### **Ego and achievement: defining behavioral patterns:**

Boundary making involves an important social element or behavioral dimension. Such social or behavioral dimension refers to '*everyday networks of relationships that result from individual acts of connecting and distancing*' and provides 'scripts of action' to individuals (Wimmer, 2008: 09). Social interaction in Malakand is characterized by behavioral traits or performance associated with the two broader categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* and the meaning such behavior communicates which I know as meaning of boundary. Therefore, what is getting important in social world is the particular behavior demonstrated by various categories.

In their daily interactions and experiences different categories in Malakand come across differences, enact their assumptions and convey messages about the choice of identities (cf. Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 184). These interactions and daily experiences mostly take place in the markets or social institutions such as schools, job location, literary associations, friendship circles, etc. However, there are sustained relationship established through formal and informal social institutions.

The defining behavioral attribute of *Khanan* is a high 'sense of superiority' which takes the form of 'Ego' in interaction with others ('them'). Similarly, the defining behavioral attribute of *Ghariban* is a 'sense of achievement'. The ego or self-pride of *Khanan* springs from their believe that they have been the Yousafzai conquerors who ruled this region until very recently and the pride inherited in their previous 'Pukhtun' status. Moreover, they refer to the blood right or ascribed status rather than achieved status, which was a necessary condition for achieving and maintaing 'Pakhtun' (chief- leadership) status in Swat society (Barth, 1959b). Lindholm did refer to growing insecurity among the young khans in Swat who insisted that '*being Pukhtun is a matter of blood, and not land*' (1982:109). Similarly, Barth in his revisit to Swat observed that 'non-Pakhtuns' have been complaining of 'Pakhtuns' considering themselves '*more capable and fit to lead, take responsibility and dominate decisions*' (1981: 157).

Interestingly, the Ego of *Khanan* is interpreted into a very strong (rather offensive) metaphor by the *Ghariban*, that is, *Nasha* (literally meaning ‘addiction’, but conveys the meaning of arrogance). This *Nasha* (arrogance) is often reported by the *Ghariban* informants, who disapprovingly consider it a barrier in the relationship between these two categories or behavioral trait that differentiates ‘them’ from us’. Interestingly, *Nasha* is not just observed in the *Khanan* though it is the defining attribute of Khan in the perception of *Ghariban*. Some *Kisanyan* and the immigrants informed me that, ‘there are people among us who also display *Nasha*’ when they accumulate wealth (Saif ullah, interview, 2008; Afrasiyab Khan, interview, 2008). However, where such *Nasha* of *Ghariban* is termed unfortunate, the *Nasha* always emanates from *Khanan*. *Khanan*’s *Nasha* is less in wealth and more in their inherited status. Very few of them are well off in comparison to immigrants and many have been living rather poorly. Barth (1959b: 79) earlier referred to division of world in Swati idiom into two kinds of people; *mor sari*, (satisfied men) and *wuge sari* (hungry man). The chiefs from the definition were *mor* and the clients were *wuge*. From this perspective change in economic conditions of *Khanan* was explained by Asmat ullah khan (2008) in Batkhela,

*Ne wuge de, ne mor de; ne pa jama pet de, ne lagher de*

(Neither are they *wuge* (hungry) nor are they *mor* (satisfied): Neither do they have much to wear nor are they stripped or naked).

Therefore, despite deplorable economic conditions *Nasha* is more prominently displayed by the poor among the *Khanan* or those who have almost lost their ancestral land.

The sense of ‘achievement’ in *Ghariban* springs from their earlier experience of struggle against the ‘exploitative system’ and successes in business. This behavioral trait is received by *Khanan* as an ‘act of betrayal’ and therefore, the achieved status is constructed as ‘thanklessness’. Asmat ullah Khan (2008) complained about immigrants in these words,

*“We gave them shelter, food and even security, when they had none of these; and look what they did to us, they cheated us, they are indeed thankless people”.*

Edwards referred to the principle of *Nanawate* where outsiders would be accommodated and the fact that through *Nanawate* the reciprocal status be maintained i.e guest- host. However, if *Nanawate* was sought by those who fled from their tribe as was the case with many immigrants that would require relegating immigrant to client status. When *Khanan* said they cheated us they meant to say they disrespected the contract reached at the time of asylum. Similarly when *Ghariban* refuted the ego of *Khanan* they refer to their success in businesses and decreasing dependence on *Khanan* (during Awamikhel struggle and afterwards). This could be the reason they demanded equality.

Aurangzeb Khan (2008) in Batkhela revealed a story of a wealthy immigrant who always remained thankful and appreciative of what the people of Batkhela did for him. That particular immigrant told him, *'I am so overwhelmed and thankful to the people of Batkhela that I wish I could clean its streets with my beard'*. Through such narrations the behavioral expectations from immigrants are set in where the 'sense of achievement' is negated by a requirement of appreciating the kindness and large heartedness of the *Khanan*. The behavior of the *Khanan* was to give shelter to these immigrants or *Ghariban* was thought to be in line with Pakhtun ideal of *Nenavati* (shelter) and hospitality and the expectation from the immigrants was to have appreciated and endorsed the leadership or dominance of the *Khanan*. Unlike what Barth and Lindholm would argue the achievement of immigrants to have accumulated wealth and secured freedoms were discredited by *Khanan*. On other hand the 'ego and 'self-pride' of *Khanan* is not endorsed by the *Ghariban*. The expectations from them were of equal opportunities for all, typical of Pakhtun acephalous and egalitarian society (although such principles are traditionally limited to kinship segments). Similarly, the hierarchical status were conceived to be inequalities brought in by the *Khanan* and not the consequence of their own doing (see Barth 1959b:24-25 and 1981:151 for the cursing of peasants in Thana).

Therefore, in social interaction, the 'ego' of *Khanan* and the 'achievement' of the *Ghariban* are the most prominent behavioral pattern, which are perceived in the meaning of '*Nasha*' (of *Khanan*) and the 'thanklessness' (of *Ghariban*) by these two categories. Such overwhelming is the association of these behavioral pattern and their associated meaning with both categories that the maintenance of cultural institutions are taken as if they manifest these fundamental patterns. Following paragraphs reflect on

some of cultural features observed during fieldwork and elaborate on how such features were interpreted as reflection of ‘ego’ and ‘self achievement’ or ‘*Nasha*’ and ‘thanklessness’. Edwards (1990) has emphasized on the contextual operation of these cultural features and values. He argues that it is imperative to see to what extent else features “reflect core values of the culture” (1990: 98). I have to elaborate whether these identity features reflect autonomy, self determination, etc.

***Melmastiya (hospitality): Hujra (guest house) and Dukan (shop):***

*Melmastiya* (hospitality) is an important Pakhtunwali feature widely practiced by Pakhtuns. The site of hospitality traditionally has been the male guest house, *Hujra*.<sup>86</sup> However, in Batkhela an alternative site *dukan* (shop) is increasingly used by *Ghariban* for the purpose to conduct hospitality. *Khanan* tend to demonstrate more ostentatiously their hospitality through *Hujra* keeping. It is also one of the most symbolically meaningful site of particularization of behavior among the *Khanan*. *Hujra* had significant political function in Pakhtun society (Barth, 1959b:80) but its cultural and social function was equally significant (Ahmed, 1976: 65; Lidholm and Meeker: 1981: 445, 446, 468). In Malakand where *Hujra* has lost most of its previous political functions of ‘gift distribution’ (Barth, 1959b: 80), still retains some of its social and political role. Besides its function of distributing patronage, in very limited sense during elections, it has primarily become the site of hospitality to friends and guests. It has, thus, become a training institution for the younger generation of *Khanan*, where the ideal Pakhtun behavior is consummated. It guides and teaches the youth, *how to behave in social interaction*, mostly through the diverse friendship gatherings in *Hujra*. Nurturing a particular character, it reinforces belief in *who is who* and consequential boundary making and maintaining. Wealthy businessman and *Khanan* such as Fareed Khan and his sons would keep *Hujra* and make it a point to entertain their friends and kin in their *Hujra*. Immigrants may find the receding functions of *Hujra* and would consider it equal to other sites of hospitality such as *Baitek* or shop. *Hujras* are kept with much more care and grandeur in Thana. *Khanan* in Thana are very particular about keeping it functional and use it symbolically.

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<sup>86</sup> Those who don’t own *Hujra* use *betak*, single detached room of the house to serve guests.

However, *Hujra* is increasingly perceived by immigrants as status symbol of khan and a site where an idle khan is sitting and bragging. Although, some rich immigrants keep *Hujras*, most would assert rather naively that, ‘*our meeting place (site of hospitality) has become our shop or the site of our business*’. Some would even question, why *Hujra* is so different from any other place when, its functions are reduced to hospitality alone. They would insist that most of their friends and guests visit their shops and are therefore served there. I also observed that often a place within the shop or an extended portion is used to entertain guests. Moreover, regular meetings, often political, may take place at shops or site of business.<sup>87</sup> *Dukan* being a site where hospitality or other social and political gathering are held also symbolically represent the achievement of *Ghariban* vis-a-vis *Khanan*.

The comparison of *Hujra* and *Dukan* (shop) could be useless otherwise, but the shrinking of *Hujra* functions (to the activity of hospitality only) makes it imperative in the perception of social actors to see other sites in its image. Moreover, the perception of *Hujra* being meaningful only when seen in its current functioning. When such functioning is limited to doing hospitality, *Dukan* (shop) can equally perform the activity. This also posits, the changing meaning of space brought forth by social transformation of Pakhtuns.

Changing meaning of space however, does not entail that *Hujra* be renounced by *Ghariban* businessmen. Certainly some businessmen keep *Hujra* and some khan entertain their guests in *Dukan* (when they are in the market doing business), but they perceive these institutions and interpret their functions in the broader behavioral attributes of the two categories ‘ego’ and ‘self achievement’. One way of looking at this relationship of *Melmastia* and *Hujra* is to distinguish these two institutions. *Melmastia* being a central feature or institution of Pakhtun culture has to be different from *Hujra*, which only represent a space that embodies *Melmastia*. However, *Hujra* could be more than just doing *Melmastia*, it can perform a variety of functions as discussed above. However, what is important in the current situation in Malakand is the symbolic use of *Hujra* by *Khanan*. Also is the perception of *Ghariban* that *Hujra* and *Melmastia*

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<sup>87</sup> A leading cloth dealer in Batkhela proudly revealed that his shop is a meeting place of various political figures of the town, despite the fact that his family does keep a *Hujra*. However, he revealed that mostly *Hujra* is used for *Gham-Khadi* (sorrow and joy) and his family members get little time to sit in *Hujra*.

represent the dominant status of *Khanan* rather than the values of equality and well being. Therefore, in *Ghariban* perception *Melmastia* and *Hujra* of *Khanan*, as institutions, do not maintain the values that they should embody (cf. Edwards, 1990: 74-75). Such a perception also indicates the current understanding of *Melmastia* among the *Ghariban* as an institution that manifest equality.

While *Khanan* demonstrate hospitality with more vigor, I have found the whole population extremely hospitable to their guests. Hospitality is perhaps one of the most pertinent and general behavioral traits on which the whole population is evaluated. My visit to an ordinary laborer's *beitak* (guest room) or to an affluent businessman and *khan* would reveal the same enthusiasm in and display of *Melmastiya*. However, hospitality of *Khanan* would go an extra mile at the cost of economic pains (most of the time) to match the ideal Pakhtun behavior and demonstrate their status. Often this would be seen by *Ghariban* as a flamboyant display. Hospitality has also an economic function, although it is never sought after. It is also rigorously pursued by *Khanan* in their business relations. Nadeem (2008), a business representative of a private firm, disclosed that he found the family of Fareed Khan (2008) extremely hospitable, something he did not see in other communities of Batkhela. Although hospitality brings them some business benefits as the guests visiting often become part of friendship network, it is usually a conscious endeavor for non-economic gains. Therefore, as the guest puts it, there is a lot of *khaloos* (intensely warmhearted intentions) in such hospitality.

### **Honor (Bravery): Business and Landownership:**

The behavioral traits of 'ego' and 'self achievement' are reflected through the conduct of Pakhtuwnali features honor and bravery. The immigrants in particular and *Ghariban* in general, interpret honor and bravery in challenging perceptions which they thought were the product of perverted traditions and system. They challenged the odds by adopting business as profession. By doing so, they established their autonomy and self-determination so closely associated with Pakhtun sense of honor.<sup>88</sup> Their success in business and the comparative failure of *Khanan* in business also consolidates their sense of achievement. However, *Khanan* continue to find landownership a traditional source

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<sup>88</sup> Edwards reported that Pakhtuns in trucking business in Pakistan demonstrate their personal autonomy through such activity (1990: 69).

of Pakhtun honor and autonomy and impress upon immigrants to have allowed them to practice business. Although many of *Khanan* are turning to businesses, their preference usually is to keep the possession of their ancestral land. Such conscious conduct substantiate their 'ego' and provide platform to attack the failure of the *Ghariban* in terms set by the previous system. In this way the values of self determination and self definition which are primary to Pakhtun identity (Edwards, 1990) are expressed through landownership (by *Khanan*) and businesses (by *Ghariban*).

***Gham-Khadi* (sorrow and Joy):**

*Gham-Khadi* (sorrow and joy) celebrations are an important part of Pakhtunwali features. Being a central institution, it has become a site where behavioral attributes ego and self achievement are enacted by various categories in Malakand. Ahmed (2006) argues that it connects participants into an ongoing social form '*tlal-rathlal*' also demonstrating 'reciprocity' which endorses social relationship (p. 43) and manifest Pukhtun form of exchange such as *badal* meaning revenge (p. 141). Moreover, despite the intense emotional nature of *gham-khadi*, these are the occasions of performance evaluation. Lavishness demonstrated at such occasions is a consequence of competition between close kin and those who participate.

In Malakand the burden of performance on *gham-khadi*, one of the central features of *Pakhtunwali* is shared by both categories. However, I found *Khanan* more complaining about such display of performance. They have been worried by the trend of extravaganza in performing and competing among the close kin to have drained their resources, particularly when such resources are limited. *Siali* (rivalry-competition) is an idiom of reciprocity between equals, as it is mostly within the kinsmen (Edwards, 1990: 70). Such *siali* in *gham-khadi* burdens *Khanan* for they sell their most valuable possession, both social and economic, i.e land. Many of them complain that they are selling their property to do *gham-khadi*. The necessity to do so is inherent in the concept of *siali* which would mean, most importantly, equality and competition within the kin but display of performance equal to the status they have in relation to *Ghariban*. Although, *Ghariban* spend on *gham-khadi*, *Khanan* assert boastfully that only they have been doing *gham-khadi* on higher level than the *Ghariban* and present it as a proof for loss of property. *Khanan* through *gham-khadi* keep the tribal reciprocity, but they also

replace the violent *badal* or agnatic rivalry through such a performance. However, this does not mean the absence of *badal* killings but indicate that it is a receding phenomenon.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, it is also important to see how *gham-khadi* is extended to non kinsmen and how it reflects the ego of *Khanan*. My informants in Batkhela told me that the behavior of *Khanan* regarding *gham-khadi* is changing for they mostly limited it to kinsmen but they now include *Ghariban*.

Interestingly the performance on *gham-khadi* is also gendered performance. Both categories invite only the male members of the other category to these celebrations. This posits that *gham-khadi* being an institution where categories are produced through gendered relationship. Here *siali* also becomes the kin's affair, and the evaluation on performance is limited to rival affinities. *Khanan* also fail to extend at times their *gham-khadi* circle to *Ghariban*. It is at times complained by immigrants that *khan* establish superiority through such relations. Although *Khanan* deny this but they insist that their *gham-khadi* is limited to neighbors and friends among *Ghariban*.<sup>90</sup> On other hand *Ghariban* often refer to how they were honored by the visit of *Khanan* to their *gham-khadi*, which was seldom a practice before. Therefore, manifesting change in relations and establishing sense of achievement in *Ghariban*. Moreover, the gendered performance also reinforces the behavioral trait of 'ego'. Excluding women of *Ghariban* from *siali* (competition) or *badal* (revenge) a type of behavior deemed workable between equals, establish superiority in itself.

#### **Political leadership: Party leaders and 'bazar mesharan' (market elders):**

The central issues in Pukhtun society revolve around the pursuit of power, status, and honor, a pursuit that is closely related and limited to agnatic kin on the tribal genealogical charter (Ahmed, 1980: 06).

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<sup>89</sup> Even the unnecessary display of arms is considered undesirable by the younger generation. Raheem Khan (2008) in Thana told me that he and his family do not like to display arms for they feel awkward in carrying them ('*Ma ta zan bad khkare*').

<sup>90</sup> Inayat ullah khan (2008) revealed that he does *gham-khadi* with a peasant because, '*my father asked me to do so for a reason. My father told me that this peasant worked on our land and regularly provided me the rent (ijara) even in those trouble days when kisanian (peasants) raised against us and refused to pay rents*'. Such behavior shall be honored. In Thana I was told that *Khanan* and *Ghariban* do *gham-khadi* thoroughly.

Political leadership has been the exclusive domain of ‘Pakhtuns’ (also saints) in the accounts of Barth (1959b) and Lindholm (1982). Pakhtun life is mostly explained to be very political and the leadership qualities were one of very important traits of ‘Pakhtun’ behavior (Barth, 1959b). Despite tremendous changes in the political configuration of the region, in an interesting way behavioral attributes of ‘ego’ and ‘self achievement’ are conducted through leadership roles. There are two alternative streams of political leadership in Malakand such as party leadership and ‘*bazar mesharan*’ (market leadership). The former refers to leadership of political parties and local governments. Although this leadership is not the exclusive domain of *Khanan*, but leadership of political parties is dominated by *Khanan*. The wealthy business families of Batkhela are mostly associated with Jamat Islami as active supporters and have not stepped in leadership role exclusively.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, the general perception and political rhetoric during elections contain a strong reference to *khan-gharib* and oppressor-oppressed idioms. The other form of leadership is particular to Batkhela. This leadership is exclusive to a greater extent to the immigrant businessmen. These leaders of the market in individual capacity and through their association access the State officials as representatives of the market. Executive officials in Batkhela often meet the Batkhela’s ‘*bazar mesharan*’ and the Thana’s *Khanan*. One occasion that I witnessed during my fieldwork involved *Khanan* from Batkhela recording protest with D.C.O (District coordinating officer-high ranking executive officer) about a dispute of land with the government authorities. The khans participating in this protest later told me that the officials were surprised to see such a huge turnout of the *Khanan* and conceded that it was unprecedented. Comparing this situation with the post 1970s period when such *Khanan* had access to State officials through jirga membership, reflects a change. It was in one such visits of *Khanan*, Irfan (2008), an immigrant and public figure, said that Muhammad Khan was introduced by the *Khanan* as Muhammad *Dokandar* (Muhammad shopkeeper in a derogatory way) and provoked him to launch Awami-khel movement (see chapter 5).

Leadership is therefore, not exclusive to *Khanan*, *Ghariban* have also been contesting elections. Moreover, the earlier principle of acquiring power through

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<sup>91</sup> The leadership of Jamat Islami includes *Ghariban* elements but leadership is not the exclusive of *Khanan*. Similarly all other parties include *Ghariban* in lower level leadership but mostly *Khanan* dominate these parties.

accumulating wealth and distributing patronage has changed which helped creating more dispersed and heterogeneous leadership; including even lower levels of *Khanan* category. Most interestingly *Khanan* have also brought in their internal differences into politics which gives a satisfaction to *Ghariban* that corporate unity among *Khanan* is broken down by modern electoral politics (former Awami-khel general secretary).

Barth has emphasized that the chief among the 'Pathans' of Swat was not only serving his interests by seeking power rather he had kept his group (his ward, including landless people) interests integrated with his own personal interests. Therefore, it was the 'rank' of a khan and not the 'power' which was generally coveted by the pretenders, but the integration of the two would mean competition for both. He explains that khans later, when Swat State was established, sought after State's support to gain the 'rank' rather the 'power' and the two were separated in this new situation. These khans were thought to becoming 'soft' in face of 'criticism' and 'shame'. It was this change in khans that the people would assert that the 'empty and false status' attract people as they are 'vainglorious' (1981: 139-140). In Malakand not only the role of a khan or the rank of khan disseminates to lower level khans (who have less land and wealth) but also to *Ghariban*. To an extent the *Ghariban* did not aspire for the rank of khan rather constituted another form of leadership i.e *bazar mesheran* and have also subjected *Khanan* in party politics to public scrutiny as succinctly put by a laborer in Batkhela, "The difference between the past and the present is that, previously it was me attending the Hujra of a khan and now the khan comes to my door and beg for my support in elections".

Therefore, the changing leadership role of the khan is to be seen in the changing context. The context not only manifests changing roles but decline in power inherent in the nature of new leadership. Previously leadership was defined by the wealth and power demonstrated through alliances and patronage (Barth, 1959b: chapter 7), currently it is characterized by scattered competition, market dynamics, delegated power and public service.<sup>92</sup> The continuity in leadership role (only in political parties

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<sup>92</sup> In my interview with political candidates at all levels of government i.e local, provincial and national not only the themes were 'how to serve people through various public projects and address local problems' but also using phraseology of modern politics such as 'I am a servant of people', 'I serve people', 'I will serve the poor' 'I have no other objective but to win the support of masses' etc. These phrases were used by all including 'khan' candidates.

leadership) is a consequence of strong urge and behavioral particularization of *Khanan*. Their perception that they have natural abilities to lead is often too conspicuous (cf. Barth, 1981: 157).

Despite such urge and perception of dominance, *Khanan* may find current electoral politics a despised domain, where power is acquired through unfavorable means. They would term electoral politics, immoral, hypocritical, deceitful and corrupt and would keep a distance by asserting, '*mong la haya razee*' (literally 'we feel shy to practice' but shyness in this sense is avoiding immoral or unfavorable things).<sup>93</sup> Such prohibition can be the consequence of changing role expectation under the new political setup.

Through this discussion I have demonstrated how cultural features are maintained in multi ethnic environment and how these features have demonstrated cultural values manifested in it. In this way Edwards insight into identity maintenance are incorporated despite disagreement with his argument that such features and the values could be maintained in tribal environment alone. However, I also reflected on how Edwards assertion that the contextual operation of cultural features is important. The case of Malakand reflect how these social categories have used and interpreted cultural features. Moreover, I have tried to demonstrate that due to cleavages between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* the contested interpretation of cultural performance is reflected in the idioms of ego and achievement, which are behavior patterns embedded in meaning of boundaries. This also means the content in which cultural features are demonstrated is defined by categorization in Malakand i.e *Khanan Ghariban* just like the context in Afghan refugees case was defined by different frameworks set by administration and donors. This also endorses what in current anthropological literature refer to boundaries and the cultural content reinforcing each other (Jenkins, 2008; Eriksen, 2002).

#### 4.3: Contested meanings and boundary strategies

The meaning of boundary as understood by various categories in Malakand are mutually oppositional and therefore contested. There is conscious effort on the part of

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<sup>93</sup> Words of the Aurangzeb Khan (2008)

the two broader categories to interpret the boundary in contested meanings. *Ghariban* recognize that boundary between “us” and “them” (*Khanan*) is located in landownership and lineage but interpret it in the meaning of ‘attempted dominance’, ‘usurpation’ and ‘arrogance’. Such interpretation is informed by historical experience and interactional conduct of the *Khanan*. The boundary location, therefore means exploitation of a dominant category through its historically privileged status and continuous arrogance in the present. The rank of khan is thus not aspired but stigmatized for ignoring to appreciate the egalitarian values of Pakhtun society. The image of a khan under the influence of this interpretation is of ‘usurper’, ‘exploiter’, ‘arrogant’ and ‘condescending’ and not of a ‘patron’ and ideal person embodying ‘strength’ and ‘bravery’ as Barth explained (1981: 150-151). In relation to a usurper, condescending khans, *Ghariban* simultaneously construct “us” into ‘hardworking’, ‘skilled’, ‘humane’ and ‘egalitarian’ people. The historical account of their business success and their struggle against the oppressive khans make their status privileged one. These very successes are conceived by *Khanan* representing non-Pakhtun, businesspersons like character. In changing circumstances khan continue to see their status superior for its association with the land and lineage. Also, they successively interpret their status as ascribed based in primordial attributes of blood, birth and tribal lineage. This continuity reinforces autonomy associated with the landownership. Similarly, for them ‘other’ category not only demonstrates discontinuity but also ‘wrongly’ associate autonomy with businesses. Therefore, In such character sketch *Khanan* emphasize that, ‘them’ are devoid of Pakhtun ideal behavior and values.

The ascribed status and behavioral attributes represented by the boundary means the ‘others’ (*Khanan*) to ‘us’ (*Ghariban*) as *Zaliman* (those who committed accesses, atrocities), *Bekara* (idle, lazy), *Badmashan* (committing unlawful things with threats and use of force - extortion), *Lofar* (Loafers) and those who under *Nasha* (arrogance) often exert verbal abuses on others (*Ghaletha Khule khwazol*). Again in the dialectical narrative *Ghariban* identify themselves as humble and down to earth, even if they are wealthy, to the ostentatious *Khanan*. They explain such contrasting behavior from their daily experience and substantiate it with account of their resistance. Some members of immigrant category was articulate about their confrontation with khans in situations when *Khanan* tried hurt others with their *Nasha*, or even if such *Nasha* was to be

broken for the sake of public humiliation. Therefore, the boundary for *Khanan* is of an ascribed statuses representing Pakhtun ideal of autonomy while for the *Ghariban* it means, more generally, oppression, arrogance and idleness. Such contesting meaning would substantiate our earlier argument which stressed that *Ghariban* would avoid to step in the roles of *Khanan*. Not because the ascribed status this boundary represents but because it conveys the meanings undesirable to them.

The intensity of khan's behavior (arrogance) varies; educated being more understandable while the younger ones (presumably with less education) more arrogant. The younger ones rely more on the ancestral land and show less interests in either business or government services. Being highly conscious of their privileged status and behavioral requirements, their economic means are shrinking in response to challenges posed by immigrants. Most of them, unfortunately, get into nonsocial activities such as taking drugs and doing gambling. These activities create the image of a young khan being a lazy, rash, addicted person who knows only to brag on his ancestor's possessions. Some *Khanan* believe that *Ghariban* benefit from such deteriorating conditions of younger generation and they therefore, deliberately communicate their social status in social interaction with the young ones to let them suffer.

#### **Saliency and 'transvaluation' of boundary:**

Currently an emerging and most interesting features of categorical relationship in Malakand is the saliency of the boundary between *Khanan* and *Kisanyan* and 'transvaluation' (see ch. 2) of boundary between *Khanan* and immigrants. Our analysis of current clashes between *kisanyan* and *Khanan* get us closer to the argument of Barth and Lindholm on individuals stepping into the role of *Khanan*. *Kisanyan* are becoming landlords but have not demonstrated leadership skills and have always found themselves on the other side of the boundary with *Ghariban*. They were also more vocal of the oppression of *Khanan* and have seen the boundary differentiating usurpers from the aggrieved. *Kisanyan* and *Khanan* most convincingly see each other in categorical terms and define each other in adversarial manner. The violent clashes between them since 1960's further reinforces the boundary between these two categories. *Kisanyan* have traditionally aligned with immigrants and emphatically locate themselves in the broader category of *Ghariban*. Their close association with Awami-khel and their violent clashes

with the *Khanan* have let them imagine Khan to be a particular person who has land since generations (reference to lineage) and has exploited peasants and farmers. Such imagination is not affected by the land acquisition of *kisanyan* and their prospects of stepping in the role of landlord.<sup>94</sup> For *kisanyan* the boundary is clearly located in the landownership, tribal lineage and it conveys the meaning of oppression and dominance. Moreover, like other categories *kisanyan* have developed their own narrative of struggle and success against the oppression of *Khanan*. This narrative is more powerful because of its actual armed struggle and continuity in the present. The lack of motivation and enthusiasm in *kisanyan* to acquire the title of khan, despite their land acquisition is explained by the dominant narrative. Therefore, interestingly, *kisanyan* continue to see themselves as *kisanyan* and their category is still meaningful. They also avoid extending khan title to those who have secured wealth such as immigrants. Moreover, like other *Ghariban*, *kisanyan* proudly assert their achievement vis-a-vis *Khanan* and unlike Barth's reported peasants, do not curse their ancestor for their current situation. One can question why the previously cursing peasant (Barth, 1959b; 1981) became a proud and bragging *kisane* (singular of *kisanyan*).

Additionally, categories in Malakand are involved in 'transvaluation' of the boundaries. Wimmer (2008) through his analysis of ethnic boundary explains 'transvaluation', to be the process of acquiring 'equality' in status and politics; and reversing the existing rank hierarchies i.e 'normative inversion'. Although Wimmer (2008) analyzed inter-ethnic situations, his work gives insight to this study of intra-ethnic processes in Malakand. In Batkhela the dominance of *Khanan* was challenged by Awami-khel movement and their position changed by political and administrative reforms (1970's). They demanded abolishment hierarchies and desiring equality which satisfy Wimmer (2008) condition of transvaluation. However, the contested meaning of boundary and the latent stigmatization of the statuses create ambiguity in whether equality is sought to replace inversion of hierarchies in post reforms era. Although it is difficult to reach at such conclusion at this State of malakand history but some mutual diminution of statuses refer to more than equality. *Khanan* are still identified as

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<sup>94</sup> *Kisanyan* have excessively invested in land but such landholding is not significant to make them bigger landlords. In fact many of them now own small pieces of land. What is important here that in some cases they own land greater than *Khanan* and openly confess that they have gained land in comparison to *Khanan* who have lost land since 1970's reforms. Such trend if continued would make them landlords in their own right.

‘usurpers’ and they demonstrate ‘*Nasha*’. However, this does not go well with the *Khanan* who continue to perceive themselves superior and dominant, in terms of their historical status and current political leverage. Consequently, disagreement exists between the categories across the boundary. Such differences take shape of a contest on meaning of the boundary. However, this contest has been certainly consequential for boundary making. Wimmer (2008b: 2008b) did not comment on the relationship of these two forms of transvaluation in his work and one can imply, from his work, that these two are separate processes pursued by people. However, these two may follow each other in successive order. In that sense *Ghariban* construction of the *Qasabgars* (occupational groups) as *Hunarmand* (skilled people) and the *Khanan* as *Bekara* (lazy or without work) and *Badmashan* indicate trends of inversion.

Lindholm has observed earlier that khans usually remain idle in Swati village.

As an aristocrat, the khan oversees the labour of other and generally prefers not to get his hands dirty, though there are notable exceptions. It is well known that this approach leads to smaller yields, but it suits the khan’s image and sense of dignity to be idle” (Lindholm, 1982: 103).

