

Helpdesk Research Report: Pashtun Society in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Areas
23.11.07

Query: Please provide an overview of the literature that exists on Pashtun society in the Pakistan and Afghanistan border area.

Enquirer: DFID South Asia Division

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1. Overview

Pashtuns take immense pride in their independence and have traditionally been fiercely resistant to central rule. Pashtun culture is governed by the '*Pashtunwali*' which, literally translated as the 'the way of the Pashtun', is an unwritten code of honour which is integral to Pashtun identity. It is comprised of the key concepts of chivalry and hospitality, and its other notable features include:

- *Jirga* or council of elders: the tribal legal system is based on this democratic decision-making body. *Jirga* decisions are made by consensus and as a result enjoy widespread legitimacy and enforceability.
- *Badal*: this obliges a Pashtun to take revenge against the family or clan of anyone who has caused him an injury. These conflicts are usually over personal matters rather than ethnic animosities but have been known to result in blood feuds spanning decades.
- *Nanawati*: This is the *Pashtunwali* requirement of providing refuge and connects to the strong kinship ties that are characteristic of Pashtun culture. This has led many commentators to argue that Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders (some of whom have married into Pashtun tribes) may be receiving shelter in Pakistan's tribal areas.
- Gender segregation: Pashtun culture is widely known for its segregation of men and women and the public and private spheres. Pashtun women often remain secluded within the home or fully veiled. Male elders can decide their marriages, usually in exchange for a bride-price. Women can also be exchanged in order to settle disputes and widows forced to marry close male relatives of their husband.
- Egalitarian leadership: Pashtun leadership is not inherited but earned on merit. However tribal leaders often have limited power, and must constantly negotiate for space with government officials and religious leaders.

Pashtun society faces various challenges today. A key issue identified by many commentators is the recent influx into Pashtun areas of foreign fighters, funds and political Islam. In some cases, religious leaders have been installed as tribal representatives, altering the traditional power structures of Pashtun society. Furthermore, many Pashtuns have been radicalised into violence in response to recent military operations as well as religious rhetoric that plays on their cultural sensibilities and values. There are many social and economic challenges also. Pashtun communities suffer from high illiteracy and poor access to basic services. In Pakistan's tribal areas, corruption is rife and the economy is dependent on the smuggling of drugs, arms and other goods. In addition, these areas are governed through the draconian Frontier Crimes Regulations, which allow government representatives to impose collective punishment without due process of law.

Numerous commentators have also argued that the conflict dynamics in Pashtun-dominated areas are due to incompatibility of Pashtun culture with the processes of modernity and globalisation. Others argue that the troubles in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are attributable to the deliberate policies of the Pakistani government which have left the region under-developed and marginalised from mainstream society. In both Pakistan and Afghanistan, tribal governance structures have traditionally filled the vacuum left by the absence of the state. It may be that tribalism today exists more as a strategy of social resistance to state control than as a culture based on kinship (Rubin, 2002).

There is a great deal of literature on Pushtuns that has been written from an ethnographic or anthropological perspective. Much of this is quite dated and while several books have been published in Pakistan and Afghanistan more recently, these are not internationally available. While the social and, in Pakistan, political and administrative structures surrounding Pushtun communities have remained relatively unchanged for many years, this query prioritises more recent literature which covers the interface of Pushtun culture with current international and domestic political contexts. Much of this literature seems to focus on Pushtuns in Pakistan's tribal areas. Surprisingly, there was very little readily available information on the social conditions of Pushtun women.

2. Key documents

Pashtun Society

- Barth, F. 1965, 'Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans', Continuum International Publishing Group – Athlone, New Edition

This book is available for purchase from Berg Publishers:

<http://www.bergpublishers.com/Default.aspx?tabid=2089>

Note: I have not been able to view this book. The summary below is adapted from the publisher's website.

This book was highly recommended by many of the experts who contributed to this report. It is a classic and highly influential ethnography, which explores political leadership among the Pathans of Swat, a valley and district in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. The study focuses on the sources of political authority, and the forms of organisation within which this authority is exercised. It also emphasises the importance of individual decision-making for wider social processes.

- Glatzer, B., 1998, 'Being Pashtun – Being Muslim: Concepts of Person and War in Afghanistan' in Glatzer, B., 1998, 'Essays on South Asian Society: Culture and Politics II', Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, pp.83-94

http://www.wardak.de/tribes/being_pashtun.pdf

This article discusses the central *Pushtunwali* concept of *nang*, which signifies honour and shame, as well as its various sub-components. These include:

- *Namus*: In its narrowest sense, the term '*namus*' refers to the modesty and respectability of women and the absolute duty of men to protect them. The author argues that Pushtuns consider young women to be less able to think and act rationally, to have less self-control and to be more inclined to sexual activity. Community perceptions of modesty are more important than actual behaviour. As a result women are often kept secluded and fully veiled.
- *Tura*: This means 'sword', indicating the readiness to fight in self-sacrifice.
- *Aql*: This means reason and social responsibility for the benefit of one's family and wider community.

The author makes the key point that the personality of a young man is expected to be dominated by *tura*, i.e. the readiness to fight at the slightest provocation. This is not expected to be tempered by his own *aql*, but by that of his elders. As a result, young boys are taught to respect and obey their elders. Both girls and boys are exposed to the workings of Pushtun culture from an early age, so that they internalise the *Pushtunwali*. The author notes that it is generally believed that women are often more uncompromising about adhering to *Pushtunwali* than men. The paper also briefly discusses the relationship between the *Pushtunwali* and Islam and argues that Pushtuns see the former as an expression of a true and practical form of the latter.

- Glatzer, B., 2002, 'The Pashtun Tribal System', in Pfeffer, G. and Behera, D. K. (eds.), 2002, 'Concept of Tribal Society', Concept Publishers, New Delhi, pp. 265-282
http://www.inwent.org/v-ez/lis/afghanistan/glatzer_pashtun_tribal_system.pdf

This article focuses on Pushtun tribal societies in Afghanistan. The author argues: "Due to its inherent primordial connotations ethnic and tribal identity is connected with strong emotions and therefore easily leads to particular aggressiveness when conflicts arise. Organisers and leaders of conflicts use ethnic and tribal emotions and instrumentalise the feelings of honour and shame connected with it as a most effective tool or weapon" (p.14). The paper also includes the following key points:

- Traditional Afghan tribal society does not readily accept outsiders but if anyone were to settle in the local area, abide by the tribal code of behaviour and intermarry with the tribe, then they might be accepted within the tribe within a generation or two.
- While individual tribal leaders can use ties of kinship to cement political alliances with other clans or tribes, when that leader dies or loses political influence, divisionism can reassert itself.
- While the tribal order discourages social hierarchy, it is used to mark out boundaries of conflict and solidarity.
- Tribes which inhabit a certain area often come together to develop common policy. This is done through the mechanism of '*jirgas*' or community councils, where every experienced male is entitled to attend and participate in the discussion and consensus-based decision-making.
- In southeastern Afghanistan, tribal communities maintain '*arbaki*' or '*lashgar*' - militias which can be summoned to back up *jirga* decisions. The classic sanction for non-compliance is to have one's house burned down. In extreme cases offenders can also be expelled from the tribe and its land.
- Despite its unpredictability, the tribal system has provided stability in times of political turmoil and state collapse or absence.
- There is no evidence that ethnic and tribal divisions are the cause of political cleavages and violent conflict.

- The Economist, 2006, 'Pushtunwali: Honour Among Them', The Economist Print Edition, The Economist Newspaper Limited, Dec 19th
http://www.economist.com/world/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8345531

This article describes how the concepts of *Pushtunwali* play out in the current contexts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The author points out that most Pushtun enmities and blood feuds are usually based on '*zar*', '*zan*' and '*zamin*' – gold, women and land, respectively. American

search tactics in Afghanistan offend on all counts. According to the Pushtunwali, this warrants revenge. The article also discusses the factors that contribute to the enduring popularity of the Pushtunwali amongst Pushtuns. These include the physical remoteness of many Pushtun communities, the inherent egalitarianism of Pushtunwali, and the Pushtun belief in the inherent superiority of their society. However, as a result of both internal and external pressures, Pushtunwali is changing. One of the principal challenges comes from political Islam which is aiming to replace the authority of the *jirga* and customary law with sharia law. The article also accepts that the reasons for the growing Taliban insurgency in both Afghanistan and Pakistan are unclear. Still, it asserts that "(i)f history is any guide, many Pushtuns in northern Pakistan and southern Afghanistan will continue their drift to Islamist militancy until they are defeated, which looks impossible, or the Pakistani and Western forces are withdrawn. They are then likely to return to their simmeringly murderous tribal ways. That would be better than the current mess. But it would also leave millions of people outside the writ of Pakistan and Afghanistan. If either state is to succeed, the alternative writs of Pushtunwali and jihadist Islam will have to wither. But that will not be soon."

- Lindholm, C., 1996, 'Frontier Perspectives: Essays in Comparative Anthropology', Oxford University Press, Karachi

This book is available for purchase from Oxford University Press:

<http://www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780195775518>

This book includes a collection of articles. Some of these are below:

- 1992, 'Quandaries of Command in Egalitarian Societies: Examples from Swat and Morocco', in Cole, E. J., 'Comparing Muslim Societies', University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor
- 1986, 'Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia', Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 28, pp. 334-55
- 1986, 'Leadership Categories and Social Processes in Islam: the Cases of Dir and Swat', Journal of Anthropological Research, Vol. 42, pp. 1-13
- 1981, 'The Structure of Violence Among the Swat Pukhtun', Ethnology, Vol. 20, pp. 147-56
- 1981, 'History and the Heroic Pakhtun', Man, Vol. 16, pp. 463-7
- 1980, 'Images of the Pathan: The Usefulness of Colonial Ethnography', European Journal of Sociology, Vol. 21, pp. 350-61
- 1979, 'Contemporary Politics in a Tribal Society', Asian Survey, Vol. 19, pp. 485-505
- 1977, 'The Segmentary Lineage System: Its Applicability to Pakistan's Political Structure', in Embree, E. A., 'Pakistan's Western Borderlands', Carolina Academic Press, Durham

Challenges to Pashtun Culture

- Fair, C. C., Howenstein, N. and Their, A., 2006, 'Troubles on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border', United States Institute for Peace, Washington DC
http://www.usip.org/pubs/usipeace_briefings/2006/1207_pakistan_afghanistan_border.html

This briefing summarises the presentations and insights from a conference organised by USIP on the implications of the October 2006 attack on an Islamic madrassa in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) which killed 82 people. This report considers the stability of the tribal areas along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Pakistan's policies toward these areas, and the effects of tribal militancy on international efforts to stabilise Afghanistan. The section 'Changes in FATA' identifies several important socio-political changes and alterations to traditional power structures. These are:

- The influx of Arab mujahideen in the 1980s and Al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters since 2001 who brought money, political Islam and illegal economic activity to the region.

- Changes in the demographic strength of certain tribes and the infusion of new resources, which have caused struggles within the traditional hierarchy. This has allowed new charismatic, religious leaders to emerge as political entrepreneurs using political Islam as their instrument of mobilisation.
 - Substantial remittances from migrant workers to families from traditionally lower tribal lineages have led the latter to seek power and influence in line with their new wealth. Migrants have also become aware of the disparities between the rights granted to the tribal areas and to other Pakistani citizens.
 - In the 1996 national elections, mainstream political parties were not allowed to campaign in the tribal regions. Religious leaders were able to take advantage of their control of the mosques and madrassahs to get elected. Traditionally, *maliks* chose their representatives to parliament on secular and tribal bases. Now, *mullahs* have become important power brokers and enjoy the resources once reserved primarily for the *maliks*. One panellist argued that the collapse of the *malik* is one of the most important changes in FATA.
 - The Pakistani military's operations in the tribal areas were viewed as excessive and indiscriminate, and have led to widespread resentment and a sense of betrayal among the tribes. The army's defeat in South and North Waziristan, and subsequent peace deals, have emboldened and legitimised the role of the *mullahs*, militants, and their Taliban allies.
- Aziz, K. 2007, 'Causes of Rebellion in Waziristan', Regional Institute of Policy Research and Training, Peshawar
<http://riport.org/pdf/waziristan.pdf>

This report examines the long and short-term causes leading to the rebellion in Waziristan. The author argues that a combination of demographic issues, tribal customs and the rise of political Islam in Waziristan is the principal cause of instability in the region. When a new generation of tribal youth attains maturity, which in Waziristan happens around the ages of 30-35, the tribal status quo is disturbed, and violence occurs within the tribe. These men compete to excel either in tribal *jirgas* or by confronting authority. When these episodic waves arise, the traditional leadership headed by the leading elder, is forced to lead a youthful force against them. The author also argues that the number of contestants grows in proportion to the scale of religious rhetoric that the youth are exposed to. When these forces are combined with an Islamist organizing principle, this creates the potential for a permanent resistance, which can last as long as there are youthful participants available, and a common 'enemy' like the Pakistani army, or US or NATO troops nearby in Afghanistan.

- Liebl, V., 2007, 'Pushtuns, Tribalism, Leadership, Islam and Taliban: A Short View', Small Wars & Insurgencies, Vol. 18, Issue 3, pp.492-510
 This article is available for purchase from Informaworld:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a785923713~db=all~tab=content~order=page>

This report provides a short overview of Pushtun tribalism across Pakistan and Afghanistan; it looks at how it impacts leadership and how it is affected by Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. It briefly details the Pushtuns' historical background, geographic location and tribal dynamics, and also explores recent impacts on the degradation and distortion of the traditional Pushtun leadership triangle. This triangle consists of i) the tribal '*khan*', or leader, or his appointed representative, the '*malik*'; ii) the 'political agent', the government's representative, usually a police official or a tribal *khan*; and iii) the religious leader - the '*mullah*'. The tribal *malik* and the government official have traditionally been the strongest elements, negotiating power and space between them. The author claims that the mullah has traditionally been seen as an object of ridicule in traditional tribal society. However, the paper goes on to discuss the degradation of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and the influence on Pushtun society of various hardline Islamic movements (including Wahhabism, Deobandism, and Ahl-e-Hadith). It also examines the interface between Islam and the *Pushtunwali*.

- Book: Haroon, S., 2007, 'Frontier of Faith', Hurst & Co., London

This book is available for purchase from Amazon.co.uk:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Frontier-Faith-Islam-Indo-Afghan-Borderland/dp/1850658544>

Note: I have not been able to view this book. The summary below is adapted from the publisher's website.

This book explores the role and influence of the mullahs in the tribal regions, and region's relationship with external powers from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s. The author argues that the position and power that the mullahs have come to possess in the frontier areas, was not automatically granted as some sort of divine right but rather, was assiduously built from social networking, political and spiritual manipulation, and coercion. The autonomy that resulted from the establishment of the tribal areas as a strategic buffer zone for British India, with minimal impact from colonial rule, emphasised the role and importance of the local mullahs, who jealously protected the powers they accrued to themselves. After the partition of India in 1947, the Tribal Areas maintained its status as an autonomous region in both the Afghan and Pakistani imaginations and cartographic descriptions. The mullahs contributed to armed mobilisations over the next half century, in return for which nationalist actors protected their vested interest in regional autonomy. Thus the region became the hinterland of successive, contradictory jihads in support of Pashtun ethnicism, anti-colonial nationalism, Pakistani territorialism, religious revivalism, Afghan anti-Soviet resistance, and more recently, anti-Americanism.

- Book: Ahmed, A. S., 2004, 'Resistance and Control in Pakistan', Routledge, Revised Edition.

This book is available for purchase from Routledge:

http://www.routledge.com/shopping_cart/products/product_detail.asp?curTab=REVIEW&id=&parent_id=&sku=&isbn=9780415349116&pc=

Note: I have not been able to view this book. The summary below is taken from the publisher's website. An online excerpt is available:

http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/reader/0415349117/ref=sib_dp_bod_ex?ie=UTF8&p=S00Z#reader-link

This book recounts the 1976 revolt of the Mullah of Waziristan in northwest Pakistan and, by placing it within the context of other movements occurring elsewhere in the Islamic world, aims to assess the underlying causes of conflict in the Muslim world. The author examines the social structure and operative principles in Muslim society and scrutinises the influence of religion in a society that is undergoing modernisation. Ahmed divides Pashtun society into two categories: '*Nang*' (honour) groups, i.e. egalitarian communities living in rural areas as land tenants, or as nomads; and '*qalang*' (taxes) groups, or ranked, land-owning societies living within established state systems. Most of the *nang* groups in Pakistan live in the tribal areas. Ahmed uses the case study of Waziristan to examine what he calls 'a *nang* society in crisis', and to discuss how disruption in the tribal areas occurred as the result of the emergence of a mullah and his direct interaction with the political administration.

Tribal Law

- Book: Yousufzai, H. M. and Gohar, A., 2005, 'Towards Understanding Pukhtoon Jirga', Just Peace International, Peshawar

http://peace.fresno.edu/docs/Pukhtoon_Jirga.pdf

This book explores the dynamics of the Pushtun, also known as 'Pukhtoon', *Jirga*. The authors claim that the institution of the Jirga is the oldest and the most dominant component of the Pushtun culture and a social institution on which Pushtuns rely heavily for the routine working of their lives. It is practiced mainly in the Pushto speaking areas of north western and western Pakistan and generally across Afghanistan. The *jirga* maintains order in every social sphere, including individual, collective, national and international affairs. This book presents the

conceptual framework, within which the *jirga* operates, its main principles; and compares them with contemporary structures.

- Kakar, P. 'Tribal Law of Pushtunwali and Women's Legislative Authority', Islamic Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School
<http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/ilsp/research/kakar.pdf>

This article argues that it is critical for the reconstruction of Afghanistan to understand the 'ideal' *Pushtunwali* in the minds of Pushtun men and women. The article highlights the negative practices associated with Pushtuns such as forced marriage, bride price, and honour killings. The author also argues in many cases Pushtun women are prepared to defend *Pushtunwali* as staunchly as men. The paper states that while much of the legal process of customary law seems to be controlled by men, this does not necessarily result in the total disempowerment of women. The paper examines women's authority to legislate and to enforce norms within *Pushtunwali*, as well as issues of inequality. The author finds that in the legislation of customary law, community councils and leaders draw from many different legal systems, such as local customs, tribal laws, Islamic law, and state law. As gender boundaries differ within each system, this allows for social arrangements in which women have legal authority and control of limited resources.

Social and Political Development

- Zissis, C. and Bajoria, J., 2007, 'Backgrounder: Pakistan's Tribal Areas', Council on Foreign Relations, New York
http://www.cfr.org/publication/11973/pakistans_tribal_areas.html?breadcrumb=%2FRegion%2Fpublication_list%3Fid%3D283%26page%3D3

This article provides a brief introduction to the Pakistani tribal areas. It discusses its governance structures and argues that the real power in the tribal agencies rests with the 'political agents': officials who represent the federal government and maintain control through the colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulations. These regulations allow the political agent to impose collective punishment for crimes committed by an individual and to deliver prison sentences without due process or right of appeal. Individual tribesmen have limited rights. The report also notes that corruption is prevalent in the tribal areas, especially as selected tribal '*maliks*' are given economic incentives by political agents in exchange for their loyalty. Political agents collect and distribute revenue with little oversight and accountability. As a result, service delivery has been neglected and the health and education sectors are unable to provide basic services. The shortage of schools has been filled by as many as 300 madrassas. The authors argue that the rising number of these religious schools reflects the growing power of Islamic extremists .

