

# **Forced Migration and Conflict-Induced Displacement**

Impacts and Prospective Responses



A Publication by the Centre for International Peace and Stability  
and the Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan

# Forced Migration and Conflict-Induced Displacement: Impacts and Prospective Responses

*Edited by*

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ISBN 978-969-8535-62-9

Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS)  
National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST)

NUST PRESS



First Published in 2020 by NUST Press.  
National University of Sciences and Technology  
H-12, Islamabad, Pakistan

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A catalogue record for this book is available from Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), NUST Library, and Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan (HSF), Islamabad.

ISBN 978-969-8535-62-9

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## Acronyms

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Afghan Movement and Repatriation Strategy	AMRS
Afghan Transit Trade Agreement	ATTA
Alternative für Deutschland	AfD
Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army	ARSA
Assisted Voluntary Return	AVR
Bundesamt für Asyl und Flüchtlinge	BAMF
Christian Democratic Union of Germany	CDU
Christian Social Union	CSU
European Council on Refugees and Exiles	ECRE
European Union	EU
Federally Administered Tribal Areas	FATA
Frontier Crimes Regulations	FCR
Human Rights Commission of Pakistan	HRCP
Internally Displaced Person	IDP
Internally Displacement Monitoring Center	IDMC
International Court of Justice	ICJ
International Relocation Alternative	IRA
International Security Assistance Force	ISAF
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	KPK
Military Families Resettlement Organization	MFRO
National Action Plan	NAP
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	NATO
North Waziristan	NW
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	OCHA
Organization of Islamic Cooperation	OIC
Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan	PDPA
Provincially Administered Tribal Areas	PATA
Rapid Protection Cluster Assessment	RPCA
Regional Security Complex	RSC
Regional Security Complex Theory	RSCT
Tehreek Nifaz-e- Shariat-e- Mohammadi	TNSM
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan	TTP

Temporarily Displaced Person	TDP
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	UNAMA
United Nations Economic and Social Council	ECOSOC
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
United Nations Human Rights Council	UNHRC
Village Defense Committee	VDC
World Food Program	WFP



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## Introduction

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**Muhