

# WAZIRI CULTURE AND PASHTUN TRIBAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: A MISSING LINK TO HALT THE DEADLIEST WAR IN WILD WAZIRISTAN

Umer Khayyam

Institute of Political Science, Westphalian-Wilhelms University of Muenster,  
GERMANY.

[khayyamumer@uni-muenster.de](mailto:khayyamumer@uni-muenster.de)

## ABSTRACT

*Waziristan, the most southern tribal agency on Pakistan's western frontier, has a long history of independence and defeating the invaders; those who aimed to bring the area under their central authoritative control likewise administrative jurisdiction and Wazir tribes to breath beneath the forced psychosomatic supremacy, induced with full power. However, the consistent upshots of Wazirs vanquished the attacker's fate. Ultimately, the Wazir tribes were dealt with skilful tactics of presenting due respect to local tribal social customs. It was followed by recognition of their tribal governance system and empowerment of the tribal elders to indirectly administer the wild frontier, which has resulted in victorious regional control for decades and peace prevailed in the region. But, last decade's turmoil has made the area and its inhabitants a sizzling concern in the pursuit of pledging un-conditional support and sanctuary to Taliban and other extremists fighters. Hence, neglecting the tribal liberation psyche, diminishing the local governance system and undermining the bygone popular role of the tribal elders, advanced tactics of war were explored by the consecutive Pakistan governments and its allies. However, it resulted in the ever-floating situation of Waziristan with extremism both in and out of Waziristan. The current situation still can be transformed to its realistic old nonviolent position; no further blood shed both in and out of Waziristan, only on admiring Waziri liberation psyche and reforming tribal governance system.*

**Keywords:** Waziristan, Wazir culture, local tribal governance system, insurgency, cease-fire

## INTRODUCTION

### Wazirs of Waziristan

Waziristan<sup>1</sup> is the homeland of Wazir tribes; the fiercest folk, independent, who owe allegiance to no one, most warlike and turbulent, brave, tough, liberal, patriotic and exceptionally (socially) conservative with a vicious reputation as warriors (S. I. Hussain, 2000; Z. Hussain, 2012; Rashid, 2004; Raverty, 1886; Young, 1882). Moreover, the cruellest people, tougher – spiritually and physically, and the finest fighters in the world, who seldom allow any tactical error to go unpunished (BBC, 2009b). Subsequently, ever vengeful, vigilant and courageous, yet detected from their eyes (A. Ahmed, 1983). The irascible folk, never taxed, never surrendered to anyone and didn't allow outsiders to capture their land (S. I. Hussain, 2000), ultimately, declared as *Wolfs* – the Mehsud tribes and *Panthers* – the Wazir tribes (Dupree, 1980).

Wazir tribes of Waziristan are acephalous, egalitarian, kinship-organized society, which is segmented into several tribes, subdividing into: clan, section, subsection and family (Wylly, 1912). They do not accept any permanently established and functioning authority in the form of central government and any other informal authority within their tribal structure. They rather believe in retaining the maximum degree of individual freedom along with acknowledgement of their belonging to a main group in the society for regulating inter-tribal and intra-tribal relations (Caroe, 1976). So, unlike other Pashtun tribes of the Pakistan's frontier region, Waziri inherit good sense to avoid any internal feuds. They are generally hospitable and remain united inevitably with little control of their masters; the *maliks* (Wylly, 1912). Through this intellect, Wazir tribes have practiced their independence over the decades, after migrating in the 14<sup>th</sup> century from Khost Province (Afghanistan) to current: Federally Administered Tribal Areas-FATA (Briggs, 1966). They are perfect followers of the Pashtun culture/social code; '*Pashtunwali*' and its fundamental ingredients; Respect (to their independent status and tribal governance system), Nanawatai (refuge granting) and Badal (revenge) – against any disrespect to redeem the Pashtun pride – *Ghairat* (Mahdi, 1986). These themes are the sum total around which Wazirs retained their sovereignty for decades and these three are the cores of this whole discussion.

Waziristan is a ragged parallelogram of 5,200 square miles of barren territory tucked away at the southwest corner of the North West Frontier, at a point where the Punjab and Kashmir reach out toward Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Waziristan agency splits into two parts; North and South Waziristan. South the southernmost but is the most famous and largest tribal agency of FATA region. It has an area of 6,620 sq. km, divided into three administrative subdivisions: Sarwakai, Ladha and lower form of Wana (agency capital).



Figure 4: Geographical Location of N&S Waziristan

Whereas, North Waziristan covers an area of 4,707 sq. km, having borders with Paktia and Khost provinces of Afghanistan. Both the agencies dwell about one million inhabitants, located geographically at a distance of roughly 500 km from the federal capital Islamabad, between Peshawar and Quetta, and stretched between Kurram and Gomal Rivers. Waziristan,

as its name implies, is the country of Wazirs tribes (Wazir: Ahmedzais & Utmanzais and Mehsud: Alizais, Bahlolzais and Shaman Khels) living in Tochi Valleys, Khaisora, Shawal, Shakai and Wana – covering all the three sides of Waziristan. Waziristan is broader terminology used here, which covers both the North and South Waziristan agencies through a *de facto* boundary.

Cultural investigation of Wazir tribes illustrates that Waziri tribes, unlike other Pashtun tribes in the tribal FATA region, are evolved into unique tribal culture; *Da Waziro Narkh* (customs traditional to Wazirs), by which they preserve concord and unity among themselves (MPI, 2005). Wazirs strictly practice ostracism by exile to secure the protection of Pashtun tribes and their independent status, which crop-out from tribal sense of liberation. Wazir tribes zealously and eagerly guard their ‘liberation and independence’ under the code of honour in Pashtunwali (A. Ahmed, 1976).

However, it’s the liberation and independence essence that stems-out from individual to clan, clan to Wazir tribes and further to Pashtun tribes of South-Asian frontier region. So, in Waziri culture, ‘*her saray khan dey*’ (every man is king) and within the society, they prefer to die than to live disrespectful life or as a sub-ordinate. In this independent society everyone is welcomed, given sanctuary and protected but within certain limits; respect to local culture and tribal liberation. Refuge (sanctuary) under Pashtunwali in Waziristan is given to anyone regardless of cast, religion and social status, but after socio-political submission to Pashtunwali. However, in worse case, if local cultural values are not respected and tribal governance system is not praised ‘*Badal*’ (revenge) is deployed to ensure total submission to locally practiced culture. Therefore, Badal as a tool of revenge killing remains the most threatening aspects flowing in the (Pashtun) Waziri tribe’s blood, which is fulfilled against all those attempts aiming to grasp or demolish the local independence and/or dishonesty against granted refuge. ‘Revenge is taken even after 100 years and its taken too soon’ (Pushto Proverb). So, it’s a chivalric code and Badal, if not carried out immediately, passed to decedents but not denied. It is because; Badal is sprinkled by Sharia (local Islamic belief). So, sense of practicing Pashtunwali is like preaching Sharia law, which don’t let them to deviate from their traditional values (Z. Hussain, 2012).

Yet, any tribal individual can’t hitherto decide for badal. The individuals and community as a whole in Waziristan is subject to single authoritative body for refuge granting and badal for area control. To ensure Waziri dominance in Waziri land, ‘Jirga’ (council of tribal elders or tribal parliament) remained the effective governance system over the centuries. The basic purpose of Jirga has been to take joint decision on any matter of common concern (Barth, 1969). Such decisions representing each local social segment through joint decisions (Johnston, 2011). Thus, Jirga takes collective decisions for resolving disputes, if any, both within the society and with the external actors. Here again, Jirga’s decisions are accepted as Islamic laws (Mahdi, 1986). So, in this wild land, Jirga of Waziri tribal elders stayed the only available influencing and governing authority as the society lack any institutionalised governance body. This tribal jury is an exemplary type of social organization with advanced mechanism for conflict resolution (Robichaud, 2015). It operates as a disputes settlement platform. Likewise, it operates as a mechanism for dispensing speedy, cheap and fair justice to all, irrespective of their social and economic status (Khyber-News, 2005).

Consequently, the rigidness to local cultural norms and values, status of Pan-Islamic stand, resilience to external forces, positioning the Pashtunwali and its ingredient of revenge under the sharia law and governing the area over centuries with no external influence twisted Wazirs even to cut in to pieces and embrace martyred death (*Shahadat*) – no other option as to be stand fast for their old tribal cultural and non-official supremacy on their land.

Confronting this psyche, no empire on record ever succeeded in taming the tribes of Waziristan, disarms and administered them even through steamroller, whatsoever. However, they are never documented as leading attackers against any religious faith or in the pursuit of their territorial expansion. But, whenever they dealt with aggression or disrespect, they have always successfully defended their ancient homeland.

## WAZIRISTAN AND ATTACKERS' FATE

The struggles to bring this part of sub-continent's frontier region continue from centuries. However, facts reveal that all monarchs, e.g., Mughal Empire, King Chingiz Khan, King Timur, Durrani and later Sikh rulers were crushed bitterly and repulsed (FCR, 2015). None of the former (brave) warriors could stand before Waziri warriors. Rather, Waziri tribes remained backers in winning the first (1839–1842) and second (1878–1880) Anglo-Afghan wars. They even played their part in winning third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919 (Caroe, 1976). Later, British army, after they took the control from Sikh rulers in 1849, used several tactics to control the area to bring Wazirs under the broader British administrative spectrum in India. But even applying advanced tactics of war, Waziristan remained the 'running sore' and Waziri tribes 'hard nut to crack' (Britannica, 2009). Waziristan proved to be the most notorious area of tribal unrest and a chronic problem for British army, particularly, on the eve of the WWII. Historian wrote that not a single month passed during that time when punitive actions had been taken by the British land- and air forces to subdue the hostiles of the Waziristan agency. However, the Wazir tribes consistently created troubles for British rulers in India (ul Haq, 2005). All advanced war strategies of the East-India Company failed to take control in Waziristan agency (Hauner, 1981, p. 126). Wazir tribes rather chased and frustrated the British army for thirty years (S. I. Hussain, 2000). History also shows that Waziri tribes, for the sake of upholding their independence status, wiped-out complete British brigades and positioned British dense weaponry dominance on their toe. Eventually, Wazirs were professed as the most unreliable fighters in the sub-continent. Moreover, as anomalous folk, Waziri tribes were prohibited *de facto* from recruiting in the Indian army.

Eventually, British supremacy, even after several clashes and two wars of great significance (1919-20 and 1936-37), failed to melt the Waziri tribes and bring the area under their executive control (Dupree, 1980, pp. 486-490). Lord Curzon (British viceroy of India and foreign secretary) in his last breaths quoted Wazir society as:

*'No patchwork scheme – and all our present recent schemes...are mere patchwork – will settle the Waziristan problem. Not until the military steamroller has passed over the country from end to end, will there be peace. But I do not want to be the person to start that machine'* (Howell, 1979).