- Poureslami, I. M. et al, 2004, 'Sociocultural, Environmental and Health Challenges Facing Women and Children Living Near the Borders between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran', *Medscape General Medicine*, Vol. 6, No. 3
<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1435647>

This paper argues that health and quality of life in the regions surrounding the Afghanistan-Iran-Pakistan borders are among the worst in the world. In general, women and children, in particular girls, suffer from limited access to healthcare, poor hygiene and lack of water. In addition, cultural, political, and socio-environmental factors play a role, including gender inequality and differences between languages spoken locally in the region and those most often used in written health education materials. The paper also argues that many of the customs and traditional practices rooted in the culture and religion of the regions have contributed to the health disparities between men and women.

Implications of the War on Terror

- International Crisis Group, 2006, 'Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants', International Crisis Group, Brussels
http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/125_pakistans_tribal_areas_appeasing_the_militants.pdf

This paper argues that FATA is difficult to govern because of deliberate government policy, not Pashtun tribal traditions or resistance. Since 1947, Pakistan has ruled it by retaining colonial-era administrative and judicial systems unsuited to modern governance. Repressive structures and denial of political representation have generated resentment. To deflect external pressure to curb radicalism, the Musharraf government has talked about reforms in FATA but not followed through. Instead, appeasement has allowed local militants to establish parallel, Taliban-style policing and court systems in the Waziristans, while Talibanisation has also spread into other FATA agencies and even the North West Frontier Province's (NWFP) settled districts. The paper argues that it is critically important to generate broad-based economic development in FATA. It is one of Pakistan's poorest regions, with high poverty and unemployment and vastly under-developed infrastructure. Its economy is dependent on smuggling and since the outbreak of the Afghan civil war, there has been enormous growth in drugs and weapons trafficking. In addition to addressing economic grievances, militancy and extremism in tribal agencies must be tackled by expanding the rule of law and taking firm action against criminality.

- Abbas, H., 2006, 'Profiles of Pakistan's Seven Tribal Agencies', Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 4, Issue 20, pp.1-4
http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/uploads/TM_004_020.pdf

This analysis investigates the notion that Pashtun tribal culture is the basis of support and sympathy of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. It does this by studying the profiles of the Pashtun tribes in the seven tribal agencies that form Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. The author argues that the tribesmen of FATA, although diverse in many ways, have some common traits: they value their independence; they consider all foreign elements suspicious (including Pakistani forces); and they are not ready to lay down their arms in combat zones willingly. Yet, at the same time, they can be willing to compromise if there are tangible dividends available and if there is no threat to their lifestyle. Indiscriminate Pakistani military operations since 2002 have resulted in a widespread lack of trust, to the extent that tribal elements cooperating with Pakistani and US forces are targeted and killed for being spies. Pro-Taliban radio stations are thriving in many agencies and there are various reports of militant camps in the area. Many newly established schools for girls have been burned down: "By Musharraf's own admission, religious extremism and pro-Taliban sentiment among FATA tribes is turning into a people's movement."

- Abbas, H., 2007, 'Increasing Talibanization in Pakistan's Seven Tribal Agencies', Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 5, Issue 18, pp.1-5
http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/uploads/TM_005_018.pdf

This paper argues that Taliban forces and their sympathisers are becoming entrenched in the region and are aggressively expanding their influence and operations. Poor coordination between the Pakistani army and NATO/ISAF, the failure to make Afghanistan a functional state and the abundance of drug money in southern Afghanistan are some of the important variables in this context. This analysis outlines what is happening today in each of the seven tribal agencies in FATA and what the implications are for Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States. The author also points out that while the US has announced \$750 million package of development aid for FATA, there is no publicly known strategy in place on how the funds will be channelled, and this has led to much apprehension and suspicion about who will really benefit in the area.

- Gizabi, A., 2006, 'Bajaur: Tribe and Custom Continue to Protect Al-Qaeda', Terrorism Focus, Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp.1-2

http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/uploads/tf_003_002.pdf

This article briefly analyses the role of the group called the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Sharia, a religious group that forcibly imposed Islamic religious laws in the Pashtun tribal areas of northwestern Pakistan in the 1990s. The group still retains some influence and occasionally sets up temporary tribal courts to try cases on fornication, alcohol consumption and selling narcotics. In 1996, when the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, the group established a close working relationship with Mullah Omar's regime. Pakistani intelligence officials say they suspect that the group is now sheltering senior Al-Qaeda leaders. The Bajaur agency is important to the Taliban and foreign militants for its proximity to Kunar province. The tribes straddling the border area are drawn to two basic tenets: Pashtunwali and Islam. Giving shelter to a fellow Pashtun or Muslim is considered a Pashtunwali tradition and an Islamic duty. The author argues that any pressure, whether from the US or Pakistani government, will not change these attitudes. However continued attacks in which innocent people are killed will only reinforce the militants' position and further isolate the central government.

Further Resources (as recommended by expert contributors)

- Caroe, O. K., 1976, 'The Pathans, 550 B.C-A.D. 1957', Oxford University Press, Karachi
This book is available for purchase from Amazon.co.uk:
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Pathans-B-C-D-Historical-Reprints/dp/0195772210>
- Ahmed, A., 1980, 'Pukhtun Economy and Society: Traditional Structure and Economic Development in Tribal Society', London: Routledge
Note: This book does not seem to be currently available
- Dupree, L., 2002, 'Afghanistan', Oxford University Press USA, New Edition
This book is available from Amazon.com: <http://www.amazon.com/Afghanistan-Louis-Dupree/dp/0195776348>
- Rubin, B. R., 2002, 'The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System', Yale University Press, Revised Second Edition
This book is available from Amazon.co.uk: http://www.amazon.co.uk/Fragmentation-Afghanistan-Barnett-R-Rubin/dp/0300095198/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1195735636&sr=8-1
(Note: Chapter 1 of this book is most relevant)

3. Press Articles

- Rubin, B., 2004, 'The Flashpoint where Afghanistan meets Pakistan', International Herald Tribune, January 12
<http://www.cic.nyu.edu/archive/pdf/heraldarticle.pdf>
- Rhode, D. and Crossette, B. 2001, 'A Nation Challenged: Loyalty in Rural Afghanistan Paces Tribe Before Country', New York Times, December 17
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990DEEDE173EF934A25751C1A9679C8B63>
- Bragg, R., 2001, 'Afghan and Pakistani Tribe Lives by its Own Set of Rules', New York Times, October 21
<http://inic.utexas.edu/~bennett/344/af-Pashtun.pdf>

- Lak, D. 2001, 'Analysis: Powerful Cross-Border Bonds', BBC Online, September 29
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/1570571.stm

4. Additional information

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Saba Gul Khattak, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad
Charles Lindholm, Boston University
Bernt Glatzer, Afghanistan Research Group
Antonio Giustozzi, LSE

Websites visited

Afghanistan Conflict Monitor, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Afghanistan Research Group, Brookings Institution, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Council on Foreign Relations, Danish Institute for International Studies, Georgetown University, Google, Google Scholar, Harvard University, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, International Crisis Group, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, Khyber.org, Pukhtunwomen.org, Regional Institute of Policy Research and Training, Quaid-e-Azam University, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, United States Institute for Peace.

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