However, such idleness is not productive in situation where competitors are accumulating wealth. Oddly, in Malakand despite the loss of considerable land ownership, some *Khanan* remain idle. If they do business, their limited success further reinforces their perception that they must remain associated with agriculture.<sup>95</sup> Some may opt for government services and others remain idle.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study to explore these boundary strategies, it would not be out of place to suggest that, the reworking of the hierarchy is not attempted through a systematic and organized effort but through symbolic processes of interpreting and associating meanings with boundary. This meaning system is informed by the historical experiences transmitted in form of narrations from generation

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<sup>95</sup> There are quite a few successful business families among the *Khanan* but mostly they are identified by immigrants to be failure. While immigrants believe that *Khanan* don’t have business acumen, *Khanan* say they fail because they do their *khani* (behavior peculiar to khans) in business.

to generation and magnified and highlighted by the Awami-khel movement and reinforced by social conduct. Nevertheless, I suggest that organized and systematic effort, to cause meaningful normative inversion, would require resources and greater ‘groupness’, currently lacking, among the *Ghariban*. Therefore, the contest on boundary meaning continues in the absence of previous hierarchies and statuses.

## Conclusion

Social interaction between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* involves communicating meanings of boundary through social conduct. Interpretation of these meanings is contested, which also reinforces the boundary in oppositional pattern. Through these arguments I suggest that by discrediting the behavior of the *Khanan*, *Ghariban* do not aspire to take their position and status. They see the ‘condescending’ behavior of the *Khanan* undesirable and project their own ‘achievements’ and ‘toil’ vis-a-vis *Khanan*. Therefore, these processes demonstrate that effort to achieve statuses within the agreed ‘value system’ (cf. Lindholm, 1982; Barth, 1959b) is irrelevant in Malakand case. The two categories in their own respective positions have perceived the boundary and interpreted the meaning it conveys in social interaction. They have retained the categorical boundary despite the collapsing hierarchies and transforming statuses.

We have discussed that people in Malakand not only categorize each other as *Khanan* and *Ghariban* but also see the categorical boundary meaningful in social and political settings. Both these categories have typified behavior reflected even in maintaining cultural institutions and identity. Informed by historical experiences these patterns convey contested meanings. Such contestation shapes the question for the next chapter of the thesis where the focus is on contested ethnic identity. It elaborates on how conflictual meanings and interpretations of the categorical boundary shape a discourse on who is and who is not a Pakhtun? Therefore, establishing a dynamic relationship between intra ethnic and inter ethnic processes.

## Chapter 5

### Contested Pakhtun identity

Pakhtun identity in Malakand is contested and contextualized. The contest is insignificant and less discernible when situational and historical contexts are wider, but more significant when these contexts are set locally. Two different aspects of Pakhtunness are emphasized in the local context to initiate inclusion and exclusion. In this process, some basic values of Pakhtunness are reinterpreted. The contest is significant in post reforms period when the social statuses and patron-client relations have undergone change. Therefore, I argue that there is contest between two broader categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* on which identity marker or aspect to emphasize, and in what context.

This research does not aim at proposing a model (cf. Ahmed, 1980; Barth, 1959b) drawing on some characteristics and fundamental behavioral traits agreed upon by Pakhtuns that define their identity in a time of transition. To a degree, inclusion and exclusion involves manipulation of ethnic identity. It questions why in a social situation affected by changing political and economic configuration, consensus on who is Pakhtun is lacking. I also analyze relation between the perviously stratified status oriented social system and contemporary situation; and question why some internal issues of stratification have influenced ethnic identification. This could mean internal social categories have realigned after losing their hierarchical structure and have shaped contest over ethnic identity. The contest is, thus, not about social statuses such as 'Pakhtun' - 'non Pakhtun' (within the ethnic group Pathan cf. Barth, 1959b; 1969b). In post reform period (1970- to date) the dependent statuses of patron-client do not exist; and although, lately ignored by anthropological inquiry (Barth, 1981; Lindholm, 1982) a discourse is currently shaping in Malakand that constitute a very basic question of ethnic identification i.e who is Pakhtun? The social categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* are emphasizing two different aspects of Pakhtunness to press for their claims of belonging to ethnic group Pakhtun.

Evaluating an organized indigenous struggle of Awami-khel I seek to reflect on the understanding of social and political system by the previous 'patron-client'

categories. I argue that the system perceived variously, is seen simultaneously as perverted for its failure to embody the values of equality, honor and autonomy, and representative of cultural norms. <sup>96</sup> Focusing on anti-system *Ghariban* category, I posit that the perception of the political and associated social system is of a construct of predominant internal (*Khanan*) and external ('encapsulating system') actors, which had left *Ghariban* deprived of their rights and created a situation of '*beizzati*' (dishonor). In this manner they questioned the system for being deficient in Pakhtun ideals and Islam. They also disputed the definition of Pakhtun offered locally by the system.

I will therefore, first explain the historical context and the struggle of Awami-khel organization to reflect on the nature of its attack on the administrative and political system of Malakand Agency. This will help us in understanding post reforms period and to account for the change as Barth's put it, "*under changing conditions at present, with urbanization and new forms of administration, the total situation has changed so that one can expect a radical change both of Pathan culture and of the organizational relevance it is given*" (1969b:133-134).

I will also see how the literature on Pakhtun identity alludes to different aspects of Pakhtunness such as ascribed and performed (or achieved) and finally explain how these aspects are emphasized variably by the two categories to define Pakhtun. Varying emphasis also causes contest and initiate inclusion and exclusion.

### 5.1: Indigenous struggle and ethnic identification

The question of identification in Malakand is consciously associated with the tribal area status of the region and the indigenous struggle for rights and identity. In following paragraphs I reflect on the nature of administration, the different interpretations of the system (implemented in 1895 and revoked in 1969) and the nature of opposition from an indigenous organization known as Awami-khel. This discussion provides background to the next section which focuses directly on the process of contested identification in Malakand.

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<sup>96</sup> Lindholm argues, "*Equality means that each man in theory has an equal chance to subdue his fellows. Each man struggles to conquer and rise in the shallow hierarchies the system allows*" (1982: 217-218). I have argued earlier that the desire among the *Ghariban* was not to rise in the hierarchies but to undo such hierarchies. Therefore, equality demanded by Awami-khel was the equality in political social and economic rights.

### **Tribal Agency: Perverted or autonomous system:**

The incessant discourse since 1960s in Malakand is about the status of the system tailored through mutual consent between Colonial power (Britain) and the local chiefs (representing tribal people) in 1895. The debate, therefore, strikes at the very heart of the perception that Political and administrative system in Malakand and all other Tribal Areas of Pakistan represented colonial needs and tribal aspirations. The locus of the discourse is a question, was the political system, endorsing social statuses (of landlords and their clients) through recognition of *Riwaj* (local customs), based in the egalitarian ideals of Pakhtun value system. If it was a compromise, how well it represented the entire population and not just a fraction of the population. Lindholm and Barth's argument that, the entire population followed a single value system may endorse the claim that the system was representative. Literature on Tribal Areas of Pakistan has debated emphatically on the working and flaws of the system inherent in the contrasting interests of the tribal people and the State. The puzzling feature was to govern the region through an arrangement that also satisfy local aspirations. The crisis of governability in Tribal Areas was shaped by contest among policy makers of 'encapsulating system'<sup>97</sup> over the question of, 'direct-indirect', 'discretionary-mediated' form of rule (White, 2008b). However, a crisis of equal magnitude was shaped by a contest generated by unequal social statuses in Malakand (at least since 1960's). This crisis is largely ignored by the literature on Federal Areas of Pakistan. The indigenous struggle within Malakand since 1960s was to question the validity of the political and social configuration that was shaped through the collaboration of a minority of *Khanan* (landlords) and the Imperial power (British India) and later extended by the State of Pakistan. Views differ among the Pakhtuns of Malakand; *Khanan* justify it to be a representative of their *Riwaj* (traditions) in practice since their conquest of the region and *Ghariban* disapprove it to be an instrument in the hands of few who have even perverted the ideals of Pakhtun values such as equality and freedom for all.

The British system of governance in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was a consequence of treaties signed with Tribal Jirgas (Khan, 2005: 103-108), and later

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<sup>97</sup> Terms used by Ahmed (1980).

between the government of Pakistan and tribal jirgas (Khan, 2005c: 27). The form of government introduced in these areas had following main constituents.

*a. Political Agent:*

The most pivotal officer in the Tribal Areas representing State interests in FATA is known as Political Agent. Being ‘half administrator’ and ‘half diplomat’ Political Agent had diverse roles to play. He was to administer on behalf of the government and also deal with the ‘co-signatories of the treaty’ (Khan, 2005a: 109). He kept a close eye on the tribes and the flow of tribal opinion through ‘constant vigilance’ (Khan, 2005b: 89). To do so he had a range of inducements. He could increase and decrease individual allowances and bribe informers from a secret and non audit-able fund. He issued export and import permits, contracts for public works, supply of services, issue quotas for Gulf employment, etc. He could take a range of punitive measures in accordance of the treaties signed and Frontier Crimes Regulations to check criminal activities (Khan, 2005a: 109-110). It was through his office that the State presence in Tribal Areas was demonstrated and for that matter his decisions or choosing sides would be perceived as the policy of the State. On various occasion I was informed by *Ghariban* and *Khanan* that such and such Political Agent was either the supporter of *Khanan* or *Ghariban*.

*b. Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR):*

Frontier Crimes Regulation were laws tailored by British in 1872 and extended to FATA after a major revision in 1901. Through these laws the powers of Political Agent were increased to facilitate him in governing Tribal Areas. These powers included collective punishment, arrest without the right to Habeas Corpus and reference of cases to a jirga (council) of tribal chiefs. Due to severity of punishment suggested and the extensive powers of the Political Agent these laws are often condemned for the worst violation of human rights in the name of governance and are thus referred to as ‘Black Laws’. In fact they constituted a parallel judicial system in Pakistan (Ali and Rehman, 2001: 53).

It is based on the premise of suppression of crime by infliction of the severest possible punishment. The administration of justice is neither its aim nor purpose. The FCR denies the accused due process of law (Ali and Rehman, 2001: 53).

Under FCR Political Agent appoints a jirga from the chiefs of the tribal area and ask it to adjudicate on an issue at hand. The jirga investigates, suggests punishment in accordance to *Riwaj* (customs) and reports back to the Political Agent. Final decision rests in Political Agent. Such jirga must be differentiated from the traditional jirga of Pakhtuns for it is appointed by the Political Agent and thus official in character (Ali and Rehman, 2001: 50-57). Besides this official function, Jirga provides a wide range of functions in Tribal Areas, from minor decisions on choice of the site for a mosque, to the settlement of blood feuds and to communicate with Political Agent on behalf of the people etc (Ali and Rehman, 2001: 51). Therefore, the officially appointed Jirga was performing a fraction of wider varieties of tasks. Moreover, its appointed status was not very popular among the tribal people of FATA.

*c. Maliki system:*

*Maliki* system is a system of patronage, to appoint *Maliks* (chiefs) among the tribal clans and to use them in facilitating Political Agent. These *Maliks* were paid through three different allowances; *Maliki* allowance, *Lungis* and *Muwajib*. *Muwajib* was a regular allowance to be distributed biannually, in the entire tribe through *Maliks*, *Lungi* was a personal allowance for individual services and *Mailki* was hereditary allowance paid to *Malik* subject to good conduct (Hussain, 2005: 7; Ali and Rehman, 2001: 48). With these allowances and inducements British and Pakistani governments produced a group of elite who were often resented by other members of the tribe.

Ahmed reports that although, unlike Swat, there were no *khans* in Mohmand Agency, there were *Maliks* (chiefs- also known as *mashar* in Mohmand Agency).<sup>98</sup> These *Maliks* were opposed by *kashars* (junior or young), who were ‘political have-nots’ of various clans; and included young and old, rich and poor alike. Discontentment against the *Maliks* was for their corruption, selfishness and deviousness and therefore, *kashars* aspired to change the personnel and not the ‘leadership structure’ and ‘the system’; he argues,

*“The kashar is a militant, not a revolutionary. He wishes to remove what he sees as the invidious British-created Maliki system and to return to the traditional ideal structure but not to create a new one”* (1980: 143-145).

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<sup>98</sup> It is one of the Federally Administered Areas of Pakistan

In Malakand the discontented group included the weaker *Khanan* and a larger group of people in 'clients' status. Also landlords in Malakand were challenged by the emerging group of businessmen who accumulated wealth through market business.

*d. Riwaj:*

Riwaj is loosely collected set of centuries-old usage and customs that govern every aspect of the lives of the tribal people. It may vary somewhat in detail but in essence remains the same throughout FATA (Hussain, 2005: 5).

Differentiating and relating *Riwaj* with Pakhtunwali, Iftikhar Hussain argues that Pakhtunwali is 'code of life', 'code of ethics' from which flows the 'social norms' or 'customs and usages' known as *Riwaj* (2005: 5-6). Although this distinction is a thin one, it correctly refers to the ideal, and structure referring to the ideal. Barth (1969b: 1959: 1981) referred to social organization of Pakhtuns on the basic principles of Pakhtunwali under conditions which shaped such organization. In Malakand *Riwaj* or the social organization and usages/customs were condemned by an emerging groups which found it perverted form, developed out of the need to control a larger population. They presented it as an instrument of the usurpers to suppress, and appealed to the ideals of Pakhtunwali that discourages such exploitation. Next section will elaborate on an organized struggle against the perverted form and the representative system.

**Awami-khel's struggle for 'emancipation' and honor:**

Post colonial political situation in Malakand is often explained with the reference to religious movements such as Tehrik Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM) (1989-to date) and the current Taliban movement (Marwat and Toru, 2005: Bahadur, 1998: Ali and Rahman, 2001). These movements have originated in post reform era and therefore, reflect little on the issue of identification in the region. I intend to discuss an organization rarely referred to in the available literature on Malakand and see the issue of identification through its struggle against the political and administrative setup in Malakand Agency before 1970. I do not evaluate its contribution to the change in form of successive reforms in the region, rather focus on the nature of its struggle and its consequences for the contested identification in Malakand.

An immigrant and businessman from Aspanr (District Dir) Muhammad Khan launched an organization known as Awami-khel.<sup>99</sup> He was soon joined by people of diverse background; kisanyan, immigrants and others including some *Khanan*. He raised concerns against the FCR, *Riwaj* and deprivation of the majority.<sup>100</sup> Under FCR, the *Riwaj* was protected, Jirga membership limited to *Khanan* and citizenship and landownership rights denied to immigrants. The growing consciousness among the *Ghariban* was partly due to education, partly due to decreasing dependence on *Khanan* and the emergence of business class. Gradual realization that, “*Judged by Pathan standards, clientship places a man among the despised failures, subordinates among independent commoners*” (Barth, 1969b: 125) they attempted to challenge *Khanan*. This realization was accompanied by a sense of degradation and overwhelming loss in cultural terms, which was soon translated into an organized effort.<sup>101</sup> Although, Awami-khel was joined by diverse categories, it drew its leadership and the majority of its support from immigrants making it an organization of businessmen immigrants. Moreover, the fact that Awami-khel was much more vigorous in Batkhela than it was in any other part of Malakand confirmed it to be based among the immigrants.

Awami-khel organized its struggle on following concerns.<sup>102</sup>

1. The political, administrative and social organization in Malakand was the product of colonial rule and local aristocracy. It was concocted by the converging and not contrasting interests of *Khanan* and colonialists. Later Pakistan emulated colonialists.
2. The system did not represent popular aspirations and even was against the principles of Islamic Law.

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<sup>99</sup> Awami-khel was inaugurated in 1967 but became fully functional in 1969.

<sup>100</sup> *Riwaj* were the usages and customs followed by Yousafzai since generations. Under FCR disputes were decided on the basis of *Riwaj*. Initially the Jirga members while investigating cases referred to *Riwaj*, relying solely on their memory, however, later (1964) these customs were compiled and published under the title “*Riwaj Nama Malakand Agency*” (Khan, 1964) by the Political Administration in Malakand. *Riwaj Nama* was considered by Awami-khel to be an instrument of oppression in the hands of *Khanan* (Awami-khel, 1969; Khan, undated; Awami-khel, undated).

<sup>101</sup> The statements of Awami-khel representatives and the literature it produced consistently used the term *beizzati* (dishonor) to refer to the treatment of *Ghariban* at the hands of *Khanan*.

<sup>102</sup> All these points are based on the study of various pamphlets published by the Awami-khel Organization from time to time for public awareness; such as *Dawat-i-Haq*, *Dawat-i-Insaf* and *Interview of Muhammad Khan*.

3. This composite system denied rights to the majority of the people, including the very basic right to call themselves ‘Pashtun’.
4. Power configuration put *Khanan* in privileged situation and therefore, they committed atrocities, imposed taxes and demanded unpaid labor.
5. The alternative system representing popular aspiration is Sharia.
6. Pakistan’s ideology does not allow the continuity of Laws representing British legacy, which are inherently anti Islam and deprive a large population of their rights.

The concerns raised by *Awami-khel* gives an impression that it imagined and particularized history of the region and related it with the Pakhtun ideals. Their struggle in post-colonial period against the construction that was perceived to be colonial (but retained by the post colonial State) was unique. Its emphasis on Pakhtun identity and its attributes such as autonomy, self-determination and egalitarianism make it a movement for seeking and restoring identity. Moreover, their pragmatic discourse on the relationship between local power holders and the foreign imperial power highlights the class aspects of the movement, however, the undertones of such discourse was always judging the behavior of *Khanan* (landlords) on Pakhtun ideals. *Khanan* were believed to be abetting with foreign powers but also failing to perform Pakhtunness. They failed to protect their autonomy in face of foreign invasion and in fact betrayed the larger population by agreeing to receive allowances, establishing social inequality derogatory to Pakhtun and Islamic ideals of equality and egalitarianism. In contrast the ‘common people’ or ‘*Ghariban*’ have fought with their lives against the foreign elements and have faced the atrocities emanating from the unequal distribution of power. In this way they glorified both Pakhtun traditions to resist foreign intervention and Islam.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, *Ghariban* deserve to call themselves Pakhtuns.

The second aspect of this polemics of *Awami-khel* is the *Riwaj* (customs and usages). It was emphasized by *Awami-khel* that *Riwaj* created statuses and a source of discrimination, inhuman treatment and *baizzati* (dishonor) of the *Ghariban*. The

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<sup>103</sup> Although the strict bifurcation between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* and the perception that only the later fought when the former were collaborating cannot be substantiated, historical accounts in vernacular refer to *Khanan* negotiating with British. Yousafi reports that in the 1895 campaign, the British did not face much resistance from the area, however, just two years later the people of Malakand dearly fought to throw the British out of the region (1960: 281). Surprisingly, there is an important distinction between these two campaigns the first one was lead by a khan from the neighboring Dir while the second one was led by a religious leader known as Mullah Mastan.

hierarchical statuses were believed to be the product of aristocratic mindset of the *Khanan* in congruence with the aristocratic and imperial characteristic of Colonial rule. Although, Awami-khel knew that *Riwaj* was not the creation of British imperialism, they found its continuity at the hands of colonial power an evidence of their mutual understanding. Moreover, the hierarchical caste system was constructed into a symbol of inequality, prejudice, inhuman conduct and atrocities. This may be because the caste system had no more a social function of dependability of clients over patrons. The forcefulness and consistency of the above argument in the Awami-khel pamphlets convince the readers that *Riwaj* was the most consequential factor in the maintaining the system that generated inequalities and perhaps needs revisiting and alignment with Pakhtun ideals.

Awami-khel construction of *Riwaj* to be a deviant (or perversion) of two moral codes such as Pakhtunwali and Islam. Such an effort also refers to an attempt to bring congruity between Islam and Pakhtun traditions under an impression that, “*Pathan customs are imagined by the actors to be consistent with, and complementary to, Islam*” (Barth, 1969b: 120). Judged through this standard *Riwaj Nama* was supposed to be in line with Islamic Law, however, there are “boundaries and disjunctions” between Islam and Pakhtun traditions (Bartolotti, 2000: 76).<sup>104</sup> Being mindful of such a situation, requires to see what exactly in *Riwaj* was perceived by Awami-khel to contradict Islam and why they would relate Islam with *Riwaj* in the first instance. I argue that Awami-khel was alluding to the two ‘moral codes’ of Pakhtun society (cf. Edwards, 1996) and through them consistently attacked the inequalities produced by *Riwaj*. Therefore, they found *Riwaj* in clash with both Islam and Pakhtun values.

Awami-khel struggle appears to be to achieve a status that was socially and politically denied to them i.e. Pakhtun citizenship. In their perception the primary hurdles were the hierarchal social organization, political and administrative configuration endorsing such organization and therefore, they sought to undo them. However, they did not discredit the system through an ideology other than Pakhtun idealism. They related it with Pakhtun identity features and found it deviant from the

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<sup>104</sup> Under this impression some informant did reflect on the Islamic and un-Islamic nature of *Riwaj Nama*. For example Ibraheem Ustajee (2008) and Asmat ullah Khan (2008) told me during their interviews that *Riwaj Nama* was very much in line with Islam and the issue was perhaps just created. My own analysis from the text of *Riwaj Nama* gave me an idea that there were clauses such as no consent needed from girl on her wedding and the restricted property possession were un-Islamic.

standard. In this way they also reinterpreted the meaning of Pakhtunness. In contrast to the *Khanan*' imagination of Pakhtunness in the possession of 'land', 'lineage', 'property', 'servants', 'houses', 'weapons' and 'Jirga membership', their Pakhtunness was in 'Love for Islam', 'honor', 'bravery' and 'Love for Jihad' (Awami-khel, 1969: 05). Also when Pakhtunness demands autonomy and when, "*Each man strives to present himself as proudly self-reliant, for dependence is weakness and weakness is quickly produced upon by the strong*" (Lindholm, 1981: 514) Awami-khel strived to change 'life circumstances' that will elevate them to such standards.

By implication Awami-khel also perceived that dignity, honor and equality are the hallmark of Pakhtun society. It is even believed in Batkhela that Awami-khel's creation was the provocation of Muhammad Khan in an incident when he felt dishonored and insulted at the hands of *Khanan*. In a visit to the office of Political Agent, Muhammad Khan was introduced by *Khanan* as *dokandar* (shopkeeper) as if it was his primary identity. It was a shocking experience for him and since then he took the task to challenge the authority of *Khanan* through a peaceful struggle. Humiliation at the hands of *Khanan* was a battle cry that organized *Ghariban* under Awami-khel and even attracted some *Khanan* to the organization. Countless stories demonstrating humiliating behavior of the *Khanan* are narrated by *Ghariban* when they recall the jirga time. Humiliation in Jirga time was tied up by Awami-khel with the denial of the Pakhtun status. Therefore, they claimed that their struggle was for the dignity intrinsic in Pakhtun status. They revealed that instead of Pakhtuns they were called with the most filthy and offending names like *Khoshey* (nameless or rootless), *Laghar* (wretched, loathed, filthy) and were treated as social outcaste (Awami-khel, 1969: 09).<sup>105</sup> Therefore, to get an honorable, dignified life and an egalitarian society the Awami-khel waged a 'jihad' against these elements (Awami-khel, 1969:11).

Interestingly, Awami-khel used Pakhto nomenclature, although just symbolically, as a strategy. The very name Awami-khel was invented, which dexterously combine two terms such as "Awami" (people's) and "Khel" (clan). The former seems to be influenced from the Bhutto's socialist rhetoric and the later inspired from Pakhtun tribal terminology. A peasant in Batkhela explained the logic behind the

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<sup>105</sup> Lindholm (1982: 109) also reports that khans in Swat used nick names such as 'grasshoppers', 'blue eyed', 'dumb one', etc and when angry 'dogs'; dogs being 'defiling', 'living on human excrement and waste' and 'think only of food'.

choice of this name in these words; “*When Muhammad Khan heard others saying, ‘we are Ibrahim Khel’, ‘we are Madey khel’ etc he answered ‘we are Awami-khel’*”. Muhammad Khan in an interview discussed the choice of the name and referred to transactional and oppositional character of his struggle reflected through the very name of the organization.

I have invented this name because the group of usurpers, depriving 95% people in Malakand of their rights, has established dictatorship and integrated in kinship ties. They are in one or other clan and collectively they are known as Khankhel. In response I have gathered a scattered and dispersed *quom* (people), and made it Awami-khel so that one khel (clan) opposes the other (Khan, undated; 05).<sup>106</sup>

The name served two purposes; it gave otherwise diverse people a single name to identify with i.e *Awami-khel* and second, it attempted to shape *Khanan-Ghariban* struggle into a tribal rivalry between two equal clans (although it was not based in segmentary lineage tribal rivalry). Muhammad Khan adds, “*through the constitution of this name alone I have attempted to develop kinship among the ordinary people so that they develop their relations by considering themselves members of a family*” (Khan, undated: 05).<sup>107</sup>

Although, the scope of Awami-khel activity was limited geographically and operationally. It was more effective in Batkhela alone where Muhammad Khan was stationed and had little impact on other areas of Malakand Agency. It was also limited in its operating capacity as its activities were limited to distribution of printed literature, social network, approaching political figures out of the Agency and publishing in print media. It could not articulate public opinion in political gatherings or protests as these activities were banned under FCR. Despite the limited scope of this organization it was a first organized effort of *Ghariban* to organize against *Khanan*.<sup>108</sup> Awami-khel struggle

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<sup>106</sup> My translation, from the original Urdu text of the interview, published by the Awami-khel’s publication wing (Khan, undated).

<sup>107</sup> My translation from the Urdu text of the interview.

<sup>108</sup> Muhammad Khan, the leader of the organization claimed that it was the first ever organization of its nature in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan (Khan, u.d).

does not give an impression of an attempt to secure a place in the hierarchical system (cf. Barth, 1981; Lindholm, 1982) rather an organization which identified flaws in the system and sought to remove them. Some of its central demands included; Adult franchise in the Agency, renunciation of *Riwaj*, introduction of Sharia, ‘discontinuity of differences between Pashtun and non-Pashtun’, citizenship rights for all those who are settled in the Agency for at least three years and protection of rights for peasants, working class, labor, students etc (Awami-khel, undated). Awami-khel, thus, articulated public opinion and gave an early platform to the poor, landless, unprivileged and aggrieved people of the Agency, when political activities were disallowed. Although most of its demands were accepted by the government when a series of reforms were introduced since 1970, we cannot calculate the extent of its influence on the decision of the government. Reforms in Malakand Agency were introduced after negotiation between Political Agent and the jirga to which they had no access. However, the decisions of the government in their favor created a general impression among the *Ghariban* that Awami-khel succeeded in achieving ‘emancipation’ for the ‘deprived people’.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, *Khanan* and their supporters resisted by writing letters to the governor and the president of Pakistan in vain.

Awami-khel was not the only organization of its kind in the region. A number of anti-Swat State organizations emerged in late 1960’s. These organizations were preceded by individual efforts through writing letters to the press and the central government, publishing books and pamphlets to reveal the autocracy of the Swat *Wali* (ruler) and demand merger of Swat State. (Rome, 2008: 275-286). Interestingly, like Awami-khel demands for Sharia were also raised by some of these individuals (Rome, 2008: 311).

Ahmed gave a passing reference to an organization *Tehrik-e-Qabail* (movement of the tribesmen). It was the organization of *kashars* (‘political have nots’) against the alliance of *Maliks* (*chiefs*) and the political administration in the Tribal Areas (1980: 311-312). He did not elaborate on the particular nature of the organization, however, the nature of discontent mentioned earlier in his work implies it to be a struggle against the system of privileges enjoyed by the *Maliks* (chiefs) in Tribal Areas. However, he

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<sup>109</sup> *Khanan* do not agree with the success of Awami-khel and argue that it was the government plan to change the status of the Agency. However, it is also believed that some Political Agents were sympathetic towards *Ghariban*. Therefore, I argue that when the interests of Awami-khel and government converged reforms initiated.

reported earlier at another place, that *Kashars* demanded adult franchise in FATA to reduce the influence of *Maliks* (1977: 49).

In this discussion on Awami-khel I have argued that the political, administrative and social structure in Malakand was challenged by a people who had experienced inequalities embedded in the system which also profoundly influenced their sense of belonging. The following section will elaborate on how such influences are reflected through a contest on the aspects of ethnic identity.

## 5.2: Ascribed and Performing aspects of Pakhtunness

Pakhtunness is reported to carry the ascribed and achieved aspects.<sup>110</sup> Pakhtunness is in patrilineal descent, tribal lineage and in speaking and doing 'Pakhto'. By doing Pakhto is the performing of Pakhtunwali the cultural code of Pakhtuns. The difference between the two may not be very clear in the minds of social actors, as the one may make the other necessary. I also do not intend to draw a subtle distinction in order to produce a model rather postulate its analytical importance in explaining identification contest in Malakand. I argue that social actors in Malakand do refer to these two aspects of Pakhtunness when they emphasize one over the other to identify a Pakhtun. Ascribed being more embedded in the birth and blood ties represents the exclusivity and performing or achieving aspect represents the inclusivity.

### **Literature on Ascribed and Performed aspects of Pakhtunness**

By ascribed aspect of Pakhtun identity I mean claiming Pakhtun identity primarily as birth right through patrilineal descent. Thus to claim, as in case of Pakhtuns in Malakand, that they have birth right to Pakhtun status because they have been the descendants of Yousaf and their rights are endorsed by their landownership and lineage membership (both interconnected).<sup>111</sup> Such right is maintained no matter how mythical genealogies are. Therefore, I reckon three connected features of the ascribed aspect of Pakhtunness i.e. Patrilineal descent established through a record of genealogy (even if mythical), landownership rights predicated on placement in genealogies and finally the right to belong by birth.

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<sup>110</sup> Ascribed here means self ascription. See also Barth (1969b).

<sup>111</sup> Yousaf is the head of Yousafzai tribe of Pakhtuns.

Barth (1969b) identified patrilineal descent being an important identity feature of Pakhtuns. He (1959b) argues that patrilineal descent holds greater emphasis among Pakhtuns and that “...*patrilineal descent defines the only principle for the ascription of status or rights. But the organization of Pathan society is not exclusively, or even predominantly, based on that principle. Most statuses and rights are usually defined by contractual agreements between persons: that is to say they are achieved*” (p.23).

Barth (1959b) has also delineated the association of landownership, genealogies and historical records. He argues that the entire population of Swat produces genealogies but with contrasting maturity. The non-landowning castes in Swat produced genealogies what Barth believes were ‘spurious pedigrees’. In contrast, the landowning ‘Pukhtuns’ had well developed genealogies that establish their lineage organization, ‘traditions of conquest’ and rights of landownership. However, through internalization process previously non-landowning groups were accommodated into Pukhtun status and were given land rights but excluded from the genealogies, which confirms the claim of Pakhtuns that, ‘genealogical assimilation is inconceivable’ (p. 24-28).

Patrilineal descent being an ascriptive aspect of Pakhtun identity is more forcefully recognized by Ahmed (1980). He asserts,

I shall define a Pukhtun, whether he is living in Pukhtun areas or not, speaking Pukhto or not, as one who can trace his lineage through the father’s line to one of the Pukhtun tribes, and in turn to the apical ancestor (Ahmed, 1980: 84).

While commenting on the ascribed aspect, being a primary feature of Pakhtunness he argues that Patrilineal descent from Pukhtun ascendants is ‘*the single most criterion for the definition of tribal Pukhtun*’. He reports about the Mohmand Pakhtuns that, ‘*nothing can strip him of his place on the tribal charter to which he is recruited by birth*’, not even the loss of land (Ahmed, 1980: 85-86).

Rittenberg (1988) also takes a position close to Ahmed and argues that belief in common descent has been the most significant attribute associated with Pakhtun identity in Pakhtun perception (p. 6). A renowned Pakhtun intellectual Professor Nawaz Tair postulated that, it is becoming extremely necessary for the Pakhtuns to keep their

genealogical record as it may become more imperative to refer to it to establish one's Pakhtun identity in future.<sup>112</sup>

Through these evidences from the literature I will support my argument in the next section on how this ascribed aspect of Pakhtunness is emphasized by one category and de-emphasized by the other. This conscious endeavor may invite contention among Pakhtuns for there are numerous groups who do not hold the memory of lineage and there are also those whose claim of placement in genealogies is challenged.

The most discussed aspect of Pakhtunness is the behavioral aspect or performing aspect. This aspect is enshrined in the behavioral code known as Pakhtunwali or Pukhto. Ahmed rightly asserts that, '*the code is the idiom through which the Pukhtun expresses his Pukhtunness*' (1980: 91). The saying among Pakhtuns, differentiates Pakhto language from the code,

*'He is Pathan who does Pashto, not (merely) the one who speaks Pashto'* (Barth, 1969b: 119).

It is this 'doing Pashto' that centers the discussion of boundary maintenance in Barth's celebrated study (1969b) and the core of 'ideal Model' of Pukhtuns, postulated by Ahmed (1980). The core values underlying this code are identified by Barth as '*male autonomy and equality, self-expression and aggressiveness*' situated in the concept of honor (1969b: 120). Ahmed argues that like other codes it is 'part-fiction' and 'part-reality' (1980: 89). It may not reflect empirical facts and is conditioned on circumstances as it may be practiced only when it provides practical 'self-image' (Barth, 1969b: 120). Barth argues that, the Pakhtun code and its inherent 'values orientation' are reflected in certain institutions such as *Melmastia* (hospitality) *Jirga* (council) and *Purdah* (seclusion of women). Ahmed (1980) on other hand adds *Badal* (revenge, feud, vendetta) and *Nanawatee* (suing of the enemy for peace) to the list but emphasizes that the most operative features of Pakhtunwali are *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry) and *Tor* (black-meaning female chastity) and collectively they constitute the concept of honor.

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<sup>112</sup> Professor Tair (2008) is former director of the Pashto Academy in Peshawar University who hails from Thana. He has done a ground breaking study on Pakhto proverbs. These assertion were made in his interview with the author in Thana on 13 April 2008.

These concepts and institutions socially organize Pakhtuns and provide a kind of behavioral charter to perform. As mentioned earlier that practicing such 'ideal' behavior may defer and vary from different ecological settings and conditions. The list of the constituting features of Pakhtunwali or ideal behavior may be inconclusive.

Parishan Khattak, a Pakhtun intellectual identifies following behavioral traits; masculinity, humanity, humbleness, no oppression and suppression, contentment, righteousness, tolerance, toil, animate, bravery, truthfulness, trustworthiness, beauty of women and manliness' of young, *Pardah* (seclusion of women), true ideology, steadfastness, determination, tenacious on Islam, ego, hospitality, generosity, respectfulness, protection of others' honor, protection of the weak and seeking knowledge (reported in Khattak, 2008; 9-12). Even the word 'Pashtun' or 'Pakhtun' describes the characteristics of Pakhtuns. Such as 'P' stands for 'Path' (honor-self respect), 'Sh' or 'Kh' stands for 'Shegara' or 'Khegara' (goodwill-support), 'T' stands for 'Tora' (sword-bravery), 'U' or 'WO' stands for 'Ufa' or 'Wafa' (loyalty) and finally 'N' stands for 'Nang' (honor) (Khattak, 2008: 08).<sup>113</sup> This long and inconclusive list of behavioral attributes adds to the sense of pride, Lindholm (1982) argues, *'It is assumed that Pukhtun are more intelligent, brave, more hospitable, more religious, and more of everything than any other people'* (p. 218).

Unlike Barth who argued that Pakhtuns emphasize more on 'doing Pakhto' and less on 'speaking Pakhto', Bartalotti argues that Pashto or Pakhto language in itself is an important attribute of Pakhtun identity (2000: 70-74). In fact the values embedded in Pakhtunwali are alive through their unwritten expression in Pakhto language, therefore the loss of Pakhto language is a loss of these values (Khattak, 2008: 61).

### **Ascribed and Performed Pakhtunness in Malakand:**

The question of 'who is a Pakhtun', when asked in the field gathered enormous response from the informants. Summarizing this response I suggest that Pakhtunness is contextualized and contested. Paradoxically, Pakhtunness is seen in both its ascriptive and performed or achieved aspects with varying emphasis. 'Speaking Pukhto' and 'doing Pukhto' are variantly stresses as is the patrilineal descent to identify a Pakhtun. *Khanan* and *Ghariban* categories stress different markers or attributes of identity and

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<sup>113</sup> This very description of Pakhtun characteristics was often cited by my informants in the field when they are asked the fundamental question of how a Pakhtun should look like (cf. Ahmed, 2006: 17).

indulge in contest over the definition of Pakhtun as they do on the meaning of categorical boundaries. This contest is shaped by multiple contexts in which the locus of discourse is the definition of Pakhtun. Contexts are situational i.e local and national and historical. Local contexts are defined by the social categorization, contested categorical boundary meaning and historical experience. Therefore, the contest on who is Pakhtun is highly significant. When the situation is defined by national context the discourse loses some of its contested form. Historical context draws from both local and national contexts and guides the discourse through historical claims deeply entrenched in the past experiences. In a sense history is repertoire, to draw from, in support of one's claim in the contest. The national historical context is vague and gives both categories the opportunity to identify with Pakhtun heritage of conquest and victory and less chances to contest.

Barth (1969b) has identified that despite hierarchal stratification, the entire population, including non Pathan groups, 'approached to a uniform Pathan style of life and speech'.

Therefore, though the local version of the ethnic name (Pakhtun in the case of Swat and Peshawar) continues to indicate the dominant stratum internally, it is increasingly used collectively to designate the whole population in contrast to the population of other, non-Pashto-speaking areas. In this sense, then the internal boundary tends to lose some of its ethnic character (Barth, 1969b: 128).

In these lines Barth, referred to the local and national context, when the reference to Pakhtun identity changes. However, Barth's model and the above observation about the internal and external processes of identification fail to explain why the people in Malakand after the collapse of traditional edifice of authority and social organization (to which even Barth (1981) later referred), and the processes we discussed earlier (chapter 4) would sustain these identification. Moreover, he did not relate intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic dynamics of identification. Within the population or to say ethnic group social categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* are organized as such that they have lost their consensus (if there was such consensus at all) over calling each other with the titles such as 'Pakhtun' or 'non-Pakhtun'. *Khanan's* claims of calling

themselves Pashtuns or 'Pakhtuns' is challenged by the *Ghariban*. In routine conversation and interaction *Ghariban* may use the title *Khanan* frequently but would avoid the title 'Pakhtun' for the *Khanan*, on other hand *Khanan* may frequently use the word Pakhtun for themselves. Moreover, we have already discussed that hierarchal patterns of patron-client relations have been discontinued and increasingly the categorical boundary convey contested meanings. In such a situation the discourse is shifted from social categorical identities to the ethnic identity and involve broader claims of ethnic identity. Inclusion and exclusion of each other in Pakhtun identity (ethnic identity) centers on varying emphasis on identity features. As mentioned earlier the context for such processes is both local and national. But in local context the contest is significant as statuses are blurred and meaning of categorical boundaries contested. Developments in Malakand suggest a contest rather a consensus, as Barth observation implies, on the definition of Pakhtun (or Barth's term 'Pathan'). There is substantial evidence referring to emerging contestation on social statuses and implied consequences for ethnic identification as demonstrated below.

Lindholm pointed out the resentment among the young 'Pukhtuns' (landlords) of a Swat village against the achieved statuses. He argues that these younger 'Pukhtuns' against the belief of their elders increasingly see Pukhtun status in blood due to 'status insecurity'. However, he argues that generally the clients or the dependents of 'Pukhtun' do not question the 'value system' even if they have amassed wealth and purchased land (Lindholm, 1982: 109-112). Barth in the same line argued that castes differences are decreasing but references to caste origins are also made.

Some consciousness and identity still adheres to caste origins: thus non-Pakhtun members of the elite complain about the presumption of Pakhtuns in assuming themselves to be naturally more capable and fit to lead, take responsibility and dominate decisions (Barth, 1981: 157).

Akbar Ahmed has insisted that Pakhtun of Mohmand Agency remains Mohmand Pukhtun even if he has lost his land and migrated from the Agency. He still retains his place on the tribal charter to which he is recruited by birth and not 'sloughed off' as Barth argued about Swati 'Pakhtuns'. Therefore, the defining attribute of the Pukhtun is his reference to tribal charter and Pukhtun ancestry (Ahmed, 1980:84).

One tends to question how the social values system will maintain itself when internal contestation is increasing. Also, as an implication, occur the blurring of 'Pakhtun' as categorical identity (in post traditional system) and emergence of Pakhtun as an ethnic identity claimed and contested by all. Focusing on these processes the internal-external dynamics be comprehended. I argue that such dynamism is currently discernible in Malakand, where in post reform era the question of who is Pakhtun is related to previous system organized by hierarchical and status structured system. Awami-khel perhaps grasped the centrality of this dynamism asked prominently in its pamphlets, *Pashtun kon?* (Who is Pakhtun?).

David Edwards reported about a group which identified itself as Ghilzai Pakhtuns in Peshawar refugee camps. Some of its members accumulated wealth through transportation business, while the others adopted the profession of transporting construction material through donkeys. However, they were consistent in acting on Pakhtunwali features such as keeping *Hujra* and doing *Purdah*. This group was perceived by other groups to be *kharkaran* (donkey workers) for their 'demeaning' occupation and negated not only their tribal but Pakhtun status. Edwards adds,

The essential reason for this denial of identity is the perception of other Pakhtuns that in accepting low-status position of donkey workers, they have abandoned their right to be called Pakhtuns. In becoming defined as an occupational group, they have foresworn their right to self-definition and, in the view of the Pakhtun, can no longer claim to fulfill the ethos of *gheyra*, whatever other features of identity they uphold (Edwards, 1990: 78-79).

The discourse about who is Pakhtun is held in a stratified society and is informed by historical experience (struggle between Awami-khel and *Khanan*) and meaning communicated across the categorical boundaries in social interaction. The discourse at times does not originate in isolation rather manifests in conversation about the land acquisition, population pressure, criminal activities in the region and electoral politics.

#### 1. Ascribed Pakhtunness:

Most of the *Khanan* would claim Pakhtun identity on ascribed attributes such as patrilineal descent from Yousaf, historical evidence to support these claims and

landownership based in ancestral land rights. These attributes are associated with birth right to be Yousafzai Pakhtun. Such Pakhtunness generates pride in the glorious past of ancestors when they conquered the area with 'bravery' and preserved their political autonomy. Genealogies are often contradictory but useful source of reference to establish one's place in the tribal charter. Landownership, although diminishing, is retained to refer to their ascribed status. They are still socially organized into *Khels* (clan) despite the administrative and demographic compulsions. In the city of Batkhela one is still either the part of *Madeykhel* quarter, *Umerkhel* or *Ibrahimkhel* quarters. Despite the mixing up of migrants in these quarters, socially and even administratively living quarters are associated with these khels.<sup>114</sup>

Referring to *Ghariban*, *Khanan* would raise doubts about their ancestry, tribal background and their migration to Malakand. Such references are always followed by assertion that their Pakhtunness is in doubt. Doubts of this kind or failure on these criteria are always the primary reference of discredit to their claim of Pakhtunness, even if performing failure is also referred to. In local context for *Khanan*, a Pakhtun is therefore, a person who can trace his descent to epical ancestor through tribal genealogies and can uphold claims of landownership.

In non-local or national (inter ethnic) context, the definition may become very inclusive. Speaking and doing Pakhto becomes prominent markers. But such inclusivity is conditioned by the fact that these people might have lost their statuses for different reasons and have retained no memory of their lineage. Although this may be considered a failure too but something which can be ignored due to social distance. Similarly, descent which is claimed but not supported through evidence can still be accepted in the case of prominent political figures. Besides Pakhtun sovereigns ruling the length and breadth of India, they would proudly refer to contemporary personalities such as Ayub Khan (President of Pakistan, 1958-1969) and Zakir Hussain (Indian President, 1967-1969) etc in their narrations as great Pakhtuns.<sup>115</sup> Referring to other ethnic groups of Pakistan they would identify the whole region a Pakhtun region. Similar conclusions were also made by Bartlotti by looking at the debate in provincial assembly of Khyber

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<sup>114</sup> Most of these quarters are in the old or Central Batkhela. Some of the clan members have migrated out of these quarters due to population pressure on land.

<sup>115</sup> I was narrated a story by a Khan in Thana, of how the mother of Indian president lamented to a Pakhtun poet visiting her in Delhi, that her son can no more speak the Pakhto language and therefore losing his Pakhtun identity.

Pakhtunkhwa about renaming the province. He found the nationalists using more inclusive markers of identity to identify Pakhtuns. Therefore, he argued that, '*Pashtun identity is malleable, negotiable and contested, in certain interpersonal, local and national political contexts*' (Bartlotti, 2000: 83-84).

The local historical context for *Khanan* would be dominated by the working of Jirga, *Riwaj*, law and order, tranquility and the rise of anti-*Riwaj* forces such as Awami-khel and kisanyan. They would be considered devoid of Pakhtun values and embodiment of treachery. Condemnation of Awami-khel would be done for their role to create tension in the society and making *Khanan-Ghariban* differences a significant social and political issue. *Riwaj* is explained as their custom and usage since generations and the effectiveness of jirga system to deal with crime.<sup>116</sup> Comparison made with the current system of justice and effectiveness of previous system confirmed.<sup>117</sup>

To conclude *Khanan* identify Pakhtuns through emphasis on ascribed aspects of the identity such as patrilineal descent and landownership. They would however, shift emphasis from these two markers to other more inclusive markers like language or perhaps Pakhtunwali when the context is situationally and historically located off Malakand. After losing most of their prerogatives the *Khanan*, with transformation of traditional system, would insist on their ascribed identity vis-a vis *Ghariban*. Among them as discussed earlier the younger ones would find themselves more inclined to choose the ascribed aspects to identify Pakhtun.<sup>118</sup> It is significant because in changing statuses and disintegration of hierarchies in the new political and social dispensation, these claims refer to not just the changing nature of statuses ('Pakhtun' versus clients) but changing nature of ethnic identity from achieved to ascribed one. Meaning that despite the transformation of previous statuses, the consolidation of these statuses is sought in shifting emphasis on the criterion of inclusion in ethnic identity from achieved

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<sup>116</sup> The document *Riwaj Nama* divided the population into Agriculturists and non Agriculturists. The Agriculturists included Pakhtuns (who own lands) and the religious classes of Mian, Pir, Syed (they are given land by Pakhtuns known as 'Serai'); while non Agriculturists include everyone else (Khan, 1964)

<sup>117</sup> Even the *Ghariban* would agree to an extent that jirga provided speedy justice but will also assert that it was growing corrupt later. Moreover, it was always considered biased for it did not include representatives of the *Ghariban*.

<sup>118</sup> The assertion of young khan in Batkhela testifies this, "if Pakhtun identity was a skin on sale in Batkhela market it would have been worth hundreds of thousand for *Ghariban*" (Yousaf Khan, interview, 2008).

to ascribed. Implying that the enlargement of internal contest on statuses to broader contest ethnic identification.

## 2. Performing Pakhtunness

*Ghariban* does not contextualize Pakhtunness to a greater extent. However, due to contextualization by the *Khanan* and their emphasis on ascribed aspects of Pakhtunness they emphasize on different markers of Pakhtun identity and therefore delineate the ascribed from achieved or performed aspects of Pakhtunness. Their diversity and historical experience impress them to perceive Pakhtun identity in more inclusive markers such as speaking or doing Pakhto. In local situational context they deny that (known) patrilineal descent and associated landownership are primary criteria of Pakhtunness. They would rather insist that the primary criteria is speaking and doing Pakhto. They also reinterpret some of doing Pakhto features in this process of emphasis.

The performing aspect of Pakhtunness, is seen equally in Pakhtun values and Islam. No matter how 'ideal' they represent consummated Pakhtun. Oddly, in contrast to ascribed aspect, the achieved aspect also takes some primordial color for it is the sum of traits that are practiced for generations and are perceived to be typical of Pakhtuns. An immigrant in Batkhela concluded that, "*Pakhto cha na ze na*" (Pakhto cannot be warded off-entailing it cannot be snatched from Pakhtuns). He insisted that like a color Pakhto is carried for ever. Second, performing Pakhto is associated with Islam. These two aspects of performance, as reported earlier, in Awami-khel imagination and discussed in light of interviews I conducted from various *Ghariban* in the field.

Pakhtunness is in "honoring others", "respecting others", *bahadari* (bravery- not just shown in the field but in challenging traditions), *Ghairat* (honor), *Melmastiya* (hospitality), dialogue, Jirga, "*Khaloos*" (compassion), "*Imandari*" (honesty), trustworthiness, *Sadaaqat* (truthfulness), *Khegera* (good will), etc. These features constitute the ever extending ideal charter. Often they are broader enough to evaluate those who may not claim Pakhtun identity. If a person, irrespective of ethnic background, demonstrates greater achievement or a moral wonder, a Pakhtun would remark "*Sam Pakhtun de*" (he is a true Pakhtun) or "*Da Pukhtano/Pukhto Kar ye woko*" (he performed like a Pakhtun). Such assertions are made for anyone without looking into his descent, language or phenotypical features. Anyone who performs in

this very way shall rightly be called a Pakhtun. Any failure with no matter how rich or well supported by record of descent would not be identified as Pakhtun.

*Ghariban* interpret Pakhtunwali features, like honor and bravery, through their own experiences. They may see honor and autonomy<sup>119</sup> in businesses; and find it 'brave' to challenge the traditional social believes such as '*business is a non Pakhtun activity*'.<sup>120</sup> Barth reported that in Swat and other western agrarian societies of 'Pathans' political autonomy is founded on land ownership (1969b:127). One would question why the immigrant businessmen would relocate autonomy to businesses. Socio-economic changes have certainly required relocation of autonomy. Moreover, the occupational groups may get new meanings such as '*Hunarmand*' (skilled people), who do manual work in contrast to the lazy *Khanan*. Awami-khel movement also described Pakhtunness. Attacking the descent and landownership or wealth as criteria of Pakhtun identity, they imagined Pakhtunness to be in 'bravery', 'honor', and 'love for Islam'. They appealed to historical accounts and the struggle of the *Ghariban* since the colonial time to fight oppression and dominance.

*Ghariban* also more emphatically identified Pakhtunness with Muslimness. The Muslimness of Pakhtun is provoked most of the time to relate Pakhtun behavior with Islamic ideals. Islamic principles of equality and justice are prominent themes of Awami-khel pamphlets. *Ghariban* see *Khanan*' failure to be just and equitable failure on both Pakhtun and Islamic account. '*Zulm*' (atrocities) *beinsafi* (injustice), *landey katal* (disrespect or looking down at others), *beizzati* (dishonor) etc were traits considered not only non-Pakhtun but also non-Islamic; and were identified in *Khanan* conduct.

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<sup>119</sup> Instead of landownership (Barth, 1969b), they related autonomy with independence from the clutches of usurpers and their system headed by Jirga. Pamphlets of Awami-khel are full of emphasis on the fact that land is the manipulating tool in the hands of khans who's land rights were protected by British for their services to British government and so against the principle of 'honor' and 'autonomy'. They also emphasized that all those who live in Malakand have the right to call themselves Pakhtuns and should have equal rights.

<sup>120</sup> It is widely believed that business is a non Pakhtun activity. In Malakand Businesses and trade were previously run by Hindus known as "Banryas" (cf. Bellew, 1864). Later, this name was referred to all those Pakhtuns who attempted to start businesses. Initially very few *Khanan* dared to do businesses and fewer of them succeeded to flourish such as Shireen Khan. Such businesses later on created jealousies among the other *Khanan* and currently a number of them are entering businesses. However, those in businesses might not leave their lands and keep their source of identity.

Therefore, Islamic idioms such as ‘Jihad’ against the usurpers (*Khanan*) and emphasis on Shari'ah were referred to in Awami-khel literature.<sup>121</sup>

### **Overlapping between ascribed and performing Pakhtunness:**

Although the above discussion posits an attempt from various categories in Malakand to delineate the ascribed and performed aspects of Pakhtunness through varying emphasis, there is no sharp distinction in the perception of the people in general. There is visible overlapping in these positions. Some of *Ghariban* would prefer to identify Pakhtun through ascribed markers and in evidence would produce the name of their ‘khel’ and the village their ancestors have migrated from. Such people would impress upon the *Khanan* that they were previously landowners but due to feuds related to *badal* (revenge) they have lost their lands to their rivals. In this way the identity is negotiated. Moreover, they would also emphasize performing features with Pakhtunness.

*Khanan* do emphasize Pakhtunwali and act prominently to further establish their claim to Pakhtun identity. They even criticize ‘others’ for their failure to perform on Pakhtunwali such as *Melmastiya* (hospitality) and *gham-khadi* (sorrow and joy celebrations) Hujra keeping, etc (see chapter 4). *Ghariban* at the same time recognize the importance of ancestry and lineage but highlight that these features are steadily lost by Pakhtun due to enormous changes in circumstance and conditions. They also discredit allegations for being failing on Performing Pakhto rather they find their acts closer to the ideal behavior of Pakhtun.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I focused on contest over ethnic identity of Pakhtuns. Through this discussion I expanded on previous discussion of internal social categorization in Malakand (chapter 4). The argument in this chapter is predicated on historical account of the struggle of Awami-khel against *Riwaj* and FCR, delineating aspects of Pakhtunness from the literature and reflecting on local struggle to contextualize and contest Pakhtunness. So far I demonstrated, how Pakhtuns in Malakand in time and space not just socially categorize, contest boundary meanings (chapter 4) but also

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<sup>121</sup> I found a sense of achievement in Awami-khel officials despite partial success in terms of failure to bring in Sharia. They bragged to bring down the system but failed to answer why could not they replace the system with Sharia, as they demanded.

evolve a discourse on ethnic identity. Such discourse has greater repercussions as it involves varying degree of emphasis on different aspects of Pakhtunness such as ascribed and achieved to include and exclude.

Elaborating on the struggle of an indigenous organization which questioned the political status of a tribal Agency and related the issues of inequality and dishonor with identification, I have suggested importance of internal processes for change. This can be tied up with the debate of change being imposed by encapsulating system (c.f Ahmed, 1980) or change being internally desired (as I showed here). Moreover, the contested and contextualized Pakhtunness as posited here would be an important addition to the literature that so far has not problematized Pakhtun identity. This may also raise the question of how this discourse on Pakhtun identity excludes or includes other identification such as Pakistani and Muslimness.<sup>122</sup> It needs explanation whether such discernible identification processes in Malakand avoid bringing in other identities and kept the primacy of the ethnic identity or involves other identities at other levels.

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<sup>122</sup> These identities are included by Pakhtuns of Pakistan in their self identification. For tribal, ethnic and Pakistani identities constituting part of Pakhtun identification see Ahmed (1977: 16) and Edward (1996). For Muslimness as part of Pakhtunness see Barth (1969b), Bartlotti (2000), Ahmed (1980; 1976) etc.

## Chapter 6:

### *'Pakistaniat' of Pakhtuns*

Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan is complicated by their own insistence on ethnic identification being a primary identity and State's incessant focus on a Pakistani identity that is predicated on Islam and has shown varying degree of appreciation to ethnic or regional identities. In this chapter I will argue that ethnic identity remains the primary identity for Pakhtuns in Malakand but it is also related to a multi ethnic Pakistani identity to generate a sense of belonging to Pakistan. Pakhtun through their own discourses on sacrifice, inter ethnic power and violence relate their ethnic pride with national identity which formulate a dynamic sense of belonging to Pakistan. Moreover, the context for such process of identification with Pakistan is set by growing integration of Pakhtuns and identifying space.<sup>123</sup>

The two conflicting views on Pakhtun integration into Pakistani State and nation have been less reflective of the complexity inherent in Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan. I identify complexity in Pakhtun sense of belonging and with support of evidence from Malakand and the literature I suggest that, these intricacies are produced among Pakhtuns by a subjective sense of ethnic pride and belonging to Pakistan. Ethnic identity remains primary, however, that does not translate into irredentist demand rather a desire to constitute a multi-ethnic society in Pakistan. The economic and political integration processes and transforming spacial identity reinforces believe in the multi-ethnic Pakistan. Moreover, I have noticed that discourse on the Pakistani nation among the Pakhtuns does not in a pragmatic way constitute interpretation of and contest over imagination of Pakistan. Such thought processes are often limited to the inter-ethnic power dynamism and resource distribution. However, a Pakistani nation in Pakhtun imagination would always be multi-ethnic. Muslim nation based in the communal discourse does not constitute a dominant debate among Pakhtun despite the fact that they identify with and assert their contribution to the wars with India. Similarly, I could not identify a sense of belonging to Afghanistan in the region which was very recently a recruiting ground for religious organizations supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan.

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<sup>123</sup> Personification of space means identification of the space with their ethnicity.

In this chapter I will draw a precise sketch of the primacy of ethnic identity among Pakhtuns for I have given details earlier on how locally the contest over Pakhtunness is significant in Malakand. I will then elucidate the Pakhtun integration in the State and reflect on their successive personification of the region where they constitute a majority. Focus afterwards shifts to discussion on Pakistani nationalism and different perspectives on it. I will then illustrate the discourse of inter ethnic power and violence which shapes the debate on national identity and sense of Pakhtun belonging. Finally, I will argue that Pakhtuns find it difficult to accommodate to a Pakistani identity that is exclusively constituted of Islamic identity and would rather propound an identity that allows ethnic expression and Muslimness.

### 6.1: Ethnic identity as a primary identity

Previous chapters emphasized that Pakhtuns in Malakand not only categorize each other locally but also contest their ethnic identity contextually. These processes also endorse another significant argument that ethnic identity has primary importance in Malakand. People inhabiting Malakand emphatically identify themselves as Pakhtuns and shape their social relations according to cultural requirements of Pakhtun identity. Despite the contest on inclusion and exclusion in ethnic identity, locally the most meaningful, consequential and consistent identification process would involve Pakhtunness. Awami-khel with all its rhetoric and struggle against the prevailing social and cultural dispensation would not opt to dissociate from Pakhtun identity. Rather the center of their attack would be to challenge the definition of Pakhtun they thought was configured by *khanan*.

Ahmed (1977; 1984) and Shafqat (2007) have drawn concentric circles of identification borne by Pakistanis. Ahmed working among Mohmand Pakhtuns included circles constituting; subsection, clan, tribal, ethnic, religious (1984: 320) and national (1977: 16). Shafqat with State centric approach identified four circles: inner most is of Islamic values followed by regional-cultural-ethnic circle, Pakistani territoriality circle and the finally symbolic circle of Ummah (2007: xxiii). These circles manifest multiple identities Pakistanis carry in multiple situations and context. My emphasis in this chapter is generally on national or Pakistani identity and particularly on Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan.

Rough as the hillmen's lives are physically, they in some ways have it easier than the better-off plainsmen, who must struggle with when to be a Pathan and when to be a Pakistani, when to develop his Pushtu and when to work on Urdu or English to get a better job, and when to sacrifice tribal or provincial for national interests. Somehow or other, over almost half a century, the Pathans have managed to balance all these things (Spain, 1995:115).

There is a multitude of views on Pakhtun ethno nationalism and their future in Pakistan. Reading from the successive political and economic integration of Pakhtuns in Pakistan a group of scholars has been optimistic about their integration to an extent that they have predicted the ultimate demise of ethno-nationalism and irredentism of Pakhtuns (Khan, A, 2005a; Jalal, 1995a; Ahmed, 1985; Noman, 1990; Ahmed, 1996). Pakhtuns are reported to have '*greater self confidence about their future in Pakistan*' (Jalal, 1995a:194) as political and economic opportunities in Pakistan weaned them away from separatism (Ahmed, 1996: 185). The irredentist demand of 'Pashtunistan' or 'Pakhtunistan' is exaggerated by the State (Noman, 1990; 198).<sup>124</sup> Consequently, there is a decline in popular support for the ethno-nationalist party ANP (Awami National Party) which also indicated that nationalists have '*completely integrated*' into the State (Khan, A: 2005a: 104).

However, the above view is differed by a number of scholars (Cohen, 2005; Jaffrelot, 2005; Waseem; 2006; Weiss, 1999; Behuria, 2005) who predict, though do not outrightly reject the integration, the re-emergence of irredentism or nationalist sentiments in the garb of religion.<sup>125</sup> Behuria has pointed out that the Punjab's dominance theory has outlived and Pakhtuns are now leading 'Islamic wave in Pakistan' (2005; 70). Anita Weiss (1999) perhaps was a bit early to come up with this view though the others must have been influenced by the post 9/11 world. Weiss (1999),

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<sup>124</sup> Omar Noman (1990[1988]; 198) suggests that Pashtunistan means the joining of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakhtun areas of Baluchistan with Afghanistan. This seems to me an irredentist category mentioned by Weiner (1992). However, the nationalists who have been demanding Pashtunistan have not come clear on the definition of the term. Perhaps it was a bargaining card and was used symbolically during the earlier years of Pakistan.