Conclusively, Waziristan was avowed with as; 'Hell's Door Knocker' by the British army, in the late 1980's (Spain, 1961). Based on these bitter realities, Waziristan was declared as an area; whose inhabitants are cherished and precious having a strange anarchic independence psyche from the constraints of civilized governments. British dense army was totally failed to administer them, let alone to disarm them. They finally started the policy of bringing development to this wild frontier. Fortified outposts, communications system, railways, roads etc. were developed, but that also brought no permanent solution in melting the local sense of their independent rule. Ultimately, they were granted with a high degree of autonomy with the promise of no external guidance. They are given free hand to control the area with the policy of 'withdrawal and concentration' – a wise solution i.e., withdrawal of British forces from the advanced posts in Waziristan and deployment of the tribal forces for the defence of the tribal area and neighbouring Afghan border, which kept-on up-to 1919 (A. S. Ahmed, 1982).

On the eve of ruling Waziristan (indirectly), East-India Company later focused on Tribal Council (Jirga) for area governance. Jirga system had been strengthened on supporting tribal elders/chiefs on genealogical basis for collective actions under Frontier Crime Regulation-FCR 1872. It is because; tribal Jirga was locally presumed and collectively admired. This strategy of British rulers remained successful for area control, governance and dispute settlement (Williams, 2005, pp. 16-29). Under this platform all declared wars with Wazir tribes were then finally settled and several peace agreements e.g., 1869, 1880 & 1900 were achieved (Wazir, 2009). Hence, without exception and on extending former persuaders' wise strategy, English men manipulated Wazirs, and managed Waziristan through Jirga on negotiating directly with them and the basis of negotiations remained as indispensable respect to tribal culture and sense of freedom (Johnston, 2011). They were then given due appreciation and greatly honoured with assurance of no interference (neither politically nor military) for area control. Resultantly, peace prevailed in the area for decades.

After the division of India, the British policy had been continuously followed. New Pakistani administration wisely continued the British policy – no interfering in the internal affairs of tribal people including Wazir tribes (Lawson, 2008). In return, they were abided to be subject to good behaviour, loyal to Pakistani government and continued to bestow with enormous benefits as earlier. Moreover, no change in their internal (political and judicial) system rather respect to them was promised (Ahmad, 2003). In reply, tribal loyalty had been proved e.g., locals' loyalty, law & order, defence of the western boarder with Afghanistan and peace in the area for five decades 1947-2000 (Khyber-News, 2005).

### **Waziristan & Local Governance – Pre 9/11 (Afghan War)**

After independence in 1947 till the cold war between USSR and America, Waziristan had been a nonviolent region and the loyal Waziri tribes and other jihadi group; the *mujahidin* remained reliable defenders of the Pakistan's boundary with Afghanistan. But changing political scenario in the early 1980s, particularly 1979 revolt against the communist coup in Afghanistan resulted Jihad in Afghanistan. Waziri tribes helped their Pashtun (Afghan Taliban) brothers against Soviet Union. The assistance covered tribal personnel, which was further extended to technical and non-technical support from America and Pak-army (Cadre, 1991, p. 151). Under the banner of 'refuge' in Pashtunwali, Waziri tribes helped in defending their brother's territory; Afghanistan, from Soviet forces. Whereas, for the dismissal of Soviet forces from Pashtun homeland, Waziri tribes provided '*Nanawatia*' (refuge) with '*Melmastia*' (hospitality) to their guest Pashtuns, who were fighting in Afghanistan, to breath in Waziristan and then fight back. Hence, for Afghan Taliban, Waziristan proved to be the safe sanctuary and heaven, where they got shelter, well-trained, fairly equipped, strongly determined and proliferated in Waziristan for attacking Soviet forces in Afghanistan (GoP, 1947, 1951-52, p. 70).

Meanwhile, for peace on the Pakistani territory, Jirga of tribal elders remained functional and it had ensured smooth functioning of the Waziristan governance system. As per the local cultural demand the afghan fighters, who remained objective to local socio-political system, started residing in Waziristan. No attempts, whatsoever, came on forefront from the sub-tribes or clans or even state government dissing the locality and procedures to handle the afghan Pashtuns. Wazir tribes were rather given free hand to judge the scenario and decide whether any action is suitable and acceptable for tribal region and the state. So, both the territorial interests and the state's ambitions were fulfilled as Wazir tribes assisted afghan Taliban to shift the power game from USSA to USA. Relaying solely on the local Jirga as power of attorney ('*Waak or Ikhtiar*) proved beneficial for all the stakeholders regionally and internationally. Interestingly, there documented no internal and external case of disobedience

to Jirga decisions; translated as *Makh Arawal* – dishonesty to Islamic law that could led to expulsion from area and burning the personal property (Khyber-News, 2005).

Ultimately, at the defeat of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, Waziristan was flooded with the Waziri fighters moving back to their homes. Unlikely, they were accompanied by [Pashtun] Afghan fighters. Later, the link between Waziri tribe and Afghan Taliban got *en masse* strength – birth of the dark night. Afghan Taliban and their Central Asian supporters had begun their secret struggle to become tribal leaders in Waziristan. Their intelligent schemes helped them to overcome the majority loyal Waziri populace. The aim behind was initially to build the Islamic state in Afghanistan in which they succeeded. In 1996 afghan Taliban established a full-fledged Taliban government in Kabul. Unfortunately, moving forward on their illicit objects they started introducing extremist ideology in Waziristan – setting grounds for enforcing ‘Sharia law’ in Pakistan – in an already declared Islamic state, yet possibly for ensuring it’s exercise. Waziristan again became somewhat popular and Afghan Taliban with some same-minded Wazir supporters eventually started gaining strength on the Waziri homeland.

### **Waziristan & Local Governance – Post 9/11**

[The] Post Afghan war posed uncontrolled situation in Afghanistan. The well-known daunting coalition, and aggressive policies of Washington and Islamabad and later 9/11 incident suddenly changed the scenario. Washington and Islamabad’s un-cleared stance towards Taliban and division between good & bad Taliban resulted in suspicion among Pashtuns across the Durand line. Resultantly, anti-Soviet war suddenly transformed into anti-Taliban war and allied forces started crushing Taliban and their Waziri supporters on the notorious ‘War on Terror’. The guerrilla afghan (mujahedeen) fighters after serving against USSR (1980’s) started fighting this time not only against American and NATO forces in Afghanistan but also their coalition partners – the Pakistani government and its armed forces. For the sake of local control, Afghan Taliban started crushing the majority loyal Wazir tribes, who never documented unfaithful to their country and countrymen. Several hundred pro-Pakistan Waziri tribal chiefs were killed (Kakar, 2014). Other dozens were forced to flee and Jirga was banned (Mir, 2005). On the strategy of blaming rather than analysing the ground realities, Waziri tribes were got on-the-hock by the Pakistani government. They were blamed as radicals and extremists’ supports, even though they continually rendered sacrifices to defend Pakistan, however, overlooked. On the other side, being loyal to Pakistani state and territory, Waziri tribes were continuously slaughtered by the Afghan Taliban (Ali, 2012). Nonetheless, the sizzling situation revealed the pre-independence mistakes and Waziristan ultimately turned into a wild frontier.

Under the shadow of blame game form afghan Taliban and Pakistani government, the Wazir tribal loyalty to Pakistani state was questioned although they continually remained loyal to the state. Meanwhile, afghan Taliban started introducing their radical Islam, which was totally against the Islamic teachings and the code of Pashtunwali. They started overcoming the Waziri tribes in which they succeeded. Taliban, as a non-state actors, threw the extreme ideology of emasculating regimes with colonialist-type aspirations through ‘a democratization and privatization’ of their struggle. However, they sought not the political but also the religious redemption through harrowed state of real and perceived subjugation; calling for *Jihad fee sabil’illah* – struggle for the sake of God (Ayman, 2002, pp. 82-94). Consistently working on their illicit agenda, they have totally changed the centuries prevailed loyalty feature of Waziri culture. Likewise, against the Islamic teaching and fundamentals of the Waziri culture, and based on their own translation of radical Islam, Taliban brutally killed women and children (both in and our of Waziristan), humiliated the dead bodies, destroyed

the social infrastructure, and hindered the locals from social facilities under their version of the religion through terror and violence (Taj, 2009).

In this way, Afghan Taliban, who were operating in the area as an uncontrolled authority, succeeded in imposing a savage social order in the region and started controlling the local administrative affairs. On hanging the tribal influential hierarchy, they became the tribal chiefs and finally established the *Shura* – an alternative to tribal Jirga. However, Taliban's non-compliance with *melmastia* made the region increasingly volatile and uncontrollable (Fair, 2009). Under their 'shadow' administrations, Taliban succeeded in instituting themselves as effective source of leadership in the region. They repeatedly attacked Jirga meetings, whenever and wherever held. It has gradually created a power vacuum in Waziristan agency. Out of the fear of assault, Jirga meetings of the loyal Pakistani tribes were often held in a secret places with a much smaller number. Although, the long-term principal business of the Jirga to ensure peace in the area had finally ended but still through these meetings, the loyal Wazir tribes consistently pledged their support to the State government (Smith, 2011), as the prevailing regional governance by Taliban under the extremist ideology was not acceptable to remaining loyal tribal heads.

So, the basic aim of murdering the local tribal elders, other than local administration, was also to finish-off the influential from the Pashtun society who, more or less, still had the potential and power to lead the society toward ceasefire and peace. Eventually, the 'dark night' had over night vanished the local centuries peaceful governance of the area. Jirga's image was eroded. Jirga was deployed for anti-state actions, Melmastia customs were deployed for illicit means, and Nanawaty was sectioned to extremists. It all has caused a brutal sense of Badal from the society against Taliban.

### **STATE to TALIBAN or TRIBES?**

Underrating the local tribal loyalty to bring lasting peace to Waziristan motivated the extremists to fully concentrate on their strategies. Evidences show that subsequent military actions over the years by the Pak.-Armed forces rather strengthened Taliban and Talibanization (Burki, 2010). It has put high alert and extended pressure across the national security agencies. Yet, without differentiating between the extremist elements and loyal Waziri tribes and beyond looking for any durable solution, Pakistani army launched its first major operation in Wana in 2004 (Monitor, 2008). However, killings from both sides urged Pakistani government to make a several peace deal with the Taliban in Waziristan. The so-called Shakai Agreement (2004), Sararogha Accord (2005) and North Waziristan Pact (2006) were signed (Acharya, 2009). Later, in 2009 army offensive 'Rah-e-Nejat' (Path to Salvation) was held to clear the area and to ensure writ of the government (BBC, 2009a; Mir, 2005). All the treaties with Taliban were kept on failing, because Taliban didn't agree to discuss their demands within the framework of the country's constitution, considering it non-Islamic. In this scenario, any chance of making any peace deal with Taliban remained impossible (DW, 2014). All the pacts commonly agreed on a non-aggression were earlier or later altered, regardless of their order, either by army's operation together with US drone attacks or due to bombing from the opponent side (See Table 1).

This scenario had further deterred the already disturbed scnerio of Waziristan agency. Aggressions from both sides resulted in Qaeda-linked Taliban Movement 'Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan'- TTP in 2007 and Haqqani Network (Ali, 2013). Finally, British administration and American (Obama) Administration declared Waziristan as; the Hotbed of FATA; 'Most Dangerous Place (Siddique, 2010).

**Table 1. Timeline of the Treaties Between Pakistani Government and Taliban in Waziristan**

Period	Treaty	Second Signatory	Points Agreed	Pact Enforcement Mechanism	Reason of Pacts' Cancellation
2004	Shakai Agreement	Nek Mohammad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cease fire from both sides</li> <li>▪ Removal of extremists from Waziristan</li> <li>▪ Release of Taliban prisoners</li> <li>▪ Compensations from the government to against property damage and those who killed</li> <li>▪ Deployment of local customs and traditions in resolving issues and handling over area control to Mehsud tribes</li> </ul>	Committee of the tribal elders and religious scholars, and action suggested against tribes in case of no compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No- registration and non-removal of extremists</li> <li>▪ PA* presence in the area and operation</li> </ul>
2005	Sararogha Agreement	Baitullah Mehsud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cease fire from both sides</li> <li>▪ Removal of extremists from Waziristan</li> <li>▪ Removal of army check posts</li> <li>▪ Giving free hand to tribes in Waziristan</li> </ul>	same as above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PA* operation</li> <li>▪ Partial removal of the army check posts</li> <li>▪ Attack by Taliban**</li> </ul>
2006	(North) Waziristan Accord	Hafiz Gul Behadur, Maulana Sadiq Noor, Maulana Abdul Khaliq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No ground and air operation by army or Taliban</li> <li>▪ Removal of army check posts</li> <li>▪ Resolving the issue through local customs and traditions</li> <li>▪ Restoration of the Tribesmen's incentives</li> </ul>	'Jirga' of tribal elders but after army's withdraw from the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No-withdraw of the PA*</li> <li>▪ No removal of the remaining check posts</li> <li>▪ Attack by Taliban**</li> </ul>
2007	--	Baitullah Mehsud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Release of Taliban prisoners by the government</li> <li>▪ Removal of extremists from Waziristan</li> </ul>	Taliban in Waziristan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PA* operation on Lal Masjid</li> <li>▪ Attack by Taliban**</li> </ul>
2008	--	Mullah Nazir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cease fire from both sides</li> <li>▪ Giving free hand to Mullah Nair in South Waziristan</li> </ul>	same as above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Killing of Mullah Nazir in a drone Attack</li> <li>▪ Fail Negotiations between Political Patties and Taliban</li> </ul>
2014	--	Mullah Fazlullah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cease fire from both sides</li> </ul>	same as above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attack by PA*</li> </ul>
June 2014	--		Army Operation 'Zarb-e-Azb' (continues...)		

\* Pakistan Army/Pakistan Armed Forces.

\*\* Attack by the Taliban against Pakistan armed forces, public property and civilians, both in and out of Waziristan.

PN: The findings are based on researchers' own analysis. Further reference is permitted only after proper citation.



In the whole exercise of pacts and confrontation, the loyal Wazir tribes were considered only in the first two agreements; Shakai and Sararogha but only as pact's enforcement agents. They were totally ignored in peace committee's formation for formal dialog with Taliban in Waziristan. Resultantly, operations like, *Rahe-e-Nejat* against the Taliban and other foreign extremists resulted in killing of mostly the local Waziri tribes. In this operation, another 200 Mehsud elders, those were raising [their] voices against Taliban, were secretly killed (Mehsud, 2014b). Yet, in reaction to both nationally, and internationally fabricated rumours and to regain control in the North and South Waziristan agency, Wazir tribes remained active to bring durable solution to the problem. These loyal tribes, in support of the Pakistan government and the armed forces, convened a grand Jirga in 2005 in Miram Shah (North Waziristan), which turned out to be 500-600 local elders from all the sub-tribes of Waziristan. Disappointingly, state government had let-down the tribal elders who wanted to engage in the dialog process (Lian, 2010, p. 89). It included all those, who promised tribal cooperation to resolve the disputes through tribal consent, in every possible manner and against all foreign elements, to regain harmony in their region (Khan, 2006).

However, on the eve of establishing writ of the government without local consent, Waziri tribal core identity was scattered both by Taliban and the Pakistan army – indiscriminately launching a series of invasions on its own tribes, portraying as foreign enemies (Byford, 2002). Yet, Pakistan army continued their policy of bombarding Waziristan with no exception, just to outclass Taliban, kill them at places and push them back to Afghanistan. Certainly with no scope of peace deals, along with uncertainty of success, brought an immediate start to deadly wave of suicide bombings on the Pakistani streets. It remained until 2015 although sometimes with low intensity (Sayah, 2009). Thus, working without the local power, Waziristan became the nightmare counterterrorism zone along the Durand line and turned into a hell of fire. Just non-inclusion of the real stakeholders gave Taliban; the status of strongmen and stature, free hand for quasi-independence and command for a *de-facto* sovereignty to rebel factions in the region.

The actual powerbrokers in Waziristan were overlooked despite of their constructive role in their historical events, correspondingly, understanding the true genesis of the Pashtun psyche, their loyalty and defense of state territory and re-establishing the genuine tribal equation for a ultimate solution. So, laying overtly on clarifications of either the military operation or departing with the dialog process without taking the inhabitants on board. Whereas, evidences shows that local elders and their Jury resisted army operation that was started on June 15, 2014 and offered government to let them alone expelling foreign elements within two weeks' time (Sharif, 2014). They even promised for secure smoothly installation of government writ (Irfan, 2014).

Here again, tribal sense of revenge (*Badal*) was misconceived that remains 'a rule of the vendetta' for Pashtuns and they are obliged to take it against 'any attack on tribal reputation or immediate family and a wounding or a murder of one's kin' (Omriani, 2009). Both national government and security forces shut their eyes to them and without secret blamed them, held responsible and harnessed for all ill-lawful action 'by the extremists' in Waziristan. It was despite of the fact that tribal council effectively grabbed the actual extremists, where possible, and handed over to Pakistan's security agencies. Moreover, in a situation, where local tribes could not act alone, the tribal council provided timely information regarding hidings of the Taliban in the rocky mountainous region (ICG, 2010).