<sup>125</sup> Harrison on other hand has been arguing that the break up of Pakistan is a possibility in an event of stepped up hostilities in Pakhtun regions (2009: 16).

reading the rise of TNSM<sup>126</sup> in Malakand, suggested that Pakhtuns were no longer showing their irredentism through the Pakhtunistan issue rather by adding religion to their nationalism. Weiss's suggestion is different from the others who shared her view of resurgence of religion in Pakhtun region but used the term Pakhtun nationalism rather than irredentism. Irredentism as explained by Myron Weiner (1992) is the demand of the minority in a State to join similar members of the group in neighbouring State. Cohen has also pointed out two eventualities of Pakhtunistan, one through MMA and the other through the sponsorship of Afghanistan (2005: 219). Both of these currently look remote as Pakhtuns have rejected religious parties in recent elections and Afghanistan is occupied more with State building, therefore irredentism seems remote possibility.

Despite this disagreement among the scholars on Pakhtun integration into Pakistan, I will emphasize that ethnicity among Pakhtuns is neither a diminishing phenomenon, nor is it sufficiently assertive politically to have culminated into irredentist demands. Ethnicity as understood through the processes of identification among Pakhtuns indicates complexity. Inherent in this complexity is the primacy of ethnic identity vis-a-vis national identity but that does not preclude Pakistani identity. I argue that Pakhtuns retain their ethnic identity as primary and still relate to Pakistani identity. In this way I adopt an ethnographic approach to the dilemma of ethnicity in Pakistan. Pakhtuns, therefore, have been discursively relating to a national identity that appreciates ethnic diversity and Muslimness. Moreover, this illustrates the primacy of ethnic identity and does not establish its exclusivity. In a pragmatic way Pakhtuns are merging ethnic pride with national belonging.

## 6.2: Integration of Pakhtuns in the State

It is widely reported that unlike other minority ethnic groups such as Baluchis and Sindhis, Pakhtuns have been drawing benefits from the State of Pakistan and perhaps this has created greater 'confidence' in them about their integration in Pakistan (Jalal, 1995a). Unlike other minority ethnic groups, Pakhtuns have all along remained masters of their land resources in Pakistan and their majority province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has

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<sup>126</sup> TNSM stands for Tehrik Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi, an armed struggle in Malakand region (in 1990s) to pressurize government to introduce Islamic Sharia in Malakand district.

never been under stress from settlers of other ethnic groups.<sup>127</sup> Furthermore, Pakhtuns have been buying lands in other provinces such as Punjab and Sindh (Ahmed: 1999: 20). Likewise, cultural and religious alienation of Pakhtun which existed during colonial time has receded (Spain, 1977:22).

### **Socio-economic integration of Pakhtuns:**

Pakhtuns are the second most numerous ethnic group of Pakistan after Punjabis. Their demographic strength is consolidated by their access to power loci and relatively greater control over natural resources in their region. They also have industrial, and agrarian contribution to National GDP (although weaker) and more important through remittances sent by fairly larger Pakhtun Diaspora in Middle East and Europe.<sup>128</sup> Although, small scale industry in Pakhtun region is growing (Zaidi, 1992:130), it still lags behind Punjab and urban Sindh in large scale industries (cf. Ahmed, 1999; Zaidi, 1992).<sup>129</sup> However, recent war on terror has seriously hampered any industrial growth and has caused the closure of existing factories in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>130</sup> However, Pakhtuns through out the country have shown greater interests in transportation, trade and construction businesses (Ahmed, 1999: 221-222; Jalal, 1995a: 194). Moreover, they still constitute a greater share of labor force particularly in the urban centers of Pakistan i.e Karachi and Lahore (Jalal, 1995a: 194). Pakhtuns have also accumulated wealth through remittances sent by family members from abroad (Jalal, 1995a: 194). They have invested in real estate and landed property in other provinces and have retained the

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<sup>127</sup> The previous name of North West Frontier Province was replaced by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the 18th constitutional amendment. This amendment was passed by both the houses through a consensus vote and was signed into law by the president of Pakistan on 19 April 2010 (The News, 20 April 2010).

<sup>128</sup> One estimate counts almost 0.3 million Pakhtuns in Middle East alone and are sending almost half a billion dollars each year (Jalal, 1995a: 194)

<sup>129</sup> Moreover, dispute of royalty on hydroelectric power generation with the central government, negligence to the large scale industrial sector (NDCP, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2007) growing unemployment, poor irrigation and above all recent unrest in the region have all contributed to its deplorable economic conditions. Shahid Kardar places Khyber Pakhtunkhwa third, on social sector development scale, after the provinces of Punjab and Sindh (cited in Zaidi, 1992: 121-123).

<sup>130</sup> President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) said recently that out of 2,254 functioning industrial units in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa only, 540 were functional in 2010. For the deteriorating business and economic conditions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Saleem, 2010).

ownership of their land resources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Ahmed, 1999: 20).<sup>131</sup> On the other hand their region (including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FATA and parts of Baluchistan) has not been burdened by settlers from other provinces as in the case of Baluchistan and Sindh (Ahmed, 1999: 20).

The most discussed aspect of Pakhtun integration into the State is their share in the two most powerful institutions of the State i.e army and civil bureaucracy. Punjabis and Pakhtuns constitute the largest share in the officers and sepoy ranks of Pakistan army since the colonial times (Cohen, 1998: chapter 2). Therefore unlike Bengalis, Baluchis and Sindhis, Pakhtuns have not been deprived of their share in the most powerful institute in the country. Similarly, Pakhtun share in civilian bureaucracy of Pakistan is significant enough to have made them partners of dominant Punjabis and Mohajirs. However, integration of Pakhtuns has brought more dependency on Punjab and thus nationalist opportunity to focus on Punjab's dominance (Harrison, 1992; 249).

#### **Personification of space:**

An important aspect of political integration of Pakhtuns in Pakistan is the evolving spacial identity. Although Pakhtuns have been claiming their association with the region historically, their administrative, political and economic control over the region particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa enables them to add spatial feature to their identity. The demographic majority, administrative and political representation, control over economic resources, social and cultural dominance and literary activism of Pakhtuns within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is conspicuous. Likewise, social interaction, dominant political and economic discourse and cultural expressions creates a Pakhtunized environment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Oddly enough, such ambiance is preserved within the boundaries of the State that does not recognize political ethnicity. However, popular identification of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan as the abode of Pakhtun reinforces the Pakhtun sense of belonging to the region.

The language, Pakhto being an important marker of identity, is widely spoken and despite adoption of Urdu as formal language of communication, it is still the 'language of the household' (Ahmed, 2002: 41). Pakhto also is extensively used in

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<sup>131</sup> A high rate of migration to businesses centres of Pakistan such as Lahore and Karachi also indicate exploiting opportunities by Pakhtuns. During 1972 to 1979 almost 69 per cent of all Pakhtun migration was destined for Karachi alone (Zaidi, 1992: 110).

informal official communication, universities and market place alike which preserves the ambience and identity<sup>132</sup>.

The Pashtuns want to be ‘recognized’ in their own right as a distinct collectivity. This makes Pashto symbolically significant but, power being accessible through English and Urdu, the Pashtuns keep acquiring those languages (Rahman, 2002: 120).

Pakhtun presence in provincial bureaucracy, local and national business, trade, print and electronic media, educational institutions is substantial enough to make the ambience Pakhtun. The officers and businessmen familiar with and raised in the ambience often get nostalgic when posted out of the province.<sup>133</sup> Therefore, Feroz Ahmed has rightly remarked that due to demographic and economic changes Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ‘*has become even more Pashtoonized*’ (2002, 38).

Pashtuns were the primary ethnic group in the province. They had monopolized land ownership. set cultural norms and directed traditional affairs over a large part of the Frontier for over four centuries since their original conquests in the region (Rittenberg, 1977: 79).

Although the political and administrative autonomy of the province is still in rudimentary stage for the central government continues to hold power, symbolic autonomy of being free from the interference and control of other ethnic groups is broadly constructed. This control is feared by other minority groups such as Baluchis and Sindhis in their respective provinces. Autonomy being a daring part of Pakhtun identity (Barth, 1969b) is then linked with land; the land is an abode always dear to

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<sup>132</sup> Most of the people do not know how to write Pakhto; mainly because of State negligence in its promotion. Pakhto has been used by nationalists leaders in the past as identity marker and that invited State suspicions (Rahman, 1996). Moreover, it is consistently used as a popular medium of expressing ethno-nationalist sentiments and preservation of cultural norms. Urdu is comprehended by majority of Pakhtuns due to official patronage and associated power (see Rahman, 1996). It is also extensively used as a language of communication in interaction with diverse ethnic groups through out the State (Safi, 2009).

<sup>133</sup> A number of bureaucrats and businesspersons in Peshawar and Batkhela told me that when they cross the Indus River and enter Khyber Pakhtunkhwa they get the sense of Pakhtun environment and feel enchanted.

Pakhtun heart and having sentimental value. “....a Pathan would rather give up his life than surrender his land or his wife. They are both sacred” (Khan, 1947[2007]:39).

Stephen Rittenberg argues that Pakhtuns appropriated most of North Western region of Pakistan by conquest, ‘and with some exceptions make the land their exclusive possession’. They also ‘came to identify a certain area as being collectively their own. They called it Pakhtunkhwa. Its boundaries were ill defined, but the concept did provide a territorial expression to their ethnocentrism’ (1977:69). The effort of Pakhtun nationalists to rename the province of NWFP as Pakhtunkhwa is considered a symbolic claim of recognition (Rahman, 2002: 120) within the State of Pakistan. These efforts exhibited negotiation of their space within the State of Pakistan. Spain rightly commented, “it is no great wonder that the benign, non-separatist Pushtoonkhwa has replaced the old aggressive, secessionist Pushtoonistan” (1995:117).

The issue was highly politicized when the constitutional amendment draft presented by the current government proposed renaming NWFP as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after a compromise on the name between Awami National Party (ANP) and Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N). Finally the coalition government of Pakistan People’s Party and ANP succeeded in renaming the province through 18th Amendment to the constitution of Pakistan in April, 2010.<sup>134</sup> The leader of ANP after the change of name related it with the recognition of Pakhtun identity in Pakistan (News, 11 April 2010). Not only he termed it a historical moment but a reflection of the recognition, ‘that they are part of the country’ (Awami National Party, 2010).

### 6.3: Sense of belonging to Pakistan: The *Pakistaniat* of Pakhtuns

One of the most difficult and complex aspect of identification among Pakhtuns is their belonging to Pakistan as a nation State. I argue that Pakhtuns have been successively integrating in the State, enjoying greater social, economic and administrative control on a territory they consistently recognize as their homeland within Pakistan and therefore, a nurturing sense of belonging to Pakistan. However, before discussing this sense of

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<sup>134</sup> The constitutional amendment bill was passed unanimously by National Assembly on 8th April (Dawn, 2010a) and by Senate on 15th April (Dawn, 2010b). It was signed into law by the President of Pakistan on 19 April, 2010 (The News, 20 April, 2010). During this period violent protests were witnessed in the Hindko (language) speaking region of Hazara in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Protesters condemned the renaming of the province and demanded a separate province of Hazara (Daily Times, 2010).

belonging we need to be aware of the context in which such belonging to Pakistan is expressed. The context is well explored by various schools of thoughts that identify the contestation in the realm of nation formation and identification in Pakistan. These schools provide different perspectives which gives useful insights to this study.

### **Pakistani Nationalism:**

Following are the two most prominent perspectives on Pakistani nationalism. Debates delineating these positions provides enormous insights into the complexity of nationalism in Pakistan.

#### Rational Choice and elite manipulation:

The most influential school of thought on Muslim nationalism in India and ethnic politics in Pakistan has been of scholars (Alavi, 1989; Brass, 1974; Samad, 2007; Jalal, 1985; 1995b) who emphasize elite interests and rational choice as explanation of the ethnic and national problem of Pakistan. They postulate that the history of Pakistan is the history of elite dominance and manipulation. Hamza Alavi found Muslim *Salariat*, the middle class urban, professional, educated elite, driving the movement for Pakistan (1989). These elite emphasized differences between the Hindus and Muslims and manipulated symbols in the process (Brass, 1974). Therefore, Muslim and Hindu elites “constructed essentialized communities around faith” by “reinterpreting the past” (Samad, 2007: 75-77). Jinnah being the central figure in this struggle was also strategizing and without any ideational or ideological concerns (Jalal, 1985: 1995b).

Post independence period Pakistan continues to be dominated by consistent elite interests. Scholars of this group illustrate that the alliance of diverse Muslim elite (from different regions and ethnicities of India) soon collapsed after partition, causing internal scramble for power and privileges (Alavi, 1989; Samad, 1995a; 1995b; 2007; Qureshi, 1993). It can be concluded that, where this rational choice or elite manipulation group is criticized for negating the role of normative and ideational concerns it is also found devoid of appreciating the role of religion i.e Islam in the creation of Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009). However, this school of thought has its contribution in highlighting the dominance of elite and shift of power from the elite of one ethnic group to another. In this way it also identified factors leading to suppression of regional and ethnic diversity.

The discursive production of nationalism:

In contrast to rational choice, the discursive school of thought on Muslim nationalism and nation formation in Pakistan is critical of the argument that the demand and articulation of Muslim separatist sentiments are the product of elite interest and manipulation. It emphasizes the normative concerns of Muslims and the discourse on nation, religion and power, a major contributing factor in guiding Muslim for political action. However, this school of thought is not entirely oblivious of the role of elite for elite representing one form of religion often against the other (regional, traditional Islam) forms and traditions of Islam (Verkaaik, 2004; 2007; Shaikh, 2009).

They argue that the ideas and norms embedded in Islamic traditions significant and overwhelming enough to have frustrated elite manipulation (Shaikh, 1989). Emphasizing the discursive production of nationhood and ‘religious nationalism’, they argue that that nationalism is a discourse that transforms preexisting forms of culture and therefore nationalism produces national culture by transforming the pre existing forms of it (Van Der Veer, 1994: 195-197). Moreover, such discursive processes can be related to the ethnic processes in post independence period (in Pakistan), where ethnic groups are, “*discursively produced categories of governance and contentious politics*” (Verkaaik, 2004: 21-22: 2007). Ethnic categories in Pakistan are ‘*inextricably linked to the nation and as a consequence to Islam and have therefore also become confused with various interpretations of Islam*’ (2004: 21-22). Islam, thus, not just acquires a role of unifying force, as was largely projected by Pakistani State and essentialist literature on national identity in Pakistan, but also a divisive one (Shaikh, 1989; 2009; Verkaaik, 2007).<sup>135</sup>

Islamic identity being central to Pakistan’s national identity is marred by a contest between rival discourse i.e communal and Islamist discourse (Shaikh, 2009). The former, being espoused by the ruling elite, is embedded in Muslim separatist discourse and the later, promoted by religious parties, is grounded in ‘radical reading of Islam’ (2009: 10-11). This can be differentiated from the argument that success of Pakistani identity based in Islam is evident in the ‘ethnicization of Islam’ in Pakistan (Verkaaik, 2007; Shafqat, 2007).

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<sup>135</sup> Essentialist literature refers to the work of scholars (Qurashi, 1969; Malik, 1963) who argue that there were objective and essential differences between Hindus and Muslims that culminated into a demand from Muslims for a separate State. Projecting official discourse on nationalism they insist on nation predicated on Islam.

It is imperative to mention that where the discursive argument and literature rightly emphasize the role of normative concerns, it fairly squarely focus on religion. From there it see a contested religious traditions that of State and ethnic groups. I would rather identify that the literature on discursive production of ethnicity and nation has overlooked the significance of linguistic and cultural repertoire, ethnic groups posses and cherish. Ethic groups like Pakhtuns have demonstrated enormous pride in their cultural linguistic and historical constituents of their identity. By this I do not intend to reify and essentialize Pakhtun identity and find primordial constituents of identity static, fixed and unchanging. Rather I find greater contest among Pakhtuns on what constituent elements of identity defines Pakhtun and also the cultural stuff evolving and changing. Moreover, I will also argue that currently a discourse among Pakhtun intellectuals and elite, excessively sensitive to the unrest in their region has been critical of the media presentation of the relationship between culture and Islam. Referring to Verkaaik's argument that ethnicity and religion are amalgamated in Pakistan, I find the relation of ethnicity with Islam problematic in a different way. I will show how Pakhtuns have currently discursively found disjunctions between Islam and Pakhtunwali and have retained distance from Taliban's Sharia and Jihad.

Nation formation in Pakistan:

It is imperative to understand the historical context of nation formation in Pakistan before, we take up the question of Pakhtun's articulation of national identity. I have been emphasizing that we need to understand nation formation as a process where elite manipulation and discursive shifts have been prominent constituent features. Pakhtun sense of belonging is tied to such process of nation making in Pakistan. In fact Pakhtuns have been shaping their Pakistaniat in relation to State driven process of nation formation. Therefore, it is significant to have a succinct view of the various perspectives of the historical development of nationalism in Pakistan.

The elite focused group (Alavi, 1989; Samad, 2007; Qureshi, 1993, Jalal, 1995b) argue that although the regional and religious divisions and factions within the Muslim elite and masses were temporarily put on hold, they reemerged soon after independence (1947). Samad (2007) has argued that the power configuration of earlier decades gave dominant role to Punjabis and Mohajirs and simultaneously Bengalis and other linguistic groups were kept out of power corridors. Samad (2007) insists that Urdu

language and associated culture was projected and regional cultures discouraged. Therefore, Punjabi *Salariat* adopted Urdu language and its culture to consolidate their position. A gradual decline in the powers of Mohajirs and increase in the power of Punjabis since 1971 changed the dynamics of alliance between Punjabi and Mohajirs. It was also a shift from communal (minority rights) discourse to majoritarian discourse and '*the mantra of one religion, one language and one state becomes the norm*' (2007: 105). In this process Punjabi salariat re-imagined Islamic identity and perceived Jinnah's intentions to be of making a religious State (2007: 106). Being distrustful of ethnic and regional interests, Salariat built a centralized State in the image of colonial India. Samad terms these processes the *Punjabization* of Pakistan to establish the hegemony of single ethnic group (2007: 105-107). Samad (2007) posits that the dominance of Punjabi salariat is an incessant phenomenon and with the parallel rise of Pakhtun elite at the cost of Mohajirs's marginalization. Moreover, the policy of the ruling elite towards ethnic diversity '*has been cynically to co-opt or coerce groups that have not been accommodative*' which has made center and ethnic groups relations problematic (Samad, 2007: 127).

Alavi (1986) also discusses the relation of ethnic dominance of Punjabis and the Islamic ideology or identity. He argues that in earlier decade secular traditions of Jinnah were maintained but soon after the rise of protests against Punjabi dominance, '*the ideological tune changed*' (1986: 43-44).

Suddenly Islam and the notion of Islamic brotherhood became the order of the day. It was unpatriotic on the part of Bengalis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluchis to make demands in terms of their regional ethnic identities because all Pakistanis were brothers in Islam (Alavi, 1986: 44)

Jalal (1995b) in her work on history text books has found how through official imagination of nation, India as well as ethno-nationalists and secularists are perceived 'others'.

The discursive school of thought has focused more on the evolving and shifting discourse on national identity and ethnic diversity. It refers to historical context of the discourse of nation formation (Metcalf, 2004; Verkaaik, 2004; 2001; Van Der Veer,

1994; Shaikh, 2009). In the early State of Pakistan's history (1947-1970) the emphasis was more on the communal discourse of Pakistani nationalism. The period was characterized by a context of 'opposition to and distinction from India' (Metcalf, 2004: 219). The State adopted Muslim 'homeland' discourse identified Pakistan as the homeland of the Muslims of India. It also adopted modernist interpretation of Islam that was close to scriptural Islam and opposed to traditional, rural, customary Islam (considered to be influenced by Hindu).<sup>136</sup> These interpretations were accompanied by emphasis on the culture expressed in Urdu language, poetry and dance. It was to discredit regional cultures and languages and to adopt the central symbols that were associated with the Muslims from the North (Metcalf, 2004: 226-227). Being associated with elite Muslim class known as '*Ashraf*' ('well-born' cf. Shaikh, 1989: 04) Urdu language and the education was meant to '*Ashrafization*' of ethnic groups such as Sindhi, Baluchis and Pakhtuns (cf. Verkaaik, 2004: 44-45).

Soon after the succession of East Pakistan (1971) when the ideal of Muslim Nationalism or communalism laid 'scattered' an alternative territorial national identity was postulated by various intellectuals. It emphasized on cultural and political unity in the territorial boundaries of Pakistan since the Indus civilization.<sup>137</sup> Such influences enabled Z.A. Bhutto's government to add a regional and ethnic element to national identity. Verkaaik argues that a Pakistani had double identities of *millat* and *ummah*. The former referred to his national identity but the later referred to universal Muslim brotherhood. Bhutto added a third community i.e. *qaum* which referred to ethnic-territorial units such as Sindhis, Baluchis, Punjabis and Pakhtuns (2004: 40). Through this interpretation of national identity Muhajirs became 'flawed and in-between category' (Verkaaik, 2004: 41). In response Muhajirs tailored an ethnic identity to redefine themselves as Pakistani in a new situation (Shaikh, 2009: 55; Verkaaik, 2004).

During the 1980s the territorial national aspect of identity was replaced with 'supra-territorial dimension of Pakistani identity' and through Islamization process and consolidating links with Middle East, a 'de nationalized' Muslim identity was

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<sup>136</sup> See Metcalf, 2004: chapter 9 and 10, Van Der Veer, 1994: 63-64, Verkaaik, 2001; 2004 and Shaikh, 2009: chapter 2 and 3.

<sup>137</sup> The proponents of these ideas were Aitzan Ahsan (1996) and A. H. Dani (1981 cited in Shaikh, 2009: 57). For discussion of these two perspectives see, Shaikh, (2009:56-57), Metcalf (2004: 231), Verkaaik (2004, 39-40).

encouraged by the State (Shaikh, 2009: 56).<sup>138</sup> Such effort exposed another aspect of the relationship between national identity and Islam. Lack of any consensus on the definition of Islam ensued a discourse on *'the proper way to be a Muslim in order to qualify as a real Pakistani'* (Shaikh, 2009: 57). Shaikh argues that since the 1990s the struggle has returned to contest between 'sons of the soil' and the migrants or 'outsiders'; however, as the case of Balochistan demonstrates the 'outsider' is defined to be one from within the State (2009: 56).<sup>139</sup> Metcalf argues that despite these shifts in identity, Muslim identity is central and consistent to Pakistan's self image. Moreover, she posits that, 'nationalist symbols have not evolved autonomously' in Pakistan and the most incessant and central symbol for most of the Pakistanis is their Muslim identity (2004: 232-233).

The tension between regional and Islamic expressions of Pakistani identity has remained unresolved (Shaikh, 2009: 56).

With this historical process of nation formation in Pakistan we can argue that although the State has been guiding the course of such process, there has been shifting discourses of ethnicity, nation, power and religion. Such shifting discourses reflect lack of consensus on national identity and the on going contestation on Pakistani nationalism. This is in the context where Islam being central to the identity, itself is ridden with contestation. Below I discuss Pakhtuns' discourses of power and sacrifice and their articulating sense of belonging to a multi ethnic Pakistani nation.

### **Interethnic discourse of power and violence: The collision Path.**

In Malakand the question of identification with Pakistani nation would invite response that is expressed in interethnic idiom and loaded with aristocratic hubris informed by historical references to Pakhtun rulers of India. The discourse may get extremely lively and emotional when post independence situation is approached. In focus group discussion in Thana participants being highly articulate, elaborated on the

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<sup>138</sup> The dilemma that has been so consist with official imagination of Pakistan is in geographical limitedness and ideological limitlessness (Jalal, 1995b; Jalibi, 1996:10).

<sup>139</sup> Non native ethnic groups in other provinces such as Punjabis in Balochistan, Punjabis and Pakhtuns in Sindh etc.

economic deprivation as well as denial of recognition of Pakhtun sacrifices and the intention on the part of ruling elite to trivialize their contribution to Pakistan. In this way the State is seen, both, as an entity to which they belong and which is controlled and maneuvered by other ethnic groups, particularly Punjabis. Verkaaik argues that Muhajirs feel that they have lost the State to Punjabis (1994: 38; 2007). Similarly, the discourse among Pakhtuns is centered around power dynamics and the control of a State by a particular group. Therefore, the argument is not a rejectionist one which seek to disown the State but to demonstrate the disadvantageous position they hold in such a State. It is hard to imply from this discourse that the grievances would pile up to shape an irredentist struggle, as the inherent nature of the discourse is accommodative and pragmatically builds up on the sacrifices and services to the State in an apparent effort to impress upon its own value and utility. Moreover, I could not find any conspicuous sense of belonging to Afghanistan, although there were symbolic reference to Pakhtun migration and glorious victories initiated from the region currently constituting Afghanistan.<sup>140</sup>

Although I agree with suggestion that Pakhtun integration has created greater confidence among Pakhtun for their future with Pakistan (Jalal, 1995a), it has also brought more dependency on Punjab and thus nationalist opportunity to focus on Punjab's dominance (Harrison, 1992; 249). Like all other ethnic minorities in Pakistan Pakhtuns have been critical of Punjab's dominance. Verkaaik reports about such tendencies in Pakistan;

In Pakistan, ethnicity is a discourse of opposition, a discourse of dominated people. Punjabis dominate both in numbers and power, have never bothered much about their Punjabiness, and as long as Mohajirs shared the dominant role they were strongly against ethnic solidarity too (Verkaaik, 1994:50).

Among the Pakhtuns of Malakand the use of inter-ethnic idioms is not limited to power configuration and economic deprivation, but these idioms have been expressed more

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<sup>140</sup> Afghanistan as a State has not been the part of people's experience for so long. Pakhtuns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have not seen a consolidated Afghanistan since 1979. Even the refugees having been born in Pakistan have more of an experience of Pakistan than Afghanistan. Therefore, the question of Pakhtuns joining Afghanistan is a remote possibility.

forcefully in the discourse of violence. The most widespread perception of the State in Malakand and broader population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been of an actor that has stakes in the current unrest. The most popular complaint would be the disadvantage of this unrest for Pakhtuns. The State would be considered a major player in this unrest by either supporting subversive elements, ignoring them or fighting them. Moreover, the current discourse of violence associated with Pakhtuns in the media or otherwise has been seen skeptically to be part of the strategy. These activities of the State are then related with persistent sacrifices of Pakhtuns for the State.

The extent and degree of dominance of one or other ethnic group in the State is debated by the literature (Binder, 1986; Talbot, 2003; Samad, 1995b). Punjab is largely believed to be primary beneficiary of this dominance (Samad, 1995b) although its own cohesiveness as a pressure group is far from reality (Talbot, 2003). Moreover, the share of Pakhtuns and Muhajirs in State bureaucracy and military along with Punjabis is also substantial and leads others to conclude that they have been benefiting at the cost of Baluchis and Sindhis. Some (Binder, 1986; Zaidi, 1992; Khan, A, 2005a; Ahmed, 1999) refer to the interplay of elite politics and ethnicity. They believe that the Punjabi feudal class, entrepreneurs and bureaucracy are in alliance with Muhajir and Pakhtun entrepreneurs and bureaucracy to share the benefits of development in Pakistan. The interests of the Pakhtun elite are associated with the status quo and perhaps that of the larger Pakhtun population, which is deprived of any benefits, with a change in the power equation. Whatever is the reported status of the dominance and benefits of ethnic groups, local perceptions varies in Pakistani provinces.

Veerkaik has reported that Muhajirs in Hyderabad believe that State is taken over by Sindhis and Punjabis (2004; 178-179). Similar sentiments were expressed by my informants in Malakand. They were articulate of Punjabi influence on the State and the extent of the power they hold to dominate others. This resentment is reflected through a range of printed magazines, journals and websites distributed in vernacular by the Pakhtuns in Pakistan and those living as Diaspora in Europe and Americas. The elite interests perspective informs us about the dominance of the Punjabi and Mohajir elite (Alavi, 1989; Samad, 2007). Nevertheless the discourse in Malakand seldom relate manipulation of *Khanan* to usurpation with Punjabis. In the very strong sense the dominant ethnic group (Punjabis) are associated with usurpation in inter-ethnic

discourse. Like Muhajirs in Sindh (Verkaaik, 1994: 37), despite a substantial share in the the army, Pakhtuns in Malakand considered e army to be a Punjabi army.

Recently the most striking phenomenon in which the inter ethnic idiom is expressed is the current unrest in the region. Local perception of this unrest in Malakand and the general Pakhtun intellectuals is of ‘othering’ of the Pakhtuns. Such process they believe comprehensively involve the region, they increasingly personify, to be a periphery of the State and association of violence with their ethnic group through a discourse in media.

If the Pakhtun intellectuals, journalists and nationalist think-tank was assertive of a hidden hand within the State institutions, particularly the military, in being consciously oblivious to the growing influence of Taliban in the region, popular perception in Malakand is shrouded in doubts about the subversive elements.<sup>141</sup> Even though the literary circles in Malakand were articulate of the State’s designs and foreign policy enacted through its support to subversive elements in the region, the popular expressions were of doubts and suspicion. The military is broadly perceived to be an institution dominated by Punjabis and therefore, the threat of the current unrest would be ignored unless it threatens Punjab. This perception can be related to the military’s strategic thinking which considers Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other minority provinces as ‘invasion routes’ and Punjab as the ‘core area’ for its population, economic strength, political authority etc (Cohen, 1998:45). Moreover, the leadership of the major political party from Punjab PML (N), is accused of an ambiguous stand on the issue of dealing with Taliban. The leadership only went public in support of action against the Taliban when they came very close to Punjab and Islamabad. The English daily Dawn, in an editorial with the meaningful title “Too Little, Too Late” reported the leader of PML (N) Mian Nawaz Sharif as saying, “*Taliban are now threatening to get out of Swat...so we have to avoid the situation*” (Dawn, 2009). Reinforcing this behavior a senior police officer in Punjab was reported in The New York Times (Tavernise et all, 2009) as saying, “*If you want to destabilize Pakistan, destabilize Punjab*”.

Another potential areas of collision between Pakhtuns and other ethnic groups is the current discourse on violence. It is this discourse that has generated response from

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<sup>141</sup> Questions are being raised from Pakhtun forums like Pakhtun Peace Forum Canada and in Pakhto magazines such as Leekwaal and Pakhtun, that State has been in the hand of elite from Punjab which is having ‘imperial’ intensions

Pakhtun intellectuals and nationalist leaders alike to defend their position. However, in Malakand I also observed this discourse being the most expressive, charged and shaping the national argument. It was this discourse that provided the context for explaining the belonging of Pakhtun to Pakistani State, their grievances against State and pride in their own cultural and historical myths.