Despite, tribes of Waziristan had totally rejected the government's policy of useless army operations in already devastated area where Wazir tribes had been suffering socially, economically, physically. They had rejected another operation in their area. It was behind the

well-known fact that innocent tribes, who could not manage to move-out, were on the hock. Besides, any such attempt for next operation could simply lead to destroying the local property. However, local consent had been presented through like-minded tribesmen, turbans on their heads, to higher officials in the consultation meetings (Yusufzai, 2014), whereas offer of negotiations and the guarantee from the actual rational actors was overlooked that stood as the cheapest platform for durable results. Unfortunately, the offer was discounted and actual local voices were hashed again, resulting another army operation in Summer 2014.

In this scenario, although Pakistan armed forces done some results through killing militants as well destroying their hideouts. The terrorists networks were also destroyed (Javaid, 2015). However, it is also a bitter reality that operation *Zarb-e-Azab* (Sharp Strike) still could not gear the planned results as Taliban left the area and entered the Afghanistan (APF, 2015). More precisely, the extremists elements and Taliban who left Waziristan are alive and hiding in safe heavens on the long extended 'boarder region' of Afghanistan with Pakistan (Zahid, 2015), likewise, in Zermelana near to Zhob, Pakistan's Balochistan Province (Dawn, 2015).

It clearly shows that even after intense-bombing on the Waziri homeland main Taliban entities are neither killed nor captured. They bear the power to organize and hit-back anytime as they did over the same period by striking-back three time posing heavy personnel and property los (Wagah boarder blast on November 2, 2014, APS Peshawar on December 16, 2014 and Mardan blast on December 29, 2015). It is because; no comprehensive strategy for boarder control exists. Free movement across the Durand-line goes-on through an un-controlled and non-fenced 800-km long Pak-Afghan boarder. Here and now, there exists no other strategy as to deploy army's posts in the region for future area control. If done so, history repeats itself, like in Swat valley, where army presence still remains indispensable starting back from 2009. It is based on non-competence of the civil law enforcement agencies to take area's control. Hence, it gives armed forces and intelligence agencies already a red signal of not leaving the area. Repeatedly, non-existence of any supreme authority that is locally established can extend the already created power vacuum in the region.

In the course of crushing Taliban in Waziristan agency, thousands of Wazir tribesmen; innocent children, women and loyal youth, who could not cope to leave-out were killed as 'collateral damage' (Bacha, 2014). Other thousands as internally displaced persons have suffered from social facilities while residing in different camps in the settled region far away from their homes. They have lived a miserable life for months (Mehsud, 2014a). Those who luckily got chance to breathe after un-wanted war and started going back to their tribal homeland are now residing as refugees on their own territory controlled by others. The sense of local governance by they-themselves no longer exists. The local tribal cultural norms and values were ruined from both Taliban and the national government through their aggressive policies of consecutive wars over the last. The tribal social order was ruined. And the local governance and administrative system was destroyed and buried.

## CONCLUSION

Waziristan portrays a perfect model that, how aggression for administrative supremacy, frightening alliances disturbs the geographical equation, particularly when historical literature is overlooked and past exercised tactics are considered as the wasted schemes, appropriate in that particular time frame. Waziristan case also illustrates how tribal traditions and well-established system when confronted with aggression and state's interference, give birth to what we understand as extremism. The case of Waziristan also perfectly presents, how the policies of demolishing the local popularity, further rejecting local earnest support to redeem the devastating situation to its actual position with no further bloodshed, result in devastation of personnel and property besides traumatisation of the locality.

Situation in Waziristan is not the cause but the consequences of wrong policies of Islamabad and its coalition partners – *half way friendship and half way hate*. The outcome of the later was although sensed before the burst of fire. But the actual tribal mentality was completely ignored. Subsequently, the problem became acute – decades long agreements with Wazir tribes were ruined. Wazir tribes were handled with disrespect and power. Pashtun justice and governance system (Jirga) to solve the issue on ground with durable results was overlooked. The Wazir land is seeded with fear, anger and hate. In this scenario, although, army operation in the area is almost complete and Pak. army is claiming of area's control but still the long-term solution of Talibanization in Waziri land is quite crucial. It's because, Taliban ideology that is left behind can nourish the blood of tribal youth against those who destroyed their land, ignored their voices and killed the turban holders under the banner of collateral damage. Acting as sub-ordinates and underlying under any centralized external authority simply fails in the Waziri blood. As, it is still challenge to their '*gherat*' (tribal honour) to obey the ordered rules on the Wazir wild land.

They don't let any one to capture their land and march pass. They retain the capacity to enjoy maximum degree of sovereignty and liberation for their independent authority while refusing any external influence for governing the area (Tapper, 2011). In the kinship relation, this society can unite under their hierarchal relationships within glimpse. So, king other than the Wazirs themselves is merely a dream. Likewise, any order other than Pashtunwali, influenced by Islamic law, remains a delusion. For conflict resolution and disputes settlement even with extremists is indispensable only through tribal jury that hold the local power of attorney. Hence, the only way to reverse to correct the local believe of *Jihad fee sabil'illah* is through correct translation of radical Islam and balance the social structure again in its the intense setting is through local consent, presented through local elders' assembly. So, the only durable solution is no other than empowering the local tribes and redeems the tribal jury. It's the Jirga that can ensure durable law & order in the area through settling the disputes with local sense of '*Rogha*' – dispute settlement between combatants. It's only the Jirga decisions that are with no-doubt individually and collectively followed in the area. Only Jirga decisions could be forcefully and collectively implemented on the extremists by the Wazirs, who have again and again pledged their support for the expulsion of extremists and offered their help in capturing in their sleeper cells. Waziri tribes are still keen for harmony in the area also behind the reason that they have severe pain and great detestation against those misinterpreted the authentic sense melmastia, evading the limits of Nanawaty and putting life losses that they can never be forgiven. It all together remains enough for enforced acceptability of any verdict, acceptable particularly to Wazirs and to state government. They are culturally pursued to take revenge – an obligation in Pashtunwali. Badal has been put on play against all the foreign afghan invaders tried to bulldoze the Wazir tribes and nullified decade long tribal governance system. Moreover, damage to locality has also built a sense of betrayal for Pakistani government, Pak-army and importantly US allied forces as the operations were viewed as excessive and indiscriminate use of force against those smashed the famous tribal sovereignty (Haider, 2009).

So, after much loses to armed forces, local Waziri tribes and property, war is no more an option as it is considered always against the proper noun (German Proverb), whereas, against common noun (terrorism and extremism), war have been less successful. The sage principle and the most rational choice remains the same; granting power and respect to locals influential tribesmen and skilfully, and brilliantly deploying their assembly to produce good for Waziristan and Pakistan – indirect ruling the wild Waziristan. And it remains a common reality that after conflicts peace process born, rise and prevails, if it is born in a climate of locally accepted legitimacy (Arnault, 2014). So, Jirga revival is the best possible solution to

end radicalism from the Pakistani soil and to halt its export to other regions. Only the local tribal elders through their unofficial parliament can safeguard the area and eliminate extremist ideology from their lines for durable peace in the Waziristan, like before.

## REFERENCE

- [1] Acharya, A., Bukhari, S. A. A. S., & Sulaiman, S. (2009). Making money in the mayhem: Funding Taliban insurrection in the tribal areas of Pakistan. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 32 (2), 95-108.
- [2] Ahmad, W. (2003). *Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: The nation's voice* (Vol. VII). Karachi: Quaid-e-Azam Academy.
- [3] Ahmed, A. (1976). *Millennium and charisma among Pathans: A critical essay in social anthropology*. London: Routledge.
- [4] Ahmed, A. (1983). *Religion and politics in Muslim society: Order and conflict in Pakistan*. Karachi: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Ahmed, A. S. (1982). Order and conflict in Muslim society: A case study from Pakistan. *Middle East Journal*, 36 (2), 184-204.
- [6] Ali, Z. (2012). Nowhere to go: Mehsud tribesmen denounce displacement decision. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/477211/nowhere-to-go-mehsud-tribesmen-denounce-displacement-decision/>.
- [7] Ali, Z. (2013). Waziristan jirga: Wana tribes decry teacher absenteeism. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/512061/waziristan-jirga-wana-tribes-decry-teacher-absenteeism/>.
- [8] APF. (2015). Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Army gearing up for final push in Shawal Valley. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/911661/army-gearing-up-for-final-push-in-operation-zarb-e-azb/>.
- [9] Ayman, al-Z. (2002). Loyalty and enmity. In Raymond Ibrahim (Ed.). *The Al Qaeda Reader*. United States: Broadway Books.
- [10] Bacha, A. H. (2014). Jirga rejects govt's body for damage assessment in Waziristan. Retrieved from <http://www.dawn.com/news/1136805>.
- [11] Barth, F. (1969). Pathan identity and its maintenance. *Ethnic groups and boundaries*, 119-134.
- [12] BBC. (2009a). Q & A: Pakistan's Waziristan challenge. Retrieved from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8296245.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8296245.stm)
- [13] BBC. (2009b). Q & A: Pakistan's Waziristan challenge (October 19, 2009). Retrieved from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8296245.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8296245.stm)
- [14] Briggs, J. (1966). *History of the rise of the Mohammedan power in India: Calcutta*. New Delhi: Adam Publishers.

- [15] Britannica Encyclopædia. (2009). Encyclopædia Britannica Online: Anglo-Afghan-Wars. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Anglo-Afghan-Wars>.
- [16] Burki, K. Z. (2010). Rise of Taliban in Waziristan. *The Dialogue*, 188-211.
- [17] Byford, G. (2002). The Wrong war. *Foreign Affairs*, 81(34).
- [18] Cadre Frunze Academy History of the Military Art. (1991). Combat actions of Soviet Force in the Republic of Afghanistan. *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 8 (I).
- [19] Caroe, O. (1976). *The Pathans, 550 BC--AD 1957*. London: Oxford University Press.
- [20] Dawn News. (2015). Jirga asks non-local militants to leave South Waziristan. Retrieved from <http://www.dawn.com/news/1224345>.
- [21] Dupree, Louis. (1980). *Afghanistan* (2nd ed.): Oxford University Press.
- [22] Deutsche Welle. (2014). Are Pakistan's talks with the Taliban bound to fail? Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/en/are-pakistans-talks-with-the-taliban-bound-to-fail/a-17416653>.
- [23] Fair, C. C., Howenstein, N., & Thier, J. A. (2009). *Troubles on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border*. Washington DC: United States Institute for Peace.
- [24] FCR. (2015). *South Waziristan Agency*. Peshawar: FATA Research Center.
- [25] GoP. (1947, 1951-52). *Revised Agreements with the Tribal People*. Peshawar: Government of Pakistan.
- [26] Haider, Z. (2009). Pak edges towards Waziristan 'Path to Salvation. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-waziristan-analysis-sb-idUSTRE56J2JU20090720>.
- [27] Hauner, M. (1981). One man against the Empire: the Faqir of Ipi and the British in Central Asia on the eve of and during the Second World War. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 16 (1), 183-212.
- [28] Howell, E. B. (1979). *Mizh: A monograph on Government's relations with the Mahsud tribe*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.
- [29] Hussain, S. I. (2000). *Some major Pukhtoon tribes along the Pak-Afghan border*: Pakistan: Area Study Centre.
- [30] Hussain, Z. (2012). Pakistan's most dangerous place. *The Wilson Quarterly*, 16-21.
- [31] ICG. (2010). *Pakistan: The worsening IDP crisis*. Islamabad: *Asia Briefing N' 111*.
- [32] Irfan, M. (2014). In search of stability: Tribal elders given 15 days to restore peace in NWA. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/718475/in-search-of-stability-tribal-elders-given-15-days-to-restore-peace-in-nwa/>.
- [33] Javid, U. (2015). Operation Zarb-e-Azb: A successful initiative to curtail terrorism. *South Asian Studies*, 30, 2.