Recently the discourse in national and international media construct the image of Pakhtun in the image of the Taliban or vice versa. Locating the trouble in the North west of the country consolidates impressions and perception of people in general that terrorism, violence or militancy is the exclusive domain of Pakhtuns.<sup>142</sup> A single violent incident in the country can trigger a debate about the appearances of the perpetrator and their probable Pakhtun credentials.<sup>143</sup> Similarly in a featured article '*A Pathan runs into a building...*' in the English Daily Dawn, Huma Yusuf disclosed the fear associated with Pakhtuns in Karachi. She narrated a story of people's ordeal in a local market when a Pakhtun tailor from a nearby building ran into a market to hide after small quarrel was taken as a suicide bomber. She asked her friend for the reason of panic and was replied that, "*I don't know, I imagine a Pathan running into a building would scare a lot of people nowadays*" (Yusuf, 2009). These kinds of perceptions are part of shocking experience for Pakhtuns who have to cope with the situation. A Pakhtun based in London described his ordeal after visiting Pakistan recently. He found out that in non Pakhtun region of Pakistan the image of Pakhtun was of a "*trigger happy terrorist*" who knows nothing but violence. Some even suggested him that Pakhtuns must join Afghanistan because they have nothing common with the rest of the people (Khan, 2008).<sup>144</sup>

Interestingly where historical myths and symbols shape Pakhtun pride, the discourse attacks those myths and symbols in 'otherization' process. Pakhtuns are stereotyped by revisiting Colonial accounts, such as Winston Churchill (1898), and

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<sup>142</sup> This argument is based on my interviews with academic staff at the Department of Political science, University of Peshawar, Pakistan.

<sup>143</sup> Marriam Abu Zahab (2009) recently in a conference expressed her surprise on the report in media about the appearances of the bomber. I also witnessed the same kind of analysis on a private news channels commenting on the armed attack on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore that the attackers were wearing *shalwar Qami*. The traditional dress wore generally in Pakistan but particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA. Later it was discovered that the attack was planned and executed by a so called "Punjabi Taliban" (cf. Hussain, 2008; Tavernise et al, 2009)

<sup>144</sup> My own discussion with Punjabi colleagues in York endorsed the same sort of impression of Pakhtuns in Punjab.

construct Pakhtuns as ‘savage’ and ‘uncivilized’ and crazy enough to attack the civilized.

Tribes of the Afghan border consider killing and destruction fun. They have their own traditions and morals. They justify cruelty and violence through revenge... If one does the psychoanalysis of these people one will find that barbarity and violence is in their genes... Unlimited poverty, unlimited ignorance and above that violent mind. Through arms they want to harm the honour and wealth of the men and women of Punjab (keep in mind suicide bombs) and then go on to conquer (in the name of Islam) the sub continent and wherever they can reach (Naqvi, 2009).<sup>145</sup>

Although the bravery and toughness of Pakhtuns is often praised by Muhajirs (Verkaaik, 2004: 178) and Punjabis (Ahmed, 2004), their favorable image has utility to serve other ethnic groups.<sup>146</sup> Nevertheless, this may be broadly disagreed as the discourse also identifies Pakhtuns with Taliban and Deobandi sect of Islam.<sup>147</sup> Such identification and their threat to challenge the very existence of State makes Pakhtuns ‘them’. Often the discourse may be expressed in comparative terms. It postulates that Punjab is largely *Barelvi* and ‘moderate’ in its religious expression and that the influence of Deobandism is spreading in Punjab through the charisma of Pakhtuns.

Afghan war changed the Punjabi character. It happened through the charisma of the Pakhtun warrior and the spread of the spiritual side of the Pakhtuns; the Deobandi faith (Ahmed, 2004: 266).<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> My translation from originally Urdu text.

<sup>146</sup> A Pakhtun lecturer based in Islamabad told me in Peshawar that his daughter was once told by her teacher that Pakhtuns are very brave because they save ‘us’ from Taliban.

<sup>147</sup> Deobandi and Barelvi sects are 19th century reform movements in South Asia. The ideologues of these two sects are often in contest over the definitions and interpretation of Islam. Moreover, Deobandi sect is often associated with militant Islam.

<sup>148</sup> The writer saw the influence of Pakhtuns in shaping them. First he identifies ‘them’ and then reports their influence on ‘us’. He also believes that this has resulted in Pakhtunization of Punjab.

Stereotyping and labeling is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan.<sup>149</sup> However, currently, the religious violence in the Pakistan and Afghanistan has focused attention on Pakhtun culture and relation to Islam (see chapter 8). The Pakhtun nationalists intellectuals, politicians and activists have responded to these stereotyping by asserting the non violent traditions of Pakhtun society and the primacy of culture over religion (see chapter 8). There is also an enormous efforts going on globally to understand the region and Pakhtuns.

However, taking insights from Samad (2007) and Jalal (1995b) I argue that the current discourse of violence manifest ‘us’ and ‘them’ categorization. The official perspective may be different but the broader spectrum of this categorization process may engulf the entire ethnic groups. Perhaps that could be a paramount development if taken its full course as it may lead to ethnic polarization in Pakistan. However, such outcome is far from happening as Mullick and Hraba (2001) demonstrated that Punjabi students (the majority group) have shown greater willingness to share their social space with Pakhtuns than with any other ethnic group. Although the study is useful to demonstrate ethnic attitudes of the students in Punjab, the study uses data collected in 1996 when Pakhtuns were not highlighted by the Islamic insurgency in their region. My own observation in Malakand in particular and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in general was of increasing concern among Pakhtuns over their ‘otherization’ by other ethnic groups particularly Punjabis and Muhajirs. Moreover, it has influenced the discourse on sense of belonging to Pakistan. My interviewee in Thana, Kamran Asif (2008) emotionally argued that the advertisement of Literacy programme of the Punjab government known as *Parha Likha Punjab* (Educated Punjab) has ‘*seriously hurt every educated Pashtun*’.<sup>150</sup> Instead of creating awareness, it symbolized that education is the exclusive

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<sup>149</sup> The provincial information minister from nationalist ANP Sardar Hussain Babrak raised the issue of stereotyping and images being constructed through official TV channels with the interior ministry. “*The PTV dramas represent Pashtuns as uneducated and uncultured domestic servants speaking Urdu in a distorted way. Pashtuns consider this type of stereotyping an insult to them*” (Daily Times, 2008).

<sup>150</sup> *Parha Likha Punjab*, officially called the Punjab Education Sector Reforms Programme (PESRP) was a literacy programme of the government of Punjab. Launched in 2003 it was partially funded by the World Bank. It spent Rs 150 million from the total budget of Rs 7 billion on advertisement awareness campaign (Khan, 2007). This programme was scrapped by the new Punjab government in April, 2008 (The News 07 April, 2008) and its efficacy exposed (Hanif, 2008).

domain of Punjabis. He asserted, *Why will your son get education, when mine is deprived. You have made terrorist out of me.*<sup>151</sup>

Another interviewee in Thana, Fida Anwar (2008), seconded Kamran Asif (2008) by asserting,

We are peaceful people; but we are always deceived in the name of Islam. I ask, why are we targeted? What is our sin? Is our Muslimness a cause of our miseries? I remind you we have done greater things for Pakistan and for the world at large.

### **The discourse of sacrifice:**

It is fair to say that nationalism is often conceptualized as a form of sacrifice in Pakistan (Verkaaik, 2004: 50).

Verkaaik has explained how Muhajirs in Sindh has been imagining nation in migration and 'homeland'. He argues that the nationalism discourse among Muhajirs includes reference to their migration and the graves of ancestors. Migration itself is related to Islamic event of Hijra.<sup>152</sup> Muhajirs have been emphasizing their sacrifices and would insist that they sacrificed for Pakistan not the Sindhis (Verkaaik, 2004: chapter 1). In response to Muhajirs, Punjabis have also developed their own discourse of sacrifice in the migration and have put forth claims that almost 5 million (out of total 7-9 million refugees) people from East Punjab sacrificed their lives for Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009: 50-51). They also emphatically find loss of Punjabi identity to adopt Pakistani identity an aspect of their sacrifice for the State (Jalal, 1995b:84).

Jalal finds a counter narration to State narration in regional expression of sacrifices and argues that such counter narration has its own 'us' and 'them' categorization. She refers to the nationalist leader of Pakhtuns Wali Khan's assertions

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<sup>151</sup> Such rhetoric is not uncommon. Asfandyar Wali Khan the leader of ANP (nationalist party of Pakhtuns) in his speech on the floor of the parliament requested the newly elected prime minister ( in 2008) in these words, *'for God's sake, do not give my child a gun, give him a pen, do not give him bullets, give him books; and I request you (with my hands folded) Do not give him a suicide jacket give him school uniform'* (Khan, 2010).

<sup>152</sup> The migration of Prophet Muhammad from his home town Makkah to the city of Madina in 622 AD

that Khudai Khidmatgar (Pakhtun nationalists) sacrificed in colonial India and that Muslim League deceived those who in real sense sacrificed for Muslim cause i.e Muslims in North India (1995b: 84-85).<sup>153</sup>

Farzana Shaikh terms it struggle for political belonging and to establish 'alpha citizen' of the country. Shaikh (2009) and Verkaaik (2004) argues that there is struggle on the part of the those who identify themselves with the geographical region that constitutes Pakistan i.e the 'sons of soil' and those, being termed 'rootless phenomenon', identify with the idea of Muslim nation.<sup>154</sup>

However, like Muhajirs and Punjabis Pakhtuns have begun to construct a powerful argument predicated on sacrifice for the State and nation. In this argument these sacrifices endorses their ethnic pride and seek to impress the State that their contribution must be recognized. Rittenberg builds a case of Pakhtun ethnic pride on the following grounds. Pakhtuns have been the conquerors who have exclusive possession of lands in the region they inhabit. They have their own linguistic and literary traditions and characteristics customs. Moreover, they consider themselves '*heirs to a unique historical past, one in which they were often pitted against the rest of India*'. Therefore Rittenburg concluded that all these elements combine to give Pakhtuns a distinctive identity, with a strong sense of pride. He adds, '*hand in hand with this has gone an ethnic chauvinism reflected to their feelings of cultural superiority and their prejudices against non-Pakhtuns*' (Rittenberg, 1977: 69).

History has been constructed in Pakistan to satisfy the ideological needs of the State (Jalal, 1995b: 77). Pakhtuns see in the official historiography a missing reference not only to past Muslim rulers but to their Pakhtunness. In this manner unlike the construction of rulers by the official text as Muslims with a dominant heritage, Pakhtuns perceive them in ethnic terms no matter how mythical the ethnic affiliation of these rulers are.<sup>155</sup>This subjective sense of glorious history no matter how mythical it be, is overwhelming and often in narrations constitute a dominant theme of discourse on the

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<sup>153</sup> For Wali Khan's perspective on colonial India and creation of Pakistan see Khan (2006).

<sup>154</sup>The term 'rootless phenomenon' was used by Benazir Bhutto (the former Prime Minister of Pakistan) for the Muhajirs (Verkaaik, 2004: 41).

<sup>155</sup> Concerning some Turko-Afghan dynasties ruling India since 12th century, a respondent, when asked how one can establish the ethnic credentials of these dynasties, responded that, '*if these rulers came from Afghanistan they must have been Pakhtuns*' (Khatir, interview, 2008). However, due to extensive references to Mughals and Pakhtun encounters in classic Pakhto literature (16th century), Mughal are always considered non-Pakhtun.

politics of South Asia and Pakistan. Moreover, the post independence sacrifices of Pakhtuns are on various occasions alluded in order to stress their contribution to the making of State. Such discourse of sacrifice is not to delineate but to claim political belonging to Pakistan.

On numerous occasions respondents alluded to the Kashmir war of 1948 and the bravery demonstrated in wars with India.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, the martyrs of the war were praised for having sacrificed their lives for the sake of Muslims and Pakistan. Therefore, the previous historical pride in being pitted against India (Rittenberg, 1977: 69) is further transformed into and related with current pride in sacrifice for Pakistan in Kashmir and elsewhere. Similarly, reference is made to the current violence in the region and the killing of innocent people for the sake of a war that is too dubious to interpret. However, the educated being aware of the situation through media have been critical of the State for having participated in the violence.

Pakhtun through the discourse of sacrifice not only express their belonging to Pakistan but also rework the ‘us’ and ‘them’ categorization. They see Punjabis as usurpers who have been exaggerating their sacrifices and ignoring their sacrifices of Pakhtuns. Moreover, Pakhtun sacrifices for Pakistan perceived to be consistent and not time bounded. Through such discourse Pakhtuns in Malakand build a dynamic sense of belonging to Pakistan. The sense of belonging is set in the discourse of sacrifice that includes ethnic pride as well as emphasis on belonging to the State of Pakistan. Therefore the proud and vainglorious Pakhtun in Malakand maneuver multiple identities by coalescing Pakhtunness and *Pakistaniat*.

### ***‘Pakistan has yet to become a nation’: Diversity in belonging***

The persistent ‘conundrum of consensus’ embedded in argument that ‘*Pakistan meant different things to different people*’ (Shaikh, 2009) refers to a deep rooted and long lasting dilemma that is consequential for the future of Pakistan. Shafqat (2007) and Verkaaik (2007) on other hand postulated a productive process of nation formation in Pakistan that has not yet culminated. Earlier, Jalibi (1996) casted doubts on the nation formation process by arguing, “*here in Pakistan complaints are not against individuals,*

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<sup>156</sup> Ahmed has stated that often in tribal jirgas in Mohmand Agency loyalty to Pakistan is expressed by referring to Jihad in Kashmir (1984: 314).

*classes or systems of ideas, but against Pakistan itself, which means that Pakistan has yet to become part of our spiritual experience” (Jalibi, 1996: 53).<sup>157</sup>*

Jalibi suggested a nation making predicated on national culture, which continues to be inconspicuous in Pakistan. Such national culture should allow regional cultures and languages but remain dominant. National culture, being shaped by glorious Islamic heritage and values peculiar to subcontinent, should also reflect regional cultures (1996:8-70). Saeed Shafqat argues on the same grounds when he draws on ‘concentric circles’ constituting Pakistani national identity, the inner core being the Islamic values (2007:xxiii).

I take insights from Shafqat’s recent work (2007) on Pakistani nationalism, which he calls *Pakistaniat*. He finds it an incessant process, that is informed by Muslim history and heritage and embedded in territorial or geographical realities. He suggests that there currently exists a synergy in Islam, ethnicity and territoriality, which was previously characterized by ambiguity in prioritization of one over the other. However, through this interplay and the process of emerging national identity, multiplicity of identities and diversity is accommodated within the Pakistani nationhood. Corollary of the process is shaping of ‘multilayered’ and ‘multifaceted’ national identity. Therefore, national identity includes the core identity of Islamic values, followed by ethnic or folk cultural identity and finally by territoriality, common heritage and national history. There is also a symbolic fourth layer of identity that is *Ummah* or Muslim brotherhood (Shafqat, 2007).

Clearly multiple identities are a part of the larger Pakistani nationhood; they operate, struggle and grow within its bonds. Cogent *Pakistaniat* is in the process of evolving and Pakistanis are learning to respect and celebrate diversity (Shafqat, 2007: xxiii).

In Malakand people would identify with the State of Pakistan. The influence of State presence in the region on the lives of the people is increasing. Political reforms introduced in the 1970s generated a political process that increases the State’s presence

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<sup>157</sup> Currently in essentialist tone Javid Iqbal argued that Pakistani nationality is founded on Islam and ‘common spiritual aspiration’ rather than commonness of race, language and territory (2003: 5).

which was weak previously. No matter how great people's complaints about the inefficiency of the State institutions, State has been increasingly intruding in people's lives. Political activities such as voting, protesting or supporting State activities and joining government services are considered part of recognizing the State and shaping sense of belonging to the State. Perhaps that was the reason I could not compile substantial information on irredentist sentiments among the people despite the fact that complaints about the State are substantial. Moreover, I will argue below that Pakhtuns have not yet reconciled with the idea that the Pakistani nation exists in objective form. Rather pragmatically they assert that Pakistan is yet to become a nation.

What I conceded here is that there is a generation of Pakistanis which is raised by the very experience of Pakistan. Such experience imagines this country geographically limited, politically sovereign, ethnically diverse and ideologically Islamic. Moreover, the experience is post independence and is bounded by time and space where ethnic realities are glaring; pre independence exploitation by 'Hindus' or 'Indians' does not constitute a significant part of popular memories. More significantly Punjabi dominance is prominent in this experience and perhaps integration with the national sphere has created these conditions. However, it is always accompanied by the perceived reality that Pakistan is not yet a nation. The nation making project is believed to be unfinished and contribution is most sought. Contribution in terms of struggle for recognition of diversity. In my fieldwork I received a reply which is self explanatory. Kamran Asif (2008) referring to elite dominating the State said, '*you accept me first, sit with me to discuss what i want*', Fida Anwar (2008) added, '*we have accepted Pakistan but we are not accepted as Pakistanis*'. Therefore I argue that informed by the experience, a peculiar understanding of Pakistan is evolving among Pakhtuns which shapes a context in which the identification as Pakistani can be explained.<sup>158</sup>

Oddly enough, for Pakhtuns assimilation in the larger 'us' is conditioned by their understanding of Pakistan as a diverse nation in making. Assimilation means destruction of their personality and such personality is well preserved in their own province where there is minimum threat from any other ethnic group. Within this invulnerability, a sense of confidence (cf. Jalal, 1995a) is boosted which feeds into their understanding of Pakistan.

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<sup>158</sup> Pakhtun understanding may be limited by diverse experiences in the different Pakhtun regions. The understanding is widespread in settled as well as Tribal Areas.

My analysis in this chapter and the next would discredit the assumption that Pakhtuns have been insisting on peculiar form of religion and conflate it with ethno-nationalism (Weiss, 1999; Behuria, 2005; Harrison, 1992). Also, I disagree with the argument that Pakhtun like other ethnic groups demonstrate shifting of contest from ethnic to religious domain and thus enact 'ethnicization of Islam' (Verkaaik, 2007). Moreover, I do not attempt to evaluate the success of State efforts to carve national identity based in Islam. I rather argue that evidence from Malakand demonstrate that Pakhtuns continue to see their ethnic identity as a primary identity but relate it with a sense of Pakistaniat that appreciates ethnic diversity and Muslimness simultaneously.

The literature on Pakistani nationalism has demonstrated that the dominant elite of the State has adopted assimilation approach to nationalism in which no regional self could be accommodated and a nation based in communal discourse of Muslims of former India being one nation against the Hindus being other (Jalal, 1995b, Samad, 2007, Shaikh, 2009). Although Shafqat (2007) insists on the evolving sense of Pakistaniat, he does not elaborate on whether such process is supported by elites controlling the State. However, I argue that Pakhtuns may not appreciate any discourse that downplay ethnic diversity and recognize nation based in Islam alone.

Islam is often seen in Pakistan as integrating force transcending differences rather than a fragmenting one (Verkaaik, 2004:3). However, Verkaaik argues that ethnicity and religions intermingled and that ethnic boundaries coincide with varying religious traditions practiced by ethnic groups in Pakistan (2004: 3). I disagree with the argument to an extent that such intermingling discredit ethnic identification predicated on cultural and linguistic differences. Although Islam is a constituent part of ethnic identity borne by Pakhtuns, the arena of contest based in the meaning of Islam has been unwarranted in Malakand.

I concede Shaikh's argument that lack of consensus on the meaning of Islam is central to Pakistan's identity dilemma and that less depends on achieving consensus and more on the nature of such consensus accommodating regional and ethnic expressions (2009: 13). Pakhtun reluctance to indulge in any kind of contestation on Islam and nationalism, as opposed to the argument of Verkaaik (2007), endorse my argument that Pakhtuns would insist on diversity in ethnic domain and see Muslimness as an attached identity. However, I could not observe problematizing Muslimness in Malakand. For Muslimness remains embedded in the non sectarian belief and rituals (see chapter 8).

Moreover, the argument of Islamism being adopted and projected through identification by Pakhtuns is refuted below (chapter 8).

## Conclusion

I illustrated that Pakistan is a nation in making, and the dilemma for Pakhtuns is to balance their own ethnic pride with that of Pakistani identity. To have a national identity that accommodates ethnic expressions is at the center of the Pakhtun paradox of belonging to Pakistan. Reiterating Pakhtun identity brings Pakhtuns in direct clash with those (ruling elites) who are inclined to define Pakistan as only an Islamic nation carved out of the Muslims of South Asia. Pakhtun intimacy with Pakhtun culture and identity require them to adjust with the national identity that has yet to be agreed upon. Elite emphasis on non ethnic Islamic identity would maximize the dilemma for Pakhtuns, for it would exasperate the paradox and force them to make a hard choice between their pride in ethnic affiliation and assimilation in nation predicated on Islam alone.

I demonstrated that Pakhtunness retains primary significance for Pakhtuns in Malakand, despite internal contest on the definition of Pakhtun. However, that does not make identification an exclusive domain of ethnic identity, rather in a pragmatic way Pakhtuns relate their ethnic and national (Pakistani) identities, which generates multiple senses of belonging. Through successive integration in the State of Pakistan and attachment to personification of the region that is located within the boundaries of Pakistan, Pakhtuns facilitate their belonging to Pakistan. Moreover, they discursively demonstrate their relation with a multi ethnic Islamic Pakistan. The Islamic aspect of Pakistani identity is neither contested nor seen as primary to belonging to the State.

Pakhtun's relation with the Muslimness aspect of Pakistani identity cannot be denied despite the fact that currently a discourse is shaping among the nationalist intellectuals and political elite to delineate Pakhtun culture from Islam (chapter 8). However, conspicuously Pakhtun cannot accommodate the idea of belonging to nation that recognizes Islamic or Muslimness of Pakistanis and frustrates ethnic as sense of belonging. For them Pakistaniat is necessarily in the ethnic diversity and Muslimness. Therefore, what I seek to establish in the central argument of the thesis is that, for Pakhtuns these three senses of belonging have to coalesce. I have illustrated how

despite contest over Pakhtunness, ethnic identity remains primary and also related to the discourse on Pakistaniat. In the next chapter I will argue about the Muslimness of Pakhtuns and suggest how transformation in religious rituals have not translated into sectarianization of Pakhtun's Muslimness.

## Chapter 7

### Religious Identification

Religion is central to ethnic and national identification in Pakistan. It is also a significant aspect of Pakhtun identity and continues to be so despite religious change. In a peculiar understanding of religion as an institution concerned with performance of rituals, Pakhtuns see religious change as non sectarian and manifested in changing performance of certain rituals. The relationship between the central constituents of Pakhtun identity such as Islam and Pakhtunwali is brought into question by a recent discourse. The discourse, being the product of current radicalized environment in the region, highlights two opposing positions of Islamists and ethno-nationalists. Moreover, the militant religious elements (such as Taliban) are perceived exclusive to ‘us’ category, despite the constructed concomitance and inclusivity of Pakhtuns and Islamic militants and the consequent stereotyping in Pakistan.<sup>159</sup> Contested State nationalism has repercussion for Pakhtuns, which is reflected in the growing crisis in the region and makes a dominant theme for ethno-nationalist discourse.

Centrality of religion to Pakhtun identity is well explored in the literature (Barth, 1959b; 1969, Ahmed, 1980; Shah, 1999; Rittenberg, 1988; White, 2008a) and their association with particular sect of Islam is although alluded to but less vigorously investigated. The need to do so is currently signified by studies which refer to complex relationship between ethnicity and Islam in Pakistan (Verkaaik, 2004: 2007: Shaikh, 2009). I take up this very theme and reflect on how, currently, Pakhtun identify with Islam or a particular sect of Islam. Most of the discussions and conclusions in this chapter are based on external interpretation of Pakhtuns’ religious identity and Pakhtuns comprehension of their religious life in response to such interpretation. Therefore, the analysis of the nature of religious change or reformation is limited to such discussion. Such a limited assessment is partly caused by the people’s silences in time of political unrest and partly my own limitation in observing people as active participants in those difficult times.

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<sup>159</sup> ‘us’ category means Pakhtun including *Khanan* and *Ghariban*.

Looking into some of the literature raising concerns about Pakhtuns, being part of religious contestation and leading sectarian change in Pakistan (Ahmed, 2004), I posit that Pakhtuns don't identify with any sectarian movement or their ideology, despite being influenced by such movements. Rituals and beliefs propagated by such movements are internalized but sectarian rhetoric and ideology are rejected, as for them religion is the experience of spirituality through performance of rituals. The contest over religious text or interpretation of the text is meaningless for intellectual debate is not central to their religious experience<sup>160</sup>. Such contestation may remain limited to religious elite and has been less relevant to general masses. Religious obligation of correcting others' practices and spreading a universal sectarian ideology is superfluous as the comprehension of sect is limited and the belief in 'simple' Islam is deep rooted. Therefore, association with and pride in sectarian mission and drawing power from the repertoire of sectarian symbols is unwarranted in Malakand.

Boundaries are drawn between 'us' and other ethnic communities in the country. However, such boundaries are not sectarian in their character. Pakhtuns differentiate between the Muslimness of Pakhtuns and the Muslimness of Punjabi or Sindhi. Such boundaries are based in performance of religious rituals rather than on sectarian beliefs. They perceive others to be poor Muslims because they do not practice religion the way they do. Moreover, they would hardly identify themselves as Deobandis or Barelvis but would most certainly and vividly identify themselves as Sunni Muslims. Although my focus remains on the Pakhtun identification I also provide a Pakhtuns' perspective on the current religious stir in the region and the external interpretation in the literature. The first section of the chapter reflects on the Islamic contestation in Pakistan. The second section elaborates on the interplay of State nationalism and Islam. It also illustrates the interplay of Pakhtun ethnicity and Islam in the context of State nationalism. In the next section I will focus on the convergence and divergence of Islam and Pakhtunwali. Finally I will elaborate on the religious identification in Malakand.

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<sup>160</sup> a recent study on the Chatrali community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reveals that intellectual debate and reflection on being Muslim are part of village life (Marsden, 2005).

## 7.1: Islamic contestations in Pakistan

Islam is a contested domain in Pakistan. By contestation I mean the ‘debates and multiple dialogues with Islamic text and symbols undertaken by individuals or groups’ among Muslim (Metcalf, 2004: 3). Such contestation as presented here are reflected through various schools of thought and their transformation with time. The focus in this section is on Sunni Islam in Pakistan and analysis presented here based on the literature produced on (Sunni) religious traditions in South Asia.

### **Religious traditions in South Asia:**

Pakhtuns are often identified with Deobandi school of thought (Ahmed, 2004: Jalal, 2009).<sup>161</sup> Deobandis are the adherents of reformist movements of India (1867) named after Deoband, a religious academy near Delhi. The academy or Madrasa itself was an innovation for it was the first non governmental and formally organized religious institution in South Asia (Metcalf, 2004: 51). Deobandis distinguished themselves for “diffusion of scripturalist practices and the cultivation of an inner spiritual life” (Metcalf, 2004: 51). Their ideological opponents, Barelvis are the traditionalists who venerate saints and the Prophet. Barelvis emerged in 1880 in response to Deobandi school and “have developed a more popular Islam” (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 21) that was ‘open to customary practices’ (Metcalf, 2004: 210). Therefore, viewed by other sectarian groups such as Wahabis, “as having deviated from the true faith” (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 21). However, Deobandi and Barelvis are united in following the traditions of Islamic Jurist Imam Abu Hanifa, but strongly oppose each other on some theological issues including the issue of saint worship.<sup>162</sup>

Wahabis are the reformists emerging in Arabian peninsula in 18th century under the leadership of Wahab Najdi and have strongly opposed Shiasm and Sufism. Ahl-i-Hadith are a 19th century reformists who distinguished themselves from Deobandis by its “refusal to accept theological and philosophical thinking which has accrued in the course of Muslim history” (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 20). They insist that Quran and

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<sup>161</sup> A Taliban “ambassador at large” is reported in Barbara Metcalf claiming that, “ every Afghan is a Deobandi” (2004: 265).

<sup>162</sup> Imam Abu Hanifa was the founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence. The others schools of thought in Sunni Islam are Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi.

Hadiths (the traditions of the prophet) should be consulted directly by the learned instead of following the rulings and commentaries of various schools of jurisprudence (Metcalf, 2004: 58). Therefore they are not theologically adherents of Hanafi tradition to which Deobandi and Barelvi adhere. *Ahl-i- Hadith* are often categorized by their opponents as Wahabis (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 19-21) for their criticism of popular Islam in South Asia. However, *Ahli Hadith* distance themselves from Wahabis due to Wahabi adherence to Hanbali school of law and their violent methods (Metcalf, 2004: 59). The Wahabi and Ahl -i-hadith ideology in Pakistan is promoted through the organization of *Dawaa wal Irshad* and its radical wing *Lashkar-i- Taiba*. The *Dawa wal Irshad* has opened a number of schools (rather than madrasa) in Pakistan where English and Arabic are taught in addition to Quran and Hadith to promote Wahabi Islam as distinct to “popular Pakistani Islam”(Zahab, 2004: 32-33). These labels of Deboni, Barelvi and Ahl-i-Hadith define sectarian division among the Sunni Muslims of South Asia and Ulema, Madaris, Mosques and a number of political and religious movements have labeled with these names (Metcalf, 2004: 270).

In Malakand a little known local brand of Deobandism known informally as Panjpiri sect has been significantly active. Punjpir sect was actually a reform movement launched by Maulana Tahir (1918-1987), who was a Yousafzai Pakhtun from a village of Panjpir in District Swabi (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). This movement is formally known as *Jama’at Ishaat-ut-Tauheed Wa-Sunnah* and was founded in 1939. Maulana Tahir was educated from a number of Madaris (in India and Saudi Arabia) including the great seminary of Deoband. The movement, ironically, focuses on local mullas and ulema instead of people; and through them traditional rituals and rites which they termed *bida* (innovation). It censure the rituals of birth and funeral locally (customarily) practiced and have also severely condemned rituals associated with Saint and shrine worship. Being the admirers of the Imam Ibni Tamiya and Wahhab Najdi, the Punjpiri thus estranged from mainstream Deobandis. However claiming to be the adherents of Deobandi tradition they can be assumed to occupy the middle ground between the Deobandis and the Wahabis.<sup>163</sup> (*Jama’at Ishaat-ut-Tauheed Wa-Sunnah*, n.d).

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<sup>163</sup>Although they claim to be “right kind of Deoandis” (Maulana, interview, 2008), they are also more sever than Deobandis on rituals that are associated with saints. Teachers and students at Deoband shared sufi bonds and cherished stories about Sufis, however, Deobandis deplored “a range of customary celebrations and practices, including what they regarded as excesses at saint’s tombs, elaborate life cycle celebrations, and practices attributed to the influence of Shi’a” (Metcalf, 2004: 270)

Activities of Panjpiri mullas in Nuristan (Afghanistan) have been much strict and overwhelming to the extent that it condemned “every kind of deviation in folklore or otherwise” sport activities and cultural expressions such as dancing and music which created tension in Nuristan villages (Klimburg, 2001: 383-384). Roy has argued that Punjpiri, although has been a branch of Deobandi school of thought, are perceived in Afghanistan as Wahabis for their strict, anti Sufi and saint preaching and is a parallel organization to JUI inspired organizations. However, they have joined Taliban recently (Roy, n.d). In Malakand, Swat and Bajaur they have considerable influence through their madaris. TNSM leader in Batkhela also confirmed his affiliation with this school of thought. Most of the Taliban in Swat and Bajaur are associated with this school of thought (Franco, 2009). Besides these religious traditions a religious party with the name Jamat Islam was founded by Abul ala Mawdudi in 1941. Jamat Islami has emphasized on creation of an Islamic State in Pakistan and, “is perhaps the first movement of its kind to develop systematically an Islamic ideology, a modern revolutionary reading of Islam, and an agenda for social action to materialize its vision” (Nasr, 2001: 93-94).<sup>164</sup> Therefore, the protagonists of this party are termed Islamists by Roy (1994).

Through a different perspective Olivier Roy (1994) differentiated between Islamists, traditionalists and neo-fundamentalists. Metcalf following Olivier Roy’s argument differentiated between ‘traditionalists’ and ‘Islamists’. While, ‘Islamists’, have built “systematic ideological system and systematically built models for distinctive polities”, “traditionalists” have sought “implementation of the sharia in matters of ritual, dress and behavior” and without adhering to the “global political agenda” (2004: 266-267). Traditionalists (JUI, Tablighis, Taliban and Deobandis in India) lack a theoretical stance to political life; they therefore, demonstrated “political adaptability” to their environment and have responded to political expediency by either embracing the existing political culture or withdraw from it completely (Metcalf, 2004: 278-279). They have not, necessarily, focussed on an external “other” (West) but on internal foe (Metcalf, 2004: 278-279).

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<sup>164</sup> Also see Nasr (1994).

### **Deobandi Islam and its transformation:**

The increasing influence of Deobandi Islam in Pakistan can be studied through its madaris and its offshoot movements such as Tabligh and Taliban. Metcalf in her pioneering study of Islamic activists groups of Deoband, Tablighis and Taliban, call them “Deobandis” and “traditionalists”, which share *‘an overriding emphasis on encouraging a range of ritual and personal behavioral practices linked to worship, dress, and everyday behavior’* (2004: 266). Such Deobandi institutions and movements not only brought religious transformation but also played crucial role in the current unrest in the country. Moreover, they are not only the cause of the religious change but they themselves have changed by the political developments in the region.

Taliban are the students of Deobandi madaris established, mostly, in the North West of Pakistan since Afghan war (1979).<sup>165</sup> They emerged in 1994 in Afghanistan and soon captured most of the country. Zahab and Roy argue that Taliban in Afghanistan were at least initially a nationalist force that sought to impose Sharia (only) in the State; and had no political revolutionary anti-imperialist agenda (unlike Iran or Al-Qaida). Although it did not share jihadist ideology of Osama bin laden, it grew more anti Western and radicalized due to the pressure of events and its increasing association with Al-Qaida (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 52-71).<sup>166</sup> Their definition of Sharia, was influenced by their extremist religious learning, the perversion of Pakhtun code, and its sever implementation unprecedented in Afghan culture and tradition (Rashid, 2008: 14). Therefore, their support among the Afghans decreased partly because of intensely ideological nature of both their language and practices, including detribalization and attack on customary law (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 52-71). Moreover, the dialectics between Pakhtun identity and ‘neo-fundamentalism’ worked both way by facilitating Taliban rise and fall in 2001 (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 70).

The Tablighi movement, unlike the Taliban, is apolitical and most widespread in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Metcalf, 2004: 280). It is distinct in a sense because it brought in the lay men into the mission, without involving madris<sup>167</sup> and its Ulema, of spreading ‘correct practice’ and shaping individual lives (Metcalf 2004:272; Van Dar Veer, 1994:

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<sup>165</sup> Taliban is the plural of Talib which means ‘student’. For the detail account of the rise of Taliban in Afghanistan see Rashid (2010).

<sup>166</sup> Taliban were in fact not driven by any ideology (Metcalf, 2004: 277).

<sup>167</sup> Of which Taliban are the product.

129). Moreover, the simplicity of its message, such as to perform duties what a Muslims already know and have to do (Van Der Veer, 1994: 129) and equality in its ranks is appealing to Pakhtuns. Tablighi activity has faced enormous criticism for its methodology and practices from Barelvīs, Ahl-i-Hadith, Jamaat Islami and even from some quarters within Deobandi school (Sikand, 2007). However, Barelvīs are the most ardent critics of the movement for its preaching against rituals at saints' shrines (Sikand, 2007). Tablighi movement not only seek to 'correcting' individual religious practice in Malakand but also attract diverse range of people. These participants not only vary across class and professional lines but also across ideological and sectarian divisions. Most of the informants from Jamaat Islami had spent some time in Tabligh and look at it favorably, despite Jamaat Islami formal criticism of the movement (Sikand, 2007). Therefore it has also blurred some of the boundaries between "traditionalist"/"neo-fundamentalist" and "Islamists".

The radicalization of Deobandis, Barelvīs and Ahl-i-Hadith is a recent development (1980s). It was in Afghan war (1979) and Zia's Islamization (1979-1987) that Deobandi, Ahle Hadith, and to some extent Barelvīs, radicalized politically. Zahab and Roy call these new radical tendencies "neo-fundamentalism" different from "Islamist" fundamentalism carried out by Jamaat Islami in Pakistan (Zahab and Roy, 2004). The transformation of the madaris as institutions and mullah as agency was the crucial part of this radicalization. During Zia's reign (1979-1987) the quality of education in Madaris deteriorated due to the addition of more prominent ideological elements necessary for the continuation of Jihad industry, which engendered change in the very shape of the Deobandism in North West of Pakistan (White, 2008a). The education system changed from the model centered around a learned *alim* (scholar) to a more "freelance" or "franchise model" which facilitated the proliferation of madaris and their radical ideologies (White, 2008a: 31).

The role and character of the mulla also changed during this process. While, Islamization of Zia benefited high ranking Ulema, the lower level mullas were dissatisfied with the Islamization and thus revolted (Nasr, 2000: 150). Being the product of theologically "shallow madaris" these mullas had no employment outside of the jihadi line of work (White, 2008a: 31-32) and were attracted to militant organizations (Nasr, 2000: 150). They had mosques and *minbar* (pulpit) at their disposal, allowing them to use sectarian rhetoric to mobilize people and gain power, status and wealth

independent of high ranking learned Ulema (Nasr, 2000: 150). Well versed in rhetoric of Afghan war than theology they were more political and jihadist in their outlook and had a role model in Afghan Taliban (Nasr, 2000: 151) Madaris also became political institutions rather than intellectual institutions of learning (Nasr, 2000: 152).

Joshua argues that through the radicalization of Islamic movements in Pakistan, Deobandism in Pakistan has been “Pashtunized”. Taliban in Afghanistan are an example of such change. They were mostly from ‘*poorly educated, ideological hardened, disenfranchised ulema*’, and aimed at the ‘*spread of conservative Pashtun values than with any grand Islamic vision. The Deobandi experience in the frontier had produced over time a syncretic form of Sunni Islam, and one in which as a practical matter, Pashtunwali trumped traditional Hanafi interpretations*” (White, 2008a: 35).

Although I agree with some of the above arguments in the literature, particularly the argument that these movements are localizing, I hardly find any syncretism between Pakhtunwali and any sect or ideology of Islam. In fact I suggest relevant tension in the Pakhtunwali and Islam due to current radicalization. Such tension is the product of discourse, at least among the elites, on the compatibility of the two. Syncretism would be hard to achieve when the disjunctions and boundaries are sharpened by the discourse. Moreover, such debate is at the base of discrepancies between popular expectation from religious reforms and the objectives and aims of the radicalized reform movements. I illustrate in details on these themes in the section on Pakhtunwali and Islam.

Joshua T. White (2008a) elaborates a new movement known as “neo-Taliban” emerging in Frontier region of Pakistan. This new movement has little coherence and homogeneity but share some characteristics. These include, political rejectionist (rejection of State) *Takfiri* (Jihad against fellow Muslims), links with criminal networks, co-opting the State at local level, tension with Pakhtun norms (p.85-87). Interestingly, differentiation between TNSM and Taliban (particularly those in neighboring Swat) is discernible. So much so that the popular leader of TNSM dissociated himself from the Taliban. He targeted particularly the *Takfiri* tendency in neo-Taliban. “*How can I fight my brother who is a Muslim and not a Hindu or English or any other non Muslim. Sharia does not allow us to kill a fellow Muslim*” (Maulana, interview, 2008). Therefore, we need to see the nature of support to various Deobandi movements in Malakand and the contest in which such support is articulated.

The above section elaborated on the Islamic contestations in Pakistan and religious radicalization in response to State's strategies as reported in the exiting literature. The following sections comment on the influence of above processes, local responses and the shape of religious change in Malakand.

### **Support for Sharia and Deobandi movements in Malakand:**

Although the popular support for Sharia in Malakand is significant, its demand is put in a context that is determined by ambiguous legal system, weak institutions of the State and the compatibility of cultural and religious laws. Therefore, when Sharia is perceived as an alternative to State's legal and political systems, it is fancied. However, when Sharia is seen in the methods and practices of Taliban it is least satisfactory on the account of *Takfiri* methods and non accommodation to Pakhtun values. The political rhetoric of the religious movements such as TNSM or Taliban dwell primarily on the local dissatisfaction from State institutions and establishment of egalitarian society. This kind of support and the context in which such support is articulated is often ignored in constructing stereotypes of Pakhtuns in Pakistan. It is assumed that Sharia or the radical religious struggle represents Pakhtun passion which provides an impulse to establish Islamic system, in all parts of Pakistan.

However, the peculiar understanding of religion among Malakand Pakhtuns rarely involves an intellectual effort at popular level to comprehend the working and details of Sharia. Nevertheless, the respondents demonstrated a generic understanding that distinguished the Sharia of Taliban and the Sharia envisioned as an alternative to the weak administrative system. The demand for Islamic law is less for its ideological appetite to construct and glorify an overwhelming Islamic system (as generally portrayed in the literature), rather it is a tool that is locally perceived to suggest solution to local problems emerging from the weakness of the State.<sup>168</sup>At least in response to my enquiry about the Taliban style Sharia, Pakhtuns in Malakand contested their Sharia. It is also important to mention that they have not lived the Taliban style Sharia as Pakhtuns in Swat and other Tribal Areas have, but their response was informed by their interaction with the people of those regions, reports in media and occasional Taliban

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<sup>168</sup> In Bajaur Taliban did exploit inefficiency in the administrative and political setup to articulate popular support (Franco, 2009: 6).

attacks on the private property and person in Batkhela and Thana.<sup>169</sup> To conclude from popular response in Malakand, the intensity of actions and imperviousness to cultural values in Taliban methods create resentment and an impression that Sharia does not guarantee the desired good governance (also see White, 2008a: 136).

Although the scope of this study is limited and it does not seek to encompass the entire dynamic of the popular support or censure of the political movements such as TNSM or Taliban, it attempts (through popular reaction in Malakand) to disapprove a simplistic view of the popular support in the literature and in media. Analysis here allude to religious reformation in the region but suggest that a comprehension of such a change would require further studies considering the entire gamut of religious change in Pakhtun region. Only then the complexity and dynamics of religious transformation and popular view of the current religious radicalism be grasped.

The political situation, media stereotypes and general distress would at times make people selective in their responses. However, the general response of the people is a mix one that ranges from complete oblivion to open censure. Taliban in Malakand are perceived as a discrete force which is detached from the society and use violent means to bring in reforms in society. Their activities are limited to correct, not the rituals but, social morality. Popular targets, during my stay in Malakand, were shops selling drugs and alcohol, gambling and to a less degree adultery. The effect of their activities was less felt on reforming social morality, but more on generating a debate about the validity of the methods and legitimacy to alternate State institutions. I could see division of opinion in these debates. However, when Taliban are located in larger picture, serious doubts are raised about their leadership, their method of imposing Sharia and their excesses in form of overstepping tribal customs and killing innocent civilians. In a *Hujra* meeting a group of elders while exchanging news report of the killing of a Taliban commander in Tribal Areas, condemned them by asserting that he was not the commander of Taliban but the commander of *Shitanan* (meaning ‘Devil’ but rhymes with the word Taliban). Similarly, they cursed and censured their way of imposing religion and killing Muslims.

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<sup>169</sup> There is also an economic reason for this lack of enthusiasm in Batkhela. Local entrepreneurs are particularly worried of any unrest in the region. Strangely some informants revealed that TNSM during their blockage of road in 1994 was supported due to hospitality and the risk to market in Batkhela.

Most of the respondents in Batkhela and Thana agreed that these groups are constructed and are easy instruments in the hands of hidden forces<sup>170</sup>. The excesses of the Taliban are not just seen through the word of media but also through the experience of violence in the locality. Saif ullah (2008) was shocked and expressed his abhorrence for Taliban by seeing the mutilated body of a local resident, killed by Taliban. Such local experience is supported by media images of killings in suicide attacks through out the region. Therefore, an emerging consensus in Malakand indicates the exclusivity of the Taliban.

### **Non saliency of sectarian boundaries in Malakand:**

The reformist movements in South Asia sought to reform the social and religious life of the Indian Muslims (see above). An important element of reformist movements such as Deobandi movement was to reform the performance of certain rituals such as visiting and worshipping at the saints' shrines, rituals at the occasions of death and birth (cf. Metcalf, 2004) and even the performance of religious duties such as daily prayers in distinct interpretation (Hanafi-see above) of the primary sources (Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) of Islamic Law. Deobandi or Panjpiri movements found some of these rituals customary and thus strived to reform them. It is imperative to mention here that Islamic duties that are incumbent upon Muslims such as prayers, Hajj (pilgrimage to the holy shrines in S. Arabia), Zakat (alms giving or poor tax), Fasting in Ramadan etc are universal and thus unchangeable. It is through the performance of these duties that Muslims around the world connect with the larger community or Muslim Ummah. However, the details of performing these duties vary due to diverse interpretation of the primary sources of Islamic jurisprudence. Deobandis seek to 'correct' the performing pattern of these duties among the general public. Moreover, there are also rituals that are malleable as they are influenced by local customs and therefore can be subjected to change such as worship at saints' tombs and rituals at the occasions of birth and death.

People's perception of sectarian schools of thought is of reform movements seeking change in religious practices and performance of rituals. This perception stems from popular believe that religious reforms are about changing the religious practices

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<sup>170</sup> These hidden forces were identified as Pakistani, American or Indian secret agencies.

rather than propagating ideology or system of beliefs that encompasses every aspect of life including cultural and social. Such perception is consolidated by a persistent and dominant perception that there is (broader) cultural and social harmony in Islam and Pakhtunwali. Only the religious practices may require reforms because they were less rooted in culture and more in the teachings of religious class. The previous religious category, has been replaced by the new one which is more learned and has greater economic and social autonomy in post hierarchical society.

Mullas are locally believed as the guides of religious practice. They were responsible for any lapses in or 'correctness' of religious rituals. Reform movements such as Panjpiri movement is recognized through the change of mullas. Mullas, formerly, performed rituals without demonstrating *ilm* (religious knowledge) and were associated as clients with clans and *Khanan* for economic and social reasons. Ahmed (1984) reported that Mohmand Pakhtun is also aware of the illiteracy of a mulla, which makes him question, "*What does he know of Islam? Why should he intercede between us and God?*". Moreover, he urged that Pakhtun Islam is 'uncomplicated', surface reaction to '*an inherited tradition that is suspicious of dogmas, debates and formalized priesthood*' (1984: 326).

However, currently mullas in Malakand hail from madrasa, where they are educated in the teaching of a particular sect. In Batkhela, most of the them follow the Punjpiri stream of Deobandi sect. Previously mullas are differentiated from the current mullas, by asserting that *zare Muliyan neshta* (earlier Mullas are gone). Under the Panjpiri influence, which particularly targets mullas associated with rituals which they consider deviation from true Islam, current mullas (including TNSM leader) are sever critics of the previous mullas. The old guards are considered ignorant, greedy, less pious and had less autonomy to serve religion and be spiritual guide to the masses.

There was, at least, in earlier stages of reforms, a conflict between the new and the old mullas, but the new prevailed for their religious knowledge. Therefore, knowledge can rightly be called the source of autonomy for religious elite. The new mullas demonstrate their *ilm* in mosques. Preaching in the mosques, particularly before Friday prayers, sectarian message is passed on to masses; however, interest in such message is limited to demonstration of *ilm* in manifesting the correctness of rituals through the armory of Quran, Hadith and Fiqah (Islamic jurisprudence). Therefore, Punjpiri or Deobandi standard of rituals are internalized exclusive of sectarian message.

Also it is this internalization that makes them say with utmost clarity that they were wrong in doing ‘*Pirparasti*’ (devotion or worship of religious figures associated with shrines such as *Pirs*), ‘*Babaparasti*’ (devotion or worship of Sufis and Saints).

People don’t listen much to mulla in the mosque, they are not interested in his sectarian message. They only attend mosques to pray (Khalid Khan, interview, 2008).

The fact that there was rarely any sectarian violence in Malakand during my field work endorsed the above assertion. Sectarian harmony prevailed despite Deobandi (Punjpiri) influences. Activities at a shrine close to the market in Batkhela was referred to with an assertion that they keep distance from such activities. Number of visitors to this shrine have decreased, however, it still attracts devotees from different regions including Punjab. Mullas in Malakand, unlike other parts of the North West, such as Kurram Valley (Nasr, 2000: 151) could not mobilize people on sectarian lines.

Sectarian boundaries in Malakand are not salient. Most of the informants would identify themselves as Sunnis but will not associate with any sub sect of Sunni Islam. “*People here are genuine (pure) Sunnis*” is an expression I heard from different sources. They don’t categorize each other as Deobandis or Barelvis. The changing religious practices do not imply that one particular sect has dominated through the proliferation of its rituals rather the argument refers to insignificant sectarian activity in the region for identification is seldom expressed in the sectarian idioms. Moreover, religious or sectarian markers does not draw boundaries or consolidate the existing boundaries between *Khanan* and *Ghariban*. Although, *Ghariban* do refer to the historical attachment of *Khanan* and their mullas with Sufism, it does not constitute a meaningful boundary. It is so because *Ghariban* do refer to their own ancestors being attached to Sufi practices and the same allusion is made by *Khanan* to their illiterate past which they accept with a guilt that they did not know (*Ne pwe Du*).

The argument I am making here contradicts what other researchers have reported. Barfield (2005) has pointed out how Afghans, being secured in their religion, would hardly take influences from foreign Wahabi elements (p.234). Verkaaik (2007) has explained how Sindhi movement formulated a traditional Islam based in mysticism and Sufi traditions; and rejected Islamic reforms and Jamaat Islami, for propagating

Islam which is foreign to them (p. 91-92). At another place he referred to Ahl hadith mosque and associated influence being termed ‘foreign’, ‘Wahbi’, ‘fundamentalist’ and ‘Taliban’ by the local population in Hyderabad and Karachi<sup>171</sup> (2004: 48). However, I found Pakhtun of Malakand assertive of religious change in form of change in office of mulla and rituals they taught.

Ahmed, in his study of Mohmand Pakhtuns referred to absence of any saint worship or mysticism because, “*Islam of the Mohmand is puritanical, not syncretic or eclectic*” (1984: 318-319). Barfield on other hand argues that, “*the very importance of Islam as part of people’s everyday identity paradoxically reduces the power of the ulema because most Afghans reject their claim of having a monopoly on defining religious orthodoxy to rest of society*” (2005: 237). However, the recognition of changing religious rituals, knowledge and autonomy of mulla and teaching of religious elite through personal example (the case of Maulana) discredit Barfield’s argument. I have argued above that religious influences from reformist movements (Deobandi or Panjpiri) are received and absorbed locally through changing the ways they perform rituals and religious duties. Religious change is described through the change in the agency of Mullah and teaching of religious elite through personal example (the case of Maulana), etc.

The reason of the religious change are locally perceived, to be numerous; growing literacy, growing Panjpiri and Tablighi activity and Saudi influences. They reflect on their own transformation in their conversations and tend to be less historical in explaining the causes of the broader religious change. Informants argued that an important reason of change was education (both religious and non religious). It was through education that they came to know that their old practices were the rituals of ‘ignorance’. The common expression in Malakand is, *Khalaq wos pwe sho* meaning “*people now know or people have realized*”. Hajj or returnees from Middle Eastern were also instrumental in transmitting Wahabi rituals and influences. Mir Khan’s (2008) return from Hajj made him assert, ‘*Asli Mazhab Da Arabo De*’ meaning “*genuine religion is that of Arabs*”. Identification with Sunni Islam convey meaning of

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<sup>171</sup> However, reformists, particularly associated with Dawa wal Irshad (associated with Wahabi/Ahl Hadith Islamists), active in rural Sindh have been little explored (Zahab and Roy, 2004: 33-34).

universalism, as Sunni Islam is perceived to be centered in present day Saudi Arabia where Pakhtuns perform ritual of life time i.e Hajj.

Moreover, the penetration of Tablighi influences in people of diverse ages, classes and religiosity gives it the upper hand in making the minds of people. Tabligh is generally perceived to be apolitical and eschews sectarian contestations. However, it is also perceived to prepare ground for the political support of religious parties such as Jamaat Islami (Jameel, interview, 2008). It is widely believed that Tabligh has been influential in reforming individual performance of certain rituals and practices. Interesting pattern of religious practice and religious activity is of blurring boundaries between 'neo-fundamentalists' and Islamists (as proposed by Roy, 1994). Tabligh being among the 'neo-fundamentalist' category or 'traditionalist' category as opposed to Jamaat Islami in Islamist category (Metcalf, 2004) can be found across such division. Many staunch supporters of Jamaat Islami in Batkhela were Tablighi as well.

However, there is broader historical context of this change. Van Der Veer (1994) argues that such influences were the part of religious reform movements of 19th and 20th century South Asia. He explains how Sufi religious practices in South Asia and even around the world declined in 19th and 20th century, when the debate about who is Muslim was influenced by the reformist movements, who tend to establish orthodox Islam in opposition to Sufi worship of tomb and saints. He challenges the assertion that such a change brought decline in the social relevance of Sufism due to urbanization, education, and emergence of middle class. He argues that although '*Sufism no more define Muslim way of life*', its social relevance did not dissipate. Its decline was due to colonial processes of modern communication, which facilitated the spread of reformist message and also because in colonial India the debate about religion was linked with the debate about religious community. Reformists condemned some of Sufi practices which were interpreted in the context of creating Hindu and Muslim communities (p. 58-62). Reformist activism in the entire Pakhtun region since 19th century is recently documented (Haroon, 2007). Perhaps that was the reason in Malakand some identified education as the reason of less inclination towards sectarianism. People in Malakand have been influenced by these reformist activism, as the Jihadi ulema in the region were well connected with Deobandi network (Haroon, 2007). I am least concerned with tracing these influences and rely more on the popular perception of this change.

## 7.2: State Nationalism, Islam and Pakhtun identity

I have reported above (chapter 7) that the contest on the meaning of Islam and the consequent uncertainty in national identity ('Pakistan meant different things to different people') characterized Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009). Pakistan's ruling elite has been promoting national ideology based in modernist interpretation of Islam, but at the same time in their political interests, have occasionally appealed to the shrines and Sufis (Veer, 1994: 63; Shaikh, 2009; Verkaaik, 2004). Such modernist interpretation rejected certain practices being considered 'traditional', 'backward', 'un-Islamic' and reminder of Hindu or colonial influences, these include, Sufism, Feudalism, and exclusive solidarity (caste, ethnic, etc). Sufism and saint worship were considered backward mentality or Hindu perversion, feudalism was in contradiction to Islamic ideal of social equality (*musawat*) and exclusivist solidarity being divisive tendencies and against the unity of Muslim community (Verkaaik, 2001).

Due to contestation on the meaning and role of Islam, there are two rival discourses of Islam in Pakistan such as 'communal' and 'Islamist'; both have been engaged in gaining ascendancy in defining Pakistan's national identity (Shaikh, 2009). The former is of Muslim separatist discourse of power, imagining Pakistan to be a shelter for the Muslims of South Asia, and the later is more rooted in radical and religious reading of Islam. Where communal discourse is vigorously projected by ruling elite in collaboration with military, the Islamist discourse is tailored by religious political parties. In Pakistan the earlier government of Ayub Khan had the modernist interpretation of Islam under communal discourse. It perceived State as a 'benevolent parent' having responsibility to discipline and enlighten people through formal education and purifying popular Islamic practices which were perceived as 'Hindu perversions' and 'innovations' (Verkaaik, 2004: 24; Shaikh, 2009). However, under the pressure from Islamists Jamaat Islami he had to fall back to traditional *Pirs* and *Sufis* for their support to counter Islamist influences (Shaikh, 2009: 91). In 1960's a counter discourse, consistent in Muslim nationalism, added regional and ethnic identity to Pakistani nationalism. It also emphasized popular and regional Islam based in the traditions of Sufism and away from sharia or modernist version promoted by the urban elite. The discourse emerged within Sindhi nationalist movement (Verkaaik, 2007) and

was further endorsed by Z A Bhutto's government. "...ethnic or regional identities were promoted as intrinsically part of the complex identity of a Pakistani citizen. Whereas a Pakistan identity had always had a national and religious component, an ethnic one was now added to it" (Verkaaik, 2001: 352). Therefore, the modernist Islamist opposed to Sufi and popular Islam created Sindhi ethno nationalist category which identified with mystic, Sufi Islam in opposition to modernist reformist Islam of the State. Bhutto's identification with such Islam and the consequent change in State nationalism was in context of such processes in Sindh (Verkaaik, 2004).

However, Bhutto's reevaluation of State nationalism has consequences for Urdu speaking emigrant population of Sindh who previously identified with State's modernist Islam. They in new circumstances reinvented their ethnicity and interpretation of Islam (Verkaaik, 2004: 2007). MQM (Mohajir Qaumi Movement), ethno-nationalist party of these mohajirs, dissociated itself with reformist Islamist ideology to strategically maneuver the diverse forms of Islam in Sindh. During political maneuvering it at times associate with Islamist to condemn syncretic, traditionalist tendencies of Sindhis and may recognize Sufi and mystic expressions when allied to Sindhis and discredit reformists (Verkaaik, 2007: 93-94).

The 1980s Islamization of the State and society is often associated with a 'new' Islamic ideology of the State (Shaikh, 2009: 101). In the later half of 1980's 'Islamization' was replaced by 'Shariatization' of the State (Shaikh, 2009). Zia also switched from Islamist Jamat Islami to 'traditionalist' Deobandi ulema. These ulema were already radicalized and politicized by Afghan Jihad. Therefore, a process of Shariatization initiated, during his tenure, which aimed '*both to question the validity of the state and to influence the debate on national identity by redefining Pakistani nationalism primarily in terms of its relation to an imagined extra territorial 'community of believers'*' (Shaikh, 2009: 109). The ulema, under this Shariatization process, wanted the imposition of Sharia and ideologically regarded State as an 'artificial construct whose physical boundaries were judged to be transient and subversive of presumed universal community of believers (*umma*)' (Shaikh, 2009: 107-109).

Moreover, the transformation of Madaris into radicalized, politicized autonomous institutions '*would radically challenge the state's right to control policy making, interpret Islam, and define the parameters of Pakistani nationalism*' (Shaikh,

2009: 112-113). It was certainly, the most challenging and perennial development for nationalism in Pakistan. After discussing the evolution of Pakistani nationalism, entrenched in Islam, I will focus on the impact of such processes on Pakhtuns in following paragraphs. I will seek to relate nation formation with Islam and Pakhtun sense of Muslimness.

The spiritual or ethical aspect of religious concepts such as Jihad (Jalal, 2008), the non political character of Deobandism (Metcalf, 2004) and modernist Islamic interpretation of Pakistani nationalism (Shaikh, 2009), have all receded since 1980's. The reasons are multiple but radicalization and politicization of religious institutions and religion itself are described as the most prominent. However, such developments are mostly construed as the product of State policy and international politics, but occasionally emphasized to be located in a region that is seen as the bastion of religion i.e. North West of Pakistan<sup>172</sup>. The logical sequence of such emphasis, even if involves stereotypical analysis (Ahmed, 2004), has consequences for the Muslimness of Pakhtuns.

Zia's tenure in office (1979-1987) was a break with the past. His consistent search for legitimacy in Islam, his involvement in Afghan war and his patronage of religious institutions connected with Afghan Jihad had consequences for the Pakhtuns with lasting effects. Since then, the religious 'warrior', 'intolerant' Deobandi (Ahmed, 2004) image of Pakhtun and his 'spartan puritanism' emphasized (Ahmed, 2004).<sup>173</sup> Such stereotypical character sketch is then constructed as a cause of transformation of identity, which now includes Jihad along Pakhtunwali as constituent elements (Verkaaik, 2007: 98). Moreover, it is also recently reported that such transformation could not be limited to Zia's era, as transnationalism and radical tendencies could be traced back to colonial time when the tradition of Jihad was kept alive in the North West of India and transnational Tablighi activity has been significant in the region (Shaikh, 2009: 110). Such radical tendencies are informed by global Islamism (Verkaaik, 2007) or Islamic transnationalism (Shaikh, 2009). Khalid Ahmed (2004) has gone one step

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<sup>172</sup> Recently Sana Haroon's (2007) book title is, 'The Frontier of Faith'. Ayesha Jalal's would have objected to the title as it reads 'faith', which she believes is currently lost in the non ethical, worldly endeavor of Jihad in these areas (2008).

<sup>173</sup> Raza and Marufkhail (2009) reported a Pakistani security official saying that '*with Arab money, the Punjabi strategy and the Pashtun muscle, an Islamic caliphate will be revived Inshallah*' (p.59).

further and has proposed that the Pakhtun intolerance, “cult of disagreement”<sup>174</sup>, and the charisma of ‘Pakhtunized Deobandi warrior’ has powerful influence not only on ‘Arab Mujahideen’ but also on ‘tolerant Punjabi’. He argues that sectarianism in ‘traditionally tolerant Punjab’ is the consequence of Pakhtun influence (Ahmed, 2004: 266-268). Nevertheless, Nasr (2002) and Zahab (2002) have demonstrated how State and regional politics of 1980’s was a crucial factor in growing sectarianism in Pakistan. Reading from such arguments I find Ahmed (2004) stereotypical analysis too simplistic and thus less useful in explaining sectarian radicalism in Pakistan.

### **Pakhtun ethnicity and Islam in national context:**

The complexity of the interplay of religion and ethnicity in Pakistan is recently investigated by Oscar Verkaaik (2001; 2004; 2007). Earlier, Nasr in his analysis of sectarianism in Pakistan has argued that politicization of sectarian division and mobilization of communal identities, under the influence of regional politics and State intervention, facilitated interface between the two discourses of power i.e Islamism and ethnic politics (2002: 86, 109). Verkaaik, arguing on those lines postulated that, discursively most evocative and emotionally more sensitive boundaries between ethnic groups do not lie in kinship, culture or language rather in ‘the ethnicized tradition of Islam’ (2004: 22). He suggests that ethnic groups identify with different forms of Islam, Sindh with Sufism (mystic and syncretic Islam), Mohajirs with modernity and Pakhtuns with global Islamism and Jihad (Verkaaik, 2007). Also, in Pakistan ethno-political movements and political parties (within democratic tradition) have used both ethnicity and Islam to mobilize people and have therefore, ethnicized Islam (Verkaaik, 2007: 88-89). Khalid Ahmed (2004) on the other hand stressed on the religious confluence of Punjabi and Pakhtuns under the leadership of Pakhtuns.

Elaborating on Pakhtun case Verkaaik, suggests that Pakhtuns are under the influence of global Islamic revivalist tendencies to the extent that they have revisited their cultural code and its relation with Islam (2007: 96). He adds that they have redefined it with the Islamic principle of Jihad. Jihad has been revived as Pakhtun tradition of fighting against foreign infidels (Verkaaik, 2007: 96). Arguing that

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<sup>174</sup> Khalid Ahmed argues that Pakhtuns have a strong sense of individuality which is inherent in this cult of disagreement. ‘Disagreeing is an assertion of individuality and to agree is the submergence of individuality’ (2004: 268)

traditional tribal leadership has lost its power at the hands of more dispersed and little qualified religious leaders who have benefited from socio-economic and political changes in Pakhtun regions, particularly associated with rural-urban migration and entrance of State, missionary organizations and educational institutions as agents of change (2007: 96-98). Therefore, he argues that, *‘these cultural ideas and forms have become popularized and are no longer primarily shaped by the landowning aristocracy and religious specialists’* (Verkaaik, 2007: 98).

On similar lines reading from Afghanistan unrest and Taliban insurgency, David Kilcullen (2009) in his pioneering study, has argued that the reasons of Pakhtun fighting along Taliban would not be political but include, “honor, adventure and love of the fight” (p. 77). Kilcullen in general and Verkaaik analysis in particular instigate the reader to think of coalescing Jihad and Pakhtunwali. Informed by historical evidences or armed conflict against the invading foreigners (British, Sikh etc) in the region through out 19th and early 20th century. I doubt whether the recent conflict in the region is perceived locally as Jihad and would suggest that, we must be careful in using the term Jihad as it has been changing its meanings through historical manipulation in South Asia (Jalal, 2008). We need rigorous research studies to elaborate how locally this unrest is perceived. Although such enquiry is out of the scope of this study I have observed general resentment in people about the current actions of TNSM and Taliban in Pakistan. This may have in long run consequences for the definition of Jihad and the religious movements using the term jihad.

We are also timely informed by an important study of Ayesha Jalal (2008) on the contested meaning of Jihad in South Asia and the State’s use of its political meaning in Pakistan. She suggests that the concept of Jihad has not only been defined differently in South Asia but it was closely linked with pre colonial revivalism, anti-colonial nationalism and State territorialism. The meaning being historically contested are transformed from ethical (struggle ‘to be human’) to political (armed struggle against the West or faithless within) overtime. Pakhtuns have certainly been influenced by such developments.<sup>175</sup>

The literature on political history of the region suggest that Pakhtun’s desire of preserving autonomy and religious fervor associated with millenarian Jihadi endeavors,

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<sup>175</sup> For pre-colonial revivalism of Syaid Ahmed see Jalal (2008) and for anti-colonial nationalism of Deobandi religious leaders see Haroon (2007).

an important factor has been others perception and images of Pakhtun (cf. Haroon, 2007). Colonial religious leaders involved in the interpretation of Jihad constructed images of Pakhtun accordingly. The ‘traditionalist’ Deobandi imagined tribal region as, ‘free’ (*azad*), distinct from the rest of the India, always being engaged in Jihad, inhabited by ‘strong willed’ and ‘brave’ people, and perceived them as best recruits in anti-colonial Jihad of 19th century (Haroon, 2007: 93-95). On the other side the modernist interpreters of Jihad condemning armed struggle against colonial government in India, find them on the wrong side of the divide.

It was just that, ‘fanatics’ having heard about jihad, sought to ‘gratify sensual desires or led by delusion perpetrate bloody deeds’. This was especially true of Pathans, who having absorbed incorrect ideas about their faith from local mullas, consider killing members of another religious community an act of virtue (Mirza Gulam Ahmed reported by Jalal, 2008: 165-166).<sup>176</sup>

Between the contrasting images of Pakhtun Jalal see unsteady support of Pakhtuns to the Jihad in colonial era.

Just as the uncertain allegiance of the Pathan tribesmen had wrecked Sayyid Ahmed Bareilvi’s Jihad, the fickleness of the Afghan ruling elite hampered Sindhi’s efforts at mounting a transnational anti-colonial Jihad—a sobering reminder of the ever-elusive nature of Muslim unity (Jalal, 2008: 310-311).

Sana Haroon’s (2007) perspective is more geographical as she argues that, autonomous space in Tribal Areas provided by various governments (in Pakistan and earlier) enabled religious leaders to establish their authority: and to preserve that authority they have fought to keep the autonomy of the region intact. Within contradictory Jihads in support of “Pakhtun ethnicism, anti-colonial nationalism, Pakistani territorialism, religious

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<sup>176</sup> *Mirza Gulam Ahmed* (1835-1908) the spiritual leader of the religious group known as Ahmedis, Mirzais or Qadianis; who define themselves Muslims but denied the right to call themselves Muslims by the State of Pakistan through a legislation in 1974. See Saeed (2008) for details. For different opinion on Pakhtun tolerance to other religious communities see Ahmed (1984: 313) and Banerjee (2000). In Batkhela I was shown places which were previously Hindu quarters and was told that Pakhtuns lived in harmony with Hindus.

revivalism and anti Americanism”, and fluctuating political allegiances what remains constant is the claim to autonomy, and within it the functioning role of religious leaders (Haroon, 2007: 03). Therefore, one can conclude from the above accounts that the images of Pakhtuns in the subcontinent and their geographical placement were compelling reasons of bringing in Jihad to their threshold.

It is imperative to explore post independence construction of Pakhtun images and the political usage of Jihad in Pakistan. This gives us a fair idea of how State has been an important factor in manipulating the meaning of Jihad for its strategic interests. Jalal argues that, in post colonial South Asia, Jihad has been taken in political sense and therefore lost its ethical meaning. Its history highlights the relationship between ulema and modern State (Jalal, 2008). These ulema were allowed by the State to interpret Jihad. The projection of its political meaning (armed struggle) and the reluctance to project its ethical meaning at the hands of the State was due to strategic reasons (Jalal, 2008: 18-19).

Jihad today is a pliable instrument in the hands of few who are more politically motivated than ethically grounded (Jalal, 2008: 19).

The anti colonial Jihad movement (19th and early 20th centuries) and the transmission of the ideas of armed struggle through the Piri-Muridi pedigree of ulema network, which was well connected with the Indian reformist movements (Haroon, 2007), gives an impression that the idea and the struggle was maneuvered from outside. Similarly Jihad in post 1980s had been significantly influenced by State’s strategic interests and the transformation within the Deobandi movement. Moreover, the general impression from the field is that, Pakhtuns being informed by the current unrest find themselves recipients and at times victims of foreign intervention even the ideas and struggle that are very much local in their scope. I find the expression, *‘we are always deceived in the name of Islam’* (Fida Anwar, interview, 2008) quite meaningful in this context. The deception in this statement also refers to reciprocal sincerity and sentimental attachment with Islam and Muslim Ummah. Others’ (including State) manipulation of such attachment is a source of resentment that need rigorous investigation.

State being involved in Islamic modernization and strategic usage of religious radicalism (politicalization of madrasa) has not been identified with any particular

tradition of Islam in Malakand. This is of particular significance because the state is more vividly perceived to be dominated by Punjabis. However, I will argue below that Punjabis are perceived as poor performers in religious duties and not as an ethnic group identifying and promoting a particular sect or tradition of religion. Therefore, unlike Sindhis and Mohajirs (Verkaaik, 2007) I could not observe development of a counter religious narrative among Pakhtuns, but found them critical of State's national identity entrenched in Islam exclusively. However, Pakhtun Islam is currently seen (in Pakistan) as distinctive, Islamist rather than communal (cf. Shaikh, 2009) and directed against the State. This invites reaction from Pakhtun elite, who are successively seeing Islam as either secondary to culture or dominant enough to comply with Pakistan's Islamist discourse (see above). However, at popular level such polarized positions have been overshadowed by the perception that, religion, being simple and ritualistic or 'laic' and 'uncomplicated' (Ahmed, 1984), continues to be constituent part of identity.

He is unburdened by religious dialectics and polemics, that he says disparagingly, is for the religious men, the mullas and Mians (Ahmed, 1984: 313).

In Malakand such exclusivity of the religious category is maintained and rather consolidated by their autonomy; also, Sharia intricacies and sectarian ideologies are set aside.

### 7.3: Islam and Pakhtunwali: Convergence and Divergence

Islam and Pakhtunwali are major constituents of Pakhtun identity. I have discussed (chapter 1) how the scholars are divided on whether Islam and Pakhtunwali coalesce or they coexist in juxtaposition. In this section I will elaborate how the boundaries and disjunction between the two are sharpened by a discourse set in the context of political unrest in the region. This discourse is significant despite the general agreement that Islam is central to Pakhtun identity. Such discourse is also partly in response to current stereotyping of Pakhtuns.

While arguing about the role of religion and Pukhtunwali in particular in Pakhtun society I do not seek to essentialize the constituent components of identity

rather I see transformation with in these spheres through historical process. Pakhtunwali code has not been practised to the standard of ideal in Malakand region (cf. Barth, 1959b; 1969b and Ahmed, 1976); and religious transformation has been taking place through historical influences from Deobandi thought and practice. More than thought it is actually influenced by Deobandi practices. Therefore there are no static, stagnant cultural and religious norms which bind Pakhtuns to themselves, as current stereotypes may suggest (Ahmed, 2004). Moreover, I also see the role of religious and non-religious elite who have been involved in instrumentalizing these spheres of identity i.e religion and Pakhtun code.

The synthesis of Islam and Pakhtun customs is not limited to living Islam but is well used in political and social reform movements<sup>177</sup>. Arguing about the Khudai Khidmatgar (KK) movement, Banerjee asserts; “*One of the reasons for the KK’s great success was the extent to which its ideology was grounded in both Islam and Pukhtunwali*” (2000: 160). Moreover, Islam has been an effective tool in the hands of religious leaders to unite Pakhtuns in times of crisis (Rittenberg, 1988) and equally efficient in regular times (cf. Haroon, 2007). Similarly Awami-khel in Malakand illustrated this relationship through their rhetoric of equality.

Anthropologically observed, Pakhtun behaviour is always judged by the society through the standards of Pukhtunwali and Islam. However, at some places Pukhtunwali attributes are practised by Pakhtuns though conscious of the fact that they are against the teachings of Islam (Ahmed, 1980: 106). At times they may choose one over the other (Khattak, 2007). Therefore, an important dimension of this relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali can be elaborated through questioning; are there ‘boundaries and disjunction between them’? (Bartlotti, 2000: 76) Barfield found them ‘inseparable’ (2005:215) and Ahmed argues that, they are within each other (1980:107). For Bartlotti Pakhtuns draw boundaries between the two and also construct ‘symbolic’ and ‘situational’ Muslimness (2000).

Currently a Pakhtun historian and intellectual (Khattak, 2007) recognised intimacy of Islam and Pakhtunwali but emphasised harmony between the two. He elaborates, “*the relationship between Islam and Pashtunwali is perennial and*

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<sup>177</sup> To see how this synthesis was attempted in religious movements since colonial times see Haroon (2007) and to locate the same process in non religious nationalist movement of Khudai Khidmatgar see Banerjee (2000). My own reading of Awami-khel struggle alludes to such fusion.

*indestructible. One is a spiritual guide while the other is temporal*”<sup>178</sup>. Mutual respect of boundaries leads to mutual growth and progress. Such harmony has been the Pakhtuns’ characteristic and in comparison to other Muslims make them better Muslims (Khattak, 2007: 16-19). However, below I will explain the growing disjunction between Islam and Pakhtunwali from the example of the TNSM leader and the emerging discourse that highlights this discontinuity.

TNSM leader (Maulana, interview, 2008) narrating his story of migration to Malakand reflected on these themes. While in village he had to either observe the customs of the land or observe his religious duties. He had to make a choice of moving from his village to an isolated place in Batkhela. If he stayed in his village he would have lost his faith (*“Da emaan na khlase del wo”*). Such narration show the perceived disjunctions between the local traditions and Islam and for that matter limitations in observing religion.

The location of TNSM leader on an isolated hilltop close to Batkhela, is a symbolic act of distancing from the social and cultural system. Such isolation or physical boundary refers to growing distrust and exclusivity from the cultural system functional in the society. Pakhtunwali relations with Islam is thus perceived in this very behavior. Mulana (interview, 2008) by severing his relations with his clan and kin in his village and keeping his isolation in Batkhela refer to the fact that cultural requirements are different from the religious requirements. It may also indicate the desperate effort to keep his economic and social autonomy, which will ensure continuity to attack social and cultural disjunctions. Nevertheless, such physical location does not mean religious exclusivity. Maulana connects himself with sectarian TNSM and madaris.

Maulana behavior not only alludes to the importance of space to reformation but also to the growing dilemma faced by reformists to operate in Pakhtun society. They know the cultural code has features which contradict Islam and partly that is what they would like to reform. But they also know the potential of the cultural code to mobilize support in favor of reforms. This duality is currently effective as charged by the environment in which contradictions between Islam and Pakhtunwali is highlighted.

Edwards (1990) in an important study in Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan has observed the tension between the religious class and the tribal Pakhtuns. He reported

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<sup>178</sup> My translation from original Pakhto text.

that mullas prevented music and dancing in the camp which was resisted by the tribal Pakhtuns. The encounter between the two in the argument of Edwards refers to attempting boundaries between cultural performance (tribal identity) and religious identity by social actors. Therefore, the power wielded by religious authorities disturbed the “traditional balance of religion and tribe and has created a disjuncture between fundamental aspects of their identity” (1990: 95-96).

I also follow the argument of David Edwards (1990) on the question of Taliban and their relationship with Pakhtun society. He describes Taliban as, “*having spent months and years in the quasi-monistic communities of the madrasas, the potential recruits were relatively limited in their understanding of the world and relatively alien to tribal, regional, ethnic and party loyalties...*” (Edwards, 1998: 725).

In my account of the Maulana this tension between the cultural values and teachings received at madrasa explains the distance between these two entities. Although, I have not interviewed madrasa students but my account of Maulana (being a product of madrasa) and Edwards observation indicate towards the tension in religious elements and the Pakhtun society. This also signifies the need of more rigorous research work on madaris in Pakhtun region to elaborate on these themes. Within the limited scope of this study I have indicated the tension and allude to important aspect of this tension manifested in the discourse.

In the background of Afghan Jihad, radicalisation of religious schools of thought (Nasr, 2000) and the emergence of “neo-Taliban” (White, 2008a), has not only created two hardened positions held by Pakhtun nationalists and religious radicals, but also generated discourse about the relationship between Pakhtunwali and Islam.<sup>179</sup> Through these hardened positions the relationship between Pakhtunwali and Islam is interpreted in essentialized way. Moreover, electoral swing from religious parties to nationalist party has been under the influence of this discourse.

Islamists have deeper inroads into the State and society through their educational institutions, their recognized role of being the guardians of public morality, their regional influence and their stakes in State’s nationalist discourse. Ethno-nationalists have been less recognized and appreciated by the State, but their recent electoral victory

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<sup>179</sup> A Pakhtun peace Jirga was held in Peshawar in November 2006, where these positions were openly demonstrated by the nationalist leaders of ANP and Pakhtunkhwa Mili Awami party and the religious parties such as JUI . See Rashid (2006a) and (2006b).

and increasing public disappointment in face of unrest in the region at the hands of Islamist strengthen their position. Pakhtun nationalists, both Awami National Party, Pakhtun Mili Awami Party and Pakhtun nationalist intellegencia have been overemphasising on non religious credentials of Pakhtun culture and relegate secondary role to religion. Such thinking is reflected through their argument that religious sentiments and association of Pakhtun have long been exploited by the State of Pakistan to gain strategic victories in Afghanistan and promote its assimilation efforts. They often refer to the secular and non violent credentials of Khudai Khidmatgar movement of Ghafar Khan.<sup>180</sup>

The discourse is not just limited to political elite, but the educated and intellectual Pakhtuns (in Pakistan and the diasporas) are more actively involved. Numerous organizations, peace forums, literary circles, websites are dedicated to contribute to this discourse. Such discourse has informed and engulfed lay man to an educated Diaspora. Due to widespread access to media and other information sources. People in Malakand have been informed by the discourse, shared their concerns about the growing tension in the region and raised questions about the foreignness of the idea and method if not the membership of militant organizations. Most of the concerns were raised by the younger and educated Pakhtuns in Malakand. They also endorsed the nationalists elite criticism of the State's contribution to the unrest. State's involvement cannot be entirely discredited as reports about secret agencies (ISI) plan to establish a "Talibanized belt" in FATA to pressure Afghan government (at least till 2004) is documented (Rashid, 2008: 269-270).

Religious elite has been very diverse. They include members from religious political parties such as JUI and Jamaat Islami and militant elements such as Taliban and TNSM. They have been alluding to the centrality and pervasiveness of Islam in Pakhtun society. They have even interpreted Pakhtun cultural elements such as 'honour' by giving it religious connotations.<sup>181</sup> They have also appealed to the traditions of religious millenarian movements of colonial era. The effort of the protagonists of these positions is to establish the dominance of one over the other. Consequently, they

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<sup>180</sup> Ironically KK leadership did appeal Islam and Pakhtunwali (Banerjee, 2000) .

<sup>181</sup> TNSM leader in Batkhela defined honor to be struggle in the way of Allah and Islam. This could be a very narrow interpretation of the term, if one look at the understanding of the term by anthropologists such as Ahmed (1980) and Barth (1969b).

are creating two polarised positions and a space that highlights the disjunction between Islam and Pakhtunwali.

This nationalist discourse about the place of religion and the extent of its influence in Pakhtun culture and society is often ignored in the literature that see the intermeshing of Jihad and Pakhtunwali (Verkaaik, 2007). This discourse appears to be a discourse of resistance, which challenges the interpretation of Pakhtun code in religious terms. In fact it refers to the destruction of the Pakhtun culture and values at the hands of the Taliban. Even voices within the national press (Rahman, 2009) recognize that Taliban are blamed for destroying Pakhto poetry, music, arts, culture, dress code and even language.

If neo Taliban had their way the Pashtuns' ethno-cultural identity could be as much under threat of extinction as the other ethno-cultural identities within the Pakistan family (Rahman, 2009).

The discourse also emphasize the need to discard some of the stereotypes of Pakhtuns, as they conceive Pakhtuns wrongly implicated and find religious radicalism, the product of State policy.

The above discussed discourse is also manifested in the electoral trends in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The electoral victory of the Pakhtun nationalists (2008) is an important event as was the victory of Islamic parties (MMA). It happened in such succession that it will not be inappropriate to see it as a possible consequence of each other. On the one hand it signified the presence of two very different electoral forces in the province on the other it referred to a trend (probably positive) that people's choice is not always based in clientelistic considerations.<sup>182</sup> Most importantly, the vote negated some of the assumptions that radical elements represent popular sentiments of the region. I tend to avoid explaining popular support swing but insist that the pattern signifies the discourse which reevaluates the relationship between the constituent elements of Pakhtun identity, which in time may redefine Pakhtun identity. The dialectics of the discourse are in the positions taken by religious groups and ethno-nationalists.

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<sup>182</sup> see Wilder (1999) for voting behavior in Pakistan.

#### 7.4: Islam and Pakhtun Identity

Islam is central to Pakhtun identity and society (Barth, 1969b; Ahmed, 1980; Glatzer, 1998; Shah, 1999; Banerjee, 2000; Rittenberg, 1988, Spain, 1996). A Pakhtun is by religion an “orthodox Muslim” (Barth, 1969b: 119) and Muslimness is acquired by birth, “his place in society as a Pukhtun and a Muslim is thus secured and defined from the moment of birth” (Ahmed, 1980: 107). Consequently for Pakhtuns, “...Islam was one of the principal constituents of their self definition, with a Muslim way of life and Pathan tradition being taken as complementary attributes of their identity” (Shah, 1999: 34) Therefore, this sense of belonging gives Pakhtuns “confidence” and “makes their religion universal and tolerant” (Ahmed, 1980:107; also see Banerjee, 2000).

South Asian Islam has been influenced by the religious revivalist movements of (19th and 20th century) which later became religious styles through the authoritative *Fatawa* (scholarly opinion) of Ulema (Metcalf, 2004) and spread to remote areas of India. I argue that religion being practiced and the form adopted for this practice is undergoing a change. Therefore, the binding nature of religion in Pakhtun society is perhaps intact, but the change in performance of rituals and practices created a social change which is related to the processes of identification and boundaries making. Such change is facilitated by the proliferation of Madaris and growing interaction with Middle East through the ritual of Hajj and experience of living and earning. I also posit that religion is made the exclusive domain of Pakhtun practice. Interestingly, extenuating the importance of religion or opting for secular has never been an option in Malakand, despite the current stigmatization of Pakhtuns in Pakistan and endeavors of ethno nationalist elite to emphasize its secondary role or choosing non religious options. Religion has been pervasive and all-encompassing way of life.<sup>183</sup>

#### **Exclusivity in observing Islam:**

Identification with Islam makes performance of religion, the exclusive domain of Pakhtuns and source of pride. Local discourse is also comparative and draw boundaries between those who practice and those who don't. They locate themselves in

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<sup>183</sup> see Barfield (2005: 213 ) for Afghanistan

the former and somehow internalize Islam as if it is being owned. The later includes all non Pakhtun ethnic groups in Pakistan.

We are Pakhtuns and Pakhtuns are devout Muslims (Hafeez ullah, interview, 2008). Islam is exclusively in Pakhtuns. Fasting, Prayers, Zakat and Pardah are only observed strictly by Pakhtuns (Arshid, interview, 2008).

Geographical boundaries are related to religious boundaries and religiosity across the boundary is doubted.

From Attock onwards there is no Islam' (Hamid, interview, 2008).<sup>184</sup> If there was no Pakhto (or Pakhtunwali) there would have been no Islam. You can weaken Islam anywhere but you cannot do it in Pakhtun regions (Arshid, interview, 2008).

The conviction that Islam belongs to them is so deep that it endorses a responsibility to do well in observing religion. Such observation inversely consolidates the conviction. Above made expressions allude to religion being owned and practiced in a way that it becomes not only a part of spiritual experience but also the exclusive sphere of collective pride. Justification comes equally from the religious elite when they endorse, if not the exclusivity, the sheer commitment and observance of religion in local population. I was told by the top leader of TNSM<sup>185</sup> that Pakhtuns are the better performers of individual religious practices (rituals) than other ethnic groups in Pakistan. *"This is the natural to Pakhtuns. God gave them this temperament"* (Maulana, interview, 2008). Also the younger generation has greater *jazba* (passion) to reform society on the lines of Sharia. Such thoughts were long held by Deobandi religious scholars about the Pakhtuns of Tribal Areas (Haroon, 2007: 93-98). Religious elite in Malakand even see bravery and *ghariat* (honor) as characteristics of Pakhtuns, but interpret it differently; *"Pakhtun must be a good Muslim, Pashto (Pashtunwali) means ghairat (honor) and ghairat must be for Islam"* (Maulana, 2008). Local interpretation

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<sup>184</sup> Attock marks the boundary between the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. No Islam was explained as poor performance of religious rituals.

<sup>185</sup> Tehrik Nifaz Shariat-e- Muhammadi, a religious movement active in Malakand.

and practice may differ but the religious elite interpretation demonstrate the extent of interpreting local cultural code religiously. The exclusivity in observing Islam and the pride demonstrated through such performance is not oblivious to the sense of belonging to Ummah. In fact through claims of better observance (of religious practices) and thus being better Muslims, Pakhtun project the sense of belonging to Ummah.

### **Piety and austerity:**

Piety and austerity are the utmost requirements from the religious categories.<sup>186</sup> However, a religious leader must also demonstrate knowledge along with piety and austerity. Therefore, more than charisma, which is divinely ordained, piety and knowledge are required of religious leader. Ahmed (1976) has reported charisma in the leadership of the millenarian movements in colonial India of 19th century.

However, charisma, as coined by Max Weber would mean the characteristic of an individual by virtue of which he is considered “extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities” (1978: 241-245). Such qualities must be divine in origin and be legitimized by the followers with absolute trust in the possessor of such charisma; and the leadership itself must ideally have no economic consideration and call his activity a “mission” or “spiritual duty” (Weber, 1978: 241-245). I concede Edwards assertion that such charisma is missing in the leadership of current religious movements that seek Sharia rather than challenging foreign intervention (1998: 726).

Therefore, austerity, piety and non temporal spiritual attitude of the religious elite is valued. Such qualities in the leadership of the movement can provide legitimacy to the cause. Maulana (TNSM leader) when learned about the rise of Sufi Muhammad started his inquiry to know whether Sufi Muhammad was honest and sincere in his call for Sharia. He stayed with Sufi Muhammad for some time and ultimately satisfied with the piety and asceticism of Sufi Muhammad he joined the movement. Maulana’s story was also of trial and tribulation in the cause of Islam. He narrated how he was refuted by his family when he decided to leave his village and started a very simple and devoted life in Batkhela. His religious service to the people of Batkhela and his involvement in the “right cause” (TNSM movement) adds to his contentment.

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<sup>186</sup> These include mulla, Mian, Syed, Qazi and saints.

I have no greed and don't expect favors from others. I once told my rich cousin that my hut is better than his bungalow because I am more contented and satisfied in it than he is in his bungalow (Maulana, interview, 2008).<sup>187</sup>

Ostentatious living and display of wealth is socially disapproved for the religious category.<sup>188</sup> Therefore, not poverty but austerity is symbolically associated with righteousness and religiosity through a narrative by the religious elite which are believed to be recognized socially. Maulana also narrated how he impressed a local khan with his behavior, who then provided land for the mosque he was running. The khan came to him along with his secretary but the TNSM leader was more respectful to khan's secretary than to the khan. It struck the khan for he expected more respect due to his wealth and social status. The khan constructed the actions of the TNSM leader unworldly and pious, and in recognition of the TNSM leader's piety and righteousness he provided his son to be taught by the TNSM leader.

When I am in league with Sufi Muhammad, it is the friendship of hunger and thirst (demanding and full of tribulations) (Maulana, interview, 2008).

*Qazian, Mians* or any other religious category doing businesses and demonstrating worldly success, when they were expected to demonstrate austerity, piety and learning, were subjected to public diatribe.<sup>189</sup> Claim to previously religious statuses require demonstration of qualities and performance expected from those statuses. Religious domain and the non religious domain are demarcated in a sense that any profane achievement such as excellence in business for the religious elite would invite opposition and social disapproval. Religious elite must excel in their own domain of religiosity and knowledge.

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<sup>187</sup> Hut symbolizes poverty and bungalow richness.

<sup>188</sup> It is interesting to report that the founders of Deobandi Madrasa in India also believed in the spiritual advantage of poverty in fostering unity, particularly in fund seeking (Metcalf, 2004: 33). Uncertainty of means of income was deemed desirable (Farouqi, 1962: 26). Such examples could be the cause of inspiration for Deobandi elite in Pakhtun region.

<sup>189</sup> Qazian were the Islamist jurists who adjudicated disputes according to Sharia during Jirga time.

The stated position of how poverty compels people to join religious extremism is not refuted here. Even TNSM leader acknowledged that mostly poor are attracted to madrasa and struggle of sharia. Instead we may argue that poverty situations are consolidated through recognition of austerity and asceticism demonstrated through simple living and refusal to accept favors. Such consolidation may happen through the examples of leaders and through social recognition. Most of those who have joined madrasa or religious organizations would already be poor but their new situations consolidate their previous status and would not be an attempt to achieve richness or wealth. Probably, by attempting to achieve richness they would lose respect and recognition in the society. This local perspective can be seen considering contradictory arguments made in literature that mullas have been seeking power, wealth and social status (Nasr, 2000; White, 2008a). I argue that locally people disapprove of such behavior and would follow religious leaders only if they demonstrate piety and austerity. Much of this argument explains local disdain of “neo-Taliban” activities in the region. I therefore, may conclude that the expectations of austerity and piety are from religious category in general and are not specific to Saints (Barth, 1959b).

### **Religious categories:**

Criticizing Barth for taking Saints and Sufis as single orthodox religious category, Ahmed distinguished orthodox from non orthodox (1976: 55). However, he clearly identified these categories in his later work (1997). He postulated that there are those with religious and legal learning, such as Ulema, Mufti, Qazi, Mualana and Maulvi, those which are defined by esoteric and unorthodox practices for example Sufis, and finally those defined by religious genealogy and descent “ and thus claiming superior status” such as *Sayyad*, *Sharif* or *Mian* (1997:85). Religion and categorization interplay in Malakand through categorical status changes, growing religiosity, and religious political affiliations.

*Qazian* of Malakand present a paradox of categorical placement. They have to renegotiate their categorical status in the situation where *Khanan* and *Ghariban* categories are consolidating. *Qazian* being jurists in jirga period have lost that function and have mostly adopted business as a profession. Despite loss of their previous role *Qazians* have been claiming their previous status. Although, they were and continue to be inclined towards *Khanan* and Jirga period which also guaranteed their privileges, had

to face diatribe from *Khanan*. We also know that many from previous castes have discarded their profession but Qazians were the only category who were increasingly questioned for their claim to previous status, perhaps for their continuous claim to previous status category.<sup>190</sup>

Changing statuses by adopting new titles would often invite stir in society. This applies to individuals ascending to higher category within the religious group. Claims to higher religious status would surely require re-negotiation, despite the rearranging of previous categories. In oblivion to such renegotiations provoke diatribe. Interestingly such diatribe would involve reference to God's authority and cursing of the individual for claiming higher religious status.<sup>191</sup> Such attempt of claiming higher statuses get severe diatribe if the claimant is a public figure.