- [34] Johnston, H. H. (2011). Mahsud Notes, in IOR, British Library (L/P&S/20 B.307, pp 22-23). Beattie, H. (Quoted). (2011). Negotiations with the Tribes of Waziristan 1849–1914—The British Experience. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 39 (4), 571-587.
- [35] Kakar, F. (2014). The FCR and FATA's quagmire. Retrieved from <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/01-Sep-2014/the-fcr-and-fata-s-quagmire>.
- [36] Khan, C. G. & Ismail. ( 2006). Taliban and allies tighten grip in North of Pakistan. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/11/world/asia/11iht-web.1211pakistan.3853083.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>
- [37] Khyber-News. (2005). Codes of Pakhtoonwali. Retrieved from [www.khyber.org](http://www.khyber.org).
- [38] Lawson, A. (2008). Why Britons walked warily in Waziristan. UK: BBC News.
- [39] Lian, W. (2010). Talibanization in the tribal areas of Pakistan. *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies (in Asia)*, 4 (1).
- [40] Mahdi, N. Q. (1986). Pukhtunwali: Ostracism and honor among the Pathan Hill tribes. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 7 (3–4), 295-304. d
- [41] Mehsud, G. (2014a). Pakistan's internally displaced persons are suffering. Retrieved from <http://www.sharnoffsglobalviews.com/pakistan-displaced-persons-341/>.
- [42] Mehsud, G. (2014b). Waziristan: Tribal residents caught between drones, the Pakistani army and insurgents. *London Progressive Journal*.
- [43] Mir, A. (2005). War and peace in Waziristan. *Asia Times*, 4.
- [44] World Survey Monitor. (2008). Phase I: US-Pakistani Relations during the Cold War & Phase II: The Historic Betrayal. In I. 4 (Ed.).
- [45] MPI. (2005). *Family structures and family law in Afghanistan*. Hamburg: Max Planck Institute-MPI.
- [46] Omrani, B. (2009). The Durand line: History and problems of the Afghan-Pakistan border. *Asian Affairs*, 40 (2), 177-195.
- [47] Rashid, H. (2004). Bin Laden not here, say tribesmen Retrieved from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/3542313.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3542313.stm) .
- [48] Raverty, H. G. (1886). *Notes on Afghanistan*. London
- [49] Robichaud, C. (2015). Afghanistan's three legal systems. *Afghanistan Watch*, 9. January 2015.
- [50] Sayah, R. (2009). On the Taliban trail in South Waziristan. Retrieved from [http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/10/30/pakistan.taliban.land/index.html?i\\_ref=nextin](http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/10/30/pakistan.taliban.land/index.html?i_ref=nextin).
- [51] Sharif, S. (2014). Pakistan's war against TTP. Retrieved from <http://defence.pk/forums/pakistans-war-against-ttp.87/>.

- [52] Siddique, Q. (2010). *Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan: An attempt to deconstruct the umbrella organization and the reasons for its growth in Pakistan's north-west* (DIIS Reports). Denmark: Danish Institute for International Studies.
- [53] Smith, B. R. K., & Kyle, A. (2011). *How agents of economic development interact with the complex dynamics of regional governance in Fata: A case study of energy development projects*. Peshawar: University of Peshawar.
- [54] Spain, J. W. (1961). The Pathan borderlands. *Middle East Journal*, 15 (2), 165-177.
- [55] Taj, F. (2009). The Pakhtun, the Taliban and ignorant outsiders. Retrieved from [http://article.wn.com/view/2009/01/14/The\\_Pakhtun\\_the\\_Taliban\\_and\\_ignorant\\_outsiders/](http://article.wn.com/view/2009/01/14/The_Pakhtun_the_Taliban_and_ignorant_outsiders/).
- [56] Tapper, R. (2011). *Tribe and state in Iran and Afghanistan (RLE Iran A)* (Vol. 32). London: Routledge.
- [57] ul Haq, N., Rashid A. K., & Maqsoodul, H. N. (2005). *Federally administered tribal areas of Pakistan*. Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute.
- [58] Wazir, M. (2009). *Waziristan: Through the Annals of History*.
- [59] Williams, M. W. (2005). *The British colonial experience in Waziristan and its applicability to current operations* (DTIC document). US: DTIC.
- [60] Wylly, H. C., Harold, C. (1912). *From the black mountain to Waziristan*: Melbourne: Macmillan.
- [61] Young, G. F. (1882). Notes on the Shaktú Valley, Waziristan (Cited: Oliver-former British army officer). 4, 537-544.
- [62] Yusufzai, M. (2014). NWA Jirga members boycott PM's function: The News. Retrieved from <https://united4justice.wordpress.com/2014/06/28/nwa-jirga-members-boycott-pms-function-the-news/>.
- [63] Zahid, F. (2015). The successes and failures of Pakistan's operation Zarb-e-Azb. *Terrorism Monitor*, 13 (14).