Where religiosity and religious functions are combined with tribal lineage pride is more overwhelming. The case of Asghar Khan (2008) demonstrates that religious affiliation generates satisfaction and spiritual uplift it also creates vulnerabilities, in face of ridicule from lineage members to have acquired a religious role. Asghar Khan (2008) comments, '*A pious man cannot survive these days; all praise to Allah, Who gave me good family (referring to his lineage) which protects me from harm*'. However, vulnerabilities are commensurate with retaining position within the lineage and constantly affirming categorical status. This also endorses my earlier argument that taking up new roles may not affect one's categorical status.

Piety and austerity are if the common requirements of religious category, performance of religious rituals is required of the entire society. Moreover, through the influence of Tabligh and the agency of Mullah more and more people are performing religious duties. This change cannot only be observed (by an outsider) but can also be grasped from the local narrations of religious change, which emphatically recognize that the observance of religious duties has grown and become more universal. Previously the categorical differences reflected differences in religiosity. *Khanan* in Batkhela told me that they were good observers of religious practices than lower castes such as *Nai* (hairdressers) and peasants. However, currently, such differences are narrowed down by

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<sup>190</sup> Unlike what their status represent i.e legal knowledge of Islam, under pressure from *Khanan* they have developed their own genealogies which demonstrate Arab ancestry; tracing back to the companions of the prophets.

<sup>191</sup> Fareed Khan(2008) snubbed his sibling for calling one such individual 'Sahib' (Sir).

reformist movements such as Tabligh, which made religious performance universal. The young generation of *Nai* and peasant castes have learned Islamic rituals, greetings and are becoming *Hafiz*.<sup>192</sup>

Oddly, categorical boundaries, to some extent, coincide with political affiliation in Malakand. Politically, most of the *Ghariban* businessmen are either Jamat-i-Islami supporters or active members. Powerful business families<sup>193</sup> and even, the leader of Awami-khel was a staunch follower of Maududi. Similarly, the first influential anti Swat State activist Sirajuddin Khan was influenced by Maududi thought (Rome, 2008: 275). Sufi Muhammad the leader of TNSM movement was also local councilor of Jamaat Islami. However, despite these affiliation with Jamaat I found most of business families are not Jamat ideologues and are at the same time associated with Tabligh. They also have a strong sense of Pakhtun identity against non Pakhtun identity. As argued above political parties are perceived locally on categorical terms. Moreover, the affiliation of businessmen from *Ghariban* with Jamat Islami refer to religious inclination as well as to a fact that Jamat provides a niche to *Ghariban* with business background to accumulate power.

## Conclusion

Through these analysis I was able to comment on the dynamic of religious change in Malakand. Although I realize that the entire scale and range of the change would be too ambitious to attempt in this modest research work, I have identified various aspects of the change. These aspects include how literature describe the change in Pakhtun regions and Pakhtun sense of Muslimness, and how people in the region perceive religious change. Also I have reported that political unrest and uncertainty has influenced people's understanding of religion or at least their reporting of such understanding. Central to this discussion was my own position as insider and outsider and associated advantage and limitations. Through these positions I was able to discern that Islam continues to be a significant part of Pakhtun identity and that religion itself is perceived to be practicing rituals rather than adopting a particular sectarian ideology with political connotations.

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<sup>192</sup> An honorary title for those who learn Quran by heart. It is a social status that enjoys wider reverence and praise.

<sup>193</sup> Such as Arshid (2008), Ab Zar (2008), Hafeez ullah (2008), Hamid (2008) etc.

I have argued that currently a discourse among the elite is revisiting the relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali (cultural code) by looking into their convergence and divergence. Despite the influence of religious reformist movements, the process of internalizing any sectarian or ideological (Jihadi) globalism into ethnic identity is unwarranted in Malakand. Part of it is also explained by people's disassociation from TNSM and Taliban methods and actions. Therefore, through the case study of Malakand Pakhtuns I contest the argument in the literature (Verkaaik, 2007) that religious and ethnic boundaries coincide in Pakistan.

## Conclusion

Pakhtuns in Malakand categorize and identify each other in a contested manner. They draw boundary and maintain it through a meaning system that involves interpretations of cultural features and performance. Through such processes they signify the intra ethnic aspects of identification. Moreover, they further relate these intra ethnic aspects of identity to inter ethnic that primarily involve a discourse on who is Pakhtun? Pakhtunness in this way is entailing contestation in local context and near consensus in non local context. The pragmatic and dynamic processes indicate the multilayered Pakhtun identity. Pakhtun in Malakand debate and reflect on their Pakistani and Muslim identities. They do so in relation to State's consistent pressure for integration in the national whole and in the current focus of relationship between Islam and Pakhtun identity. Thus for Pakhtuns various aspects of Pakhtunness manifest intra ethnic, inter ethnic, national and religious identification that also involve contestation and consensus. Therefore, the multiple senses of belonging for Pakhtuns are crucial aspects of their existence on which they reflect in the process of identification.

This study is about the intra ethnic, inter ethnic process of identification, contextual and contested identities reflected in segmentary ethnicity. It is an enquiry into these processes in time of social and economic flux. It also illustrates the interplay between ethnicity and religion and the manifestation of this interplay in the process of identification. In this study I have argued that Pakhtun identity need to be problematized to enquire into its various aspects that undergo a change. I have taken Pakhtuns' perspective of their identity in order to explicate its problematized character. In doing so I will set the debate about the Pakhtunness that will contribute to exiting literature that has been less reflective on such problematization and to suggest future researches avenues related to ethnic identification among Pakhtuns.

The theoretical position undertaken by this work is close to social constructionists, focusing on how people in Malakand socially construct their differences and thus draw boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. Moreover, the foremost focus of the project is the generative process and the flux that characterize the complexity of Pakhtun social existence and their identity. In this way the study is contemporary in its focus on the dynamism and complexity of society as against the

structural functionalist view of ‘static’, ‘homogeneous’ and ‘isolated’ cultures and societies (cf. Eeriness, 2002: 10). It is through such nuanced understanding of ethnicity, boundaries, groupness embedded in the process of identification that this study shapes its analysis and seek to contribute to the literature.

The diligent inquiry of identification processes in Pakistan reveals that the concept of boundary is relevant to delineate internal stratification among Pakhtuns and explicate the simultaneous process of ethnic identification among various groups in Pakistan. Internal identification process discloses that Pakhtuns in Malakand categorize each other into *Khanan* and *Ghariban* and thus draw a boundary that differentiates. However, such identification and categorization process is set in a local context that is characterized by contestation, informed by previous stratification schemes and influenced by incessant social and economic change. Boundary making is also evident from the identification by Pakhtuns vis-a-vis other ethnic groups, such as Punjabis or Mohajirs etc. Such identification is embedded in the national (non local) context which is characterized by consensus among Pakhtuns in choosing more inclusive features of Pakhtun identity (such as language) in apparently symbolic and, at times, in essentialized manner. It is here that the ‘groupness’ (cf. Brubaker, 2004) among Pakhtuns in political sense is more visible.

Moreover, this study equally significantly explains the importance of the internal content (‘cultural stuff’) which Barth (1969a) initially ignored. Through the discussion of social stratification, behavioral patterns and reinterpretation of cultural features I denoted that the internal content has its own significance. Thus the dialectics of internal stratification (contestations) and the ethnic groupness (consensus) highlight the mutual influence and significance of the ‘cultural stuff’ and the boundary simultaneously.

The thesis contributes to the broader literature on ethnicity and identity by adding to the debate about the segmentary and contextual ethnicity, identity processes and shifting emphasis from cultural content to boundary. The discussion in the thesis on the Pakistaniat and Muslimness of Pakhtun provides insights for the researchers working on the relationship of ethnicity and religion in Pakistan. Such discussion also provides different perspective (Pakhtun perspective) on the current Islamic unrest in the region and thus is a valuable addition to the multitude of literature produced in post 9/11 context.

In this study I have argued that Pakhtuns in Malakand construct Pakhtunness in certain contexts by emphasizing one or other marker or aspects of Pakhtunness (ascribed or achieved). In such a way they contest over the choice of ascribed or performed aspect in local context but develop a consensus on more inclusive markers such as language to identify a Pakhtun in non local context. Therefore, unlike Ahmed (1980) who described lineage or Barth (1969b) who emphasized values (such as autonomy, equality, etc) as defining markers I argue that defining markers depend on the choice Pakhtun make in different contexts. Ironically, local context may be characterized by contested Pakhtunness but the non local context may manifest concurrence on Pakhtunness.

The ontological question of who is Pakhtun is implied in the statement that Pakhtun identity is based in an elaborated repertoire or 'tool kit' that includes diverse features that are contextually associated with Pakhtunness. Therefore, the reality of Pakhtunness is socially and contextually constructed through a reference to diverse features. Moreover, such process of construction is partly informed by the ascription of Pakhtuns by non Pakhtuns such as Punjabis, Mohajirs etc through numerous stereotypes. In this stereotypical image Pakhtuns are vividly seen as 'them', which in turn influences Pakhtun sense of belonging to Pakistan.

The position and identity of the author is an important aspect of this study. Where my Pakhtun credentials were instigating elements in undertaking this study, the inherent sensitivities were pivotal in the analysis and reporting about the Pakhtun perspective from the Pakhtuns of Malakand. The utmost effort to gain access to informants and information at such testing times would have been difficult for non Pakhtun researcher, particularly when the issue of access is the major cause of unavailability of new perspectives on the people and the region (Banerjee, 2000). However, the researcher was also an outsider to the society under investigation and such position had its own consequences. The information shared was under the pressure of circumstances and situation. Most importantly the expectations and sensitivities of the informants put restraints on the researcher in time of enormous uncertainty and ambivalence.

In this study I have not postulated a model that would be taken in holistic manner to interpret Pakhtun everywhere, for I am aware that the variation in Pakhtun form and existence would render any such attempt short of reductionism and

synchodicism as Ahmed (1976: 8-) found in the study of Barth. However, the case study I undertake represent hybridity of Tribal and Settled Areas if not *Nang* and *Qalang* (cf. Ahmed, 1976: 73-83; 1980) and the variation in Pakhtun form. Also I postulated the findings of this study will have relevancy for the situation in Settled Areas where hierarchical stratification are more established and decades of existence under centralized States may have produced more significant identity issues. Moreover, the findings of the study may still be useful to Tribal Areas where stratification may not be a significant fact of life but the encroaching State has disturbed the locus of authority and power. These areas manifest the flux that is also characteristic of Malakand. The findings of this study may help in elaborating the flux in Tribal region in relation to Pakhtun identity.

### Intra ethnic and inter ethnic processes

This thesis signifies the role of intra ethnic aspects of Pakhtun identification which are often discussed as internal stratification short of meaningful identification process. These intra ethnic aspects of identification are enacted by social actors in time of flux. They are meaningful in local contexts where the people engaging with socio economic changes and deal with the hybridity of the administrative and political system. Malakand being one such place which is at the margin of Tribal and Settled Areas and has hybrid administrative and political systems of Tribal and Settled Areas. People in Malakand relate intra and inter ethnic aspects in a dynamic process that has mutual consequences. Although, further study is needed to elaborate on the precise relationship between these different aspects of identification, this thesis sets the debate that suggest the significant of these aspects. In this way it contributes to the understanding of Pakhtun identity, the flux that affect such identity and the political and administrative system in relation with identity.

The broader literature on ethnicity recognizes the segmentary nature of ethnicity (Jenkins, 2008a; 42-43) but reflect less on the processes at these segmentary levels and the consequent collectivities produced through such processes. I have illustrated these processes and the entailing contestation and consensus. I have also explicated how these processes are transcendent as they cut cross the segmentary levels. The way *Khanan*

and *Ghariban* configured within the larger ethnic group in oppositional manner on the bases of lineage and landowning, the way they stressed ascribed and performed aspects of Pakhtunness to include and exclude in broader ethnic identity in local context, the way they contested and consented in different contexts on the definition of Pakhtun, refer to the striking presence of intra ethnic and inter ethnic processes and the relationship these different aspects have.

The thesis signifies that besides the external boundary maintenance on which a huge anthropological literature stresses in post Barth (1969b) proposition. It is in line with some literature currently referring to cultural stuff that has regained some of its weight. By focusing on intra ethnic processes, manipulation of cultural features in local context and the processes that involve contestation and consensus I have signified the importance of cultural content of ethnic groups. Implied in these discussions is the argument that social actors in Malakand have reconstructed the external boundary vis a vis other ethnic groups by revisiting the debate of who is Pakhtun? It is the contextualization of this debate that generated contestation and consensus. Moreover, such contestation and consensus is related to internal process of categorization in local context. Therefore, a dynamic process in which *Khanan* and *Ghariban* involve in categorizing each other internally and contextually contest each other's Pakhtunness by emphasizing its different aspects.

Higher degree of immigration, development of Batkhela market and related economic changes, the inflow of remittances from abroad, the emergence of Awami-khel movement and Bhutto's ascend to power and finally successive political administrative reforms (since 1970) have generated changes that have influenced collective identification in Malakand. These changes have signified intra ethnic processes or internal processes largely ignored by the literature. Focusing on these internal processes, I have argued that Pakhtuns in Malakand categorize each other internally and maintain categorical boundary. The two most prominent categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* emerge from such processes. These two categories are related to each other through reciprocated identification of 'us' and 'them'.

Previously reported (Barth, 1959b; 1981; Lindholm, 1982) social stratification, where people were divided in a range of hierarchical status categories is diminishing.

The hierarchal structure of categories is successively transforming in a dynamic way into an organization where continuity with the past is established by drawing from previous categorical arrangement. However, the transformed categories of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* keep a mutually antagonistic relationship (overtly or covertly) despite losing previous patron-client character.

This work elaborated the evolving nature of *Khanan* and *Ghariban* categories and did not pursue to determine the exact nature of these categories. Perhaps it is too early to establish it for it is difficult to predict the direction of this evolution. However, what is illustrated here is the diminishing hierarchical statuses and patron client relationships that were too obvious in the literature produced on the area and its people. This is the reason I insist that the hierarchical stratification discussed by the literature are not enough to grasp the complexity of social relations and the impact of this complexity on the identity issues. Focusing on the these categories in relation with identification process I have integrated my findings at intra ethnic level with other levels of identification to support the central argument that there are multilayered identification processes that need to be studied. Moreover, I leave it to future researchers to look into the character of these categories and their relationship with historical processes and memories, accumulated experiences of the members of these categories and their setting in changing social milieu.

By focusing on collective identification and the reworking of hierarchies into more oppositional categorization between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* I have avoided what Ahmed (1976) has criticized Barth's for i.e Methodological individualism. I have not observed a khan leading a faction in fight with another khan leading another faction and clients making a choice to support one or the other patron, rather I have indicated social tension between social collectivities engaged in the process of categorization and identification.

The categorical boundaries between *Khanan* and *Ghariban* in Malakand are rigorously maintained by a meaning system that is informed by social conduct. The meaning system and the social conduct is reflected through typified behavioral patterns. Nevertheless, these meanings emanating from these behavioral patterns generated contest when interpreted differently. Therefore, *Khanan* through their pride in heroic

past and tribal identity demonstrate 'ego' and 'self pride' and *Ghariban* through their own self aggrandizement vis a vis Khan in business demonstrate 'self accomplishment'. These behavioral patterns are interpreted in the meaning of '*Nasha*' (arrogance) and 'Thanklessness', 'betrayal' in social interaction. Some cultural features and institutions such as *Melmastiya*, honor, *Gham Khadi*, etc, reflect the above behavioral traits and the contestations in the associated meanings. Through the performance of these cultural features the extent to which these features satisfy the core cultural values (cf. Edward, 1990) can be determined.

The boundary that demarcates *Khanan* from *Ghariban* is also interpreted in contestation. Therefore, the boundary for *Ghariban* means 'usurpation', 'arrogance', etc and the image of Khan becomes a 'usurper', 'condescending' unlike earlier suggested (Barth, 1981, Lindholm, 1982) ideal person embodying 'bravery' and 'strength'. The status of Khan is therefore, less desirable. *Ghariban* for *Khanan* are devoid of Pakhtun ancestry and Pakhtun values. *Ghariban* and *Khanan* see their statuses primarily but not exclusively performed and ascribed. The boundary between *Kisanyan* (peasants) and the *Khanan* is currently salient despite *kisanyan* stepping into the landowners role that was zealously reserved by *Khanan* for themselves. *Kisanyan* narrative like other *Ghariban* is of accomplishment and pride and not of remorse and malediction (cf. Barth, 1981). The redrawing of hierarchies in Malakand is not consciously pursued but the contested interpretation of the boundary in itself indicate hierarchies are discredited and dissolved. Moreover, the tacit consent and submission to values and social system built on them as demonstrated by Barth (1981) and Lindholm (1982) is non discernible in Malakand. In fact, by discrediting the behavior of the *Khanan*, *Ghariban* did not aspire to take their position and status.

Awami-khel, an indigenous organization, questioned the political status of a tribal Agency and related the issues of recognition, inequality and dishonor with identification. Awami-khel, although entirely ignored by the literature on the region, indicates the significance of internal processes for change. I have illustrated the ideology and struggle of the Awami-khel to reflect on how local forces can demand reforms in Tribal Areas and how those demands are embedded in local issues of social stratification and identification. This can be tied up with the debate of change being imposed by encapsulating system (c.f Ahmed, 1980) or change being internally desired (as I have shown here). Future research may focus on the issue of indigenous endeavor

against the prevailing political and social dispensation in Tribal Areas and explore the relationship between State's interests and local demands for reforms. An extensive debate about the reforms in Tribal Areas is currently addressing the paradox to whether reform the political and administrative system in the region. The debate is the part of enormous interest in the region in the context of unrest in Tribal Areas.

Pakhtuns in Malakand not just socially categorize, contest boundary meanings (chapter 4) but also evolve a discourse on ethnic identity. Such discourse has greater repercussions as it involves varying degree of emphasis on different aspects of Pakhtunness such as ascribed and achieved to include and exclude. The ascribed aspect of Pakhtunness allude to patrilineal descent established through the memory of genealogies, landownership related to the position in the genealogy and the right to belong by birth. Literature on Pakhtun identity clearly emphasize on the importance of ascribed aspect of Pakhtun. The performing aspect or achieved aspect is in the Pakhtun code of Pakhtunwali or Pakhto. Its significance is also highlighted by the literature. These two aspects are variously stressed in different contexts by the Pakhtun in Malakand. *Khanan* and *Ghariban* categories stress different markers or attributes of identity and indulge in contest over the definition of Pakhtun as they do on the meaning of categorical boundaries. This contest is shaped by multiple contexts in which the locus of discourse is the definition of Pakhtun. Contexts are situational i.e local, national and historical. Local contexts are defined by the social categorization, contested categorical boundaries meaning and historical experience. Therefore, the contest on who is Pakhtun is highly significant. When the situation is defined by national context the discourse loses some of its contested form. Historical context draws from both local and national contexts and guides the discourse through historical claims deeply entrenched in the past experiences. Through such processes the inter ethnic and intra ethnic aspects of Pakhtun identity are related. Moreover, the contested and contextualized Pakhtunness as posited here would be an important addition to the literature that so far has not problematized Pakhtun identity.

I put history in perspective when I explored the struggle and rhetoric of Awami-khel when they related tribal organization and the establishment of the political system with the arrival of British in the region. I have also shown how consistently the system was locally categorized to be deviation from the norm and how such deviation happened in colonial context. This refers to some of the criticism Ahmed extended against Barth's

study of Swat. I agree to an extent that Barth and Lindholm were insensitive to the popular discontent towards such deviation. Why could not they grasp the popular reference to norms of Pakhtun and the exploitation of *Khanan* at the cost of deviation from norms. Malakand being an extension of Swat society under autonomous administrative system designed by British, also highlights the debate about *Nang* and *Qalang* categories and their relationship with maintaining Pakhtun identity (cf. Ahmed, 1976; Barth, 1959b; Barth 1981; Edwards, 1998). However, Malakand case suggest blurring of such distinction and uniqueness of its character. It is here that the recent work on Pakhtun comes handy to explain that the features of Pakhtunwali are not static and that its features can be interpreted, manipulated and negotiated (Banerjee, 2000; Bartlotti, 2000).

The *Ghariban* insistence on values and norms of Pakhtun culture despite the fact that they have lost most of the organizational characteristics of Pakhtun society i.e trace of common descent, segmentary tribal opposition vis a vis *Khanan* who have retained some of these features refer to their attempt to establish the egalitarian values and norms outside the tribal setup. My arguments in this thesis does not suggest that *Ghariban* wished to destroy the tribal setup, in fact they attempted to emulate it at times, Awami-khel symbolic reference to *Ghariban* as a single *khel* (clan), but suggest the dynamism of tribal setup as pointed out by Anderson (1983).

### Religion, ethnicity and Pakistani identity

A useful approach towards the problem of national integration in Pakistan would be to take the perspective of the ethnic groups having the history of ethno nationalist sentiments. This could be useful alternative to the exhausted State centered approaches to Pakistani nationalism. I have attempted to explain the issue of national integration and national identity through Pakhtun perspective and their processes of identification. I suggest that Pakistani identity is part of Pakhtun identification and it is through the studying of Pakhtun identity that we can comprehend the problem of national integration in Pakistan. Although mine is not first attempt to see Pakhtuns developing sense of belonging to Pakistan (see Ahmed, 1977:16; 1984 and Edwards, 1996:227-230). However, I have related such sense of belonging to other senses of belonging i.e intra and inter ethnic and religious. My study is different from various other studies on ethnic

groups in Pakistan which primarily enquire into ethno nationalist sentiments and articulation of such sentiments in Political movements. These studies look into the centrifugal and centripetal tendencies and then debate the effectiveness of the nation making process in Pakistan. I contribute to the wider literature by combining State centered and ethnic centered approaches by giving Pakhtuns' perspective; but shaping of such perspective in response to State's nation making efforts. I have also probed the interplay of ethnicity and religion in such identification process. Although literature on Pakhtuns has reported that Muslimness is central to Pakhtun identity I discuss such Muslimness in relation to State's nation making. I therefore contribute to literature on the interplay between ethnicity and religion in Pakistan. In these discussion I take up a most important aspect of current debates about the relationship of Islam with Pakhtunwali in the context of religious radicalism.

Pakhtunness retains primary significance for Pakhtuns in Malakand, despite internal contest on the definition of Pakhtun. However, that does not make identification an exclusive domain of ethnic identity, rather in a pragmatic way Pakhtuns relate their ethnic and national (Pakistani) identities, which generates multiple senses of belonging. Through successive integration in the State of Pakistan and attachment to personification of the region that is located within the boundaries of Pakistan, Pakhtuns facilitate their belonging to Pakistan. Moreover, they discursively demonstrate their relation with a multi ethnic Islamic Pakistan. The Islamic aspect of Pakistani identity is neither contested nor seen as primary to belong to the State. Conspicuously Pakhtun cannot accommodate the idea of belonging to nation that recognizes Islamic or Muslimness of Pakistanis and frustrates ethnic as sense of belonging. For them Pakistaniat is necessarily in the ethnic diversity and Muslimness.

Pakistan is a nation in making, and the dilemma for Pakhtuns is to balance their own ethnic pride with that of Pakistani identity. To have a national identity that accommodates ethnic expressions is at the center of the Pakhtun paradox of belonging to Pakistan. Reiterating Pakhtun identity brings Pakhtuns in direct clash with those (ruling elites) who are inclined to define Pakistan as only an Islamic nation carved out of the Muslims of South Asia. Their intimacy with Pakhtun culture and identity require them to adjust with the national identity that has yet to be agreed upon. Elite emphasis on non ethnic Islamic identity would maximize the dilemma for Pakhtuns, for it would

exasperate the paradox and force them to make a hard choice between their pride in ethnic affiliation and assimilation in nation predicated on Islam alone.

Islam continues to be a significant aspect of Pakhtun identity. Not only religion is understood in a peculiar way as an institution concerned with performance of certain rituals and duties but Sharia is also interpreted in local context to be an alternative to inefficient political system. Pakhtuns in Malakand have been receptive to reformists message of reforms in the performance of rituals but unreceptive to their sectarian rhetoric and political ideology. Although local discourse rarely involves contestation over religious text or interpretation of the text, Taliban style Sharia and methods are contested. Therefore, the process of internalizing any sectarian or ideological (Jihadi) globalism into ethnic identity is indiscernible. The militant religious elements (such as Taliban) are perceived exclusive to 'us' category, despite the constructed concomitance and inclusivity of Pakhtuns and Islamic militants and the consequent stereotyping in Pakistan. However, I have posited that people's responses and sensitivities are informed by current presentation of Pakhtuns in media and political unrest in the region.

Moreover, Pakistani nationalism predicated on Islam has been less an assimilating factor for Pakhtuns as they insist on their ethnic identity. The exiting literature and evidence from the field suggest that global Islamism and the ideological Jihad has been more the product of State strategy and has less reflection in local expression and discourse of religion in Malakand. However, such an understanding in Malakand is informed by the current political situation. The relationship of Pakhtun culture and the radical tendencies is also complex. Currently a discourse is revisiting the relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali (cultural code). Such discourse looks for convergence and divergence between the two and polarize the elite among Pakhtuns. The discourse indicate two counter narratives of the relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali that sharpens the disjunctions and discontinuities. The discourse itself alludes to the processes of identification among Pakhtuns as an ongoing struggle and not a transformation through the dominance of any single constituent element of identity such as, Islam or Pakhtunwali.

Despite sectarian contestation in Pakistan, sectarian boundaries do not coincide with ethnic boundaries. Although, Pakhtuns differentiate between the Muslimness of Pakhtuns and the Muslimness of Punjabis or Sindhis, such boundaries are non sectarian. They perceive others to be poor Muslims because they do not practice religion the way

they do. Moreover, they would hardly identify themselves as Deobandis or Barelvīs but would most certainly and vividly identify themselves as Sunni Muslims and express their unequivocal sense of belonging to Muslim Ummah. On these grounds I contest the proposition of ethnicization of Islam in Pakistan (Verkaaik, 2007).

## Appendix

### List of informants with their Pseudonyms and other details

Interviewee	Details	Place	Dates
Fareed Khan	A leading Khan of Batkhela, who also owns considerable land and property. He is one of those earliest <i>Khanan</i> in business. He and his siblings are generally respected for their success in business and political influence.	Batkhela	26 Oct 2008 11 April 2008 Several informal discussions.
Saif ullah	A leading member of <i>Kisanyan</i> movement. Still active and owns land in Batkhela now.	Batkhela	10 April 2008 28 Oct 2008
Hamid	A leading businessman in Batkhela who's family migrated generations ago.	Batkhela	12 April 2008
Arshid	A leading businessman in Batkhela market. His family has greater political influence in Batkhela. His family is considered by <i>khanan</i> to belong to lower caste category.	Batkhela	18 April 2008 26 Sept 2008
Asmat ullah Khan	Former government employe and a well known khan.	Batkhela	10 April 2008
Abu Zar	A leading political figure who claims Syed caste but often cited by <i>Khanan</i> in Batkhela and Thana to have changed his caste from mullah to Syed. His family runs a very successful business in Batkhela.	Batkhela	19 April 2008
Raheem	An immigrant and businessman of Batkhela who has been a public figure.	Batkhela	Did not interview
Maulana	A high ranking TNSM leader who is also an immigrant in Batkhela. He is educated in a number of madrasas and associate himself with Panjpiri sect.	Batkhela	12 April 2008

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Yousaf Khan	A young khan from Batkhela who is a government servant and the grandson of Fareed khan	Batkhela	10 April 2008
Afrasiyab Khan	An important Awami-khel office bearer. He is an immigrant and former government servant.	Batkhela	26 Oct 2008
Aurangzeb Khan	Khan of Batkhela who runs business, practice law and owns land. He participated in processions against Muhammad Khan the leader of Awami-khel in 1970s.	Batkhela	December 2007
Asfandyar Khan	An elderly khan of Batkhela. Currently, retired from government service.	Batkhela	27 Oct 2008 7 April 2008
Abdali Khan	A leading khan, trader and businessman, who also patronizes and participate literary activities in Batkhela.	Batkhela	27 Oct 2008
Inayat ullah Khan	The son of Fareed khan and a leading businessman.	Batkhela	19 April 2008
Dr Anwar Alam	A practicing doctor and an immigrant.	Batkhela	28 Oct 2008
Irfan Nazim	An immigrant who traces his family migration from the British time. He is currently a representative of a political party and holds public office in local government.	Batkhela	28 Oct 2008
Asad Nazim	A renown immigrant who has successful business, represent a political party and hold public office in local government.	Batkhela	26 Oct 2008
Arbaz Khan	A leading khan of Batkhela who owns land and is associated with agriculture. His family is associated with politics for generations.	Batkhela	26 Oct 2008

Interviewee	Details	Place	Dates
Nadeem	A representative of private company visits Batkhela often and mostly stays with Fareed khan's family. He does not belong to Malakand.	Batkhela	2008
Khatir	A literary figure from an immigrant family. His family is associated with business.	Batkhela	04 April 2008
Hafeez ullah	One of the most successful businessman, who migrated to Batkhela in 1950s. His family members are included by Inayat ullah Khan in friendship circles.	Batkhela	5 April 2008
Kamran Asif	School teacher in Malakand. Member of Thana Adabi Tolena (Thana literary gathering/association).	Thana	13 April 2008
Fida Anwar	Poet and member of Thana Adabi Tolena.	Thana	13 April 2008
Jameel	Jamat Islami activist from <i>Ghariban</i> . Runs a small business.	Batkhela	15 April 2008
Asghar Khan	A khan of Batkhela who was previously a Jirga member. However, since performing Hajj has devote to teach Quran to children.	Batkhela	8 April 2008
Qaid Khan	A well known khan of Thana who is local government representative and political worker of a leading political party.	Thana	14 April 2008
Khalid Khan	A well known khan of Thana. Agriculturalist and lawyer by profession.	Thana	December 2007
MAL	A literary Association in Batkhela. One of its gathering was used as focus group in this research work.	Batkhela	6 April 2008
Thana Adabi Tolena	Literary Association of Thana. One of its gathering was used as focus group in this research work.	Thana	13 April 2008

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Government Officials in Malakand	Administrative officers stationed in Batkhela and Malakand.	Batkhela and Malakand	28 Oct 2008
Faculty of Peshawar University	Various faculty members of Department of Political Science, University of Peshawar, Peshawar.	Peshawar	17 November 2008
Dr. Muhammad Taieb	Faculty member of University of Peshawar	Peshawar	17 November 2008
Dr Nawaz Tair	Ex faculty member of University of Peshawar.	Thana	13 April 2008
Ibraheem Ustagee	A respected man in Batkhela who teaches Quran to children and also serves a teacher in a school.	Batkhela	5 April 2008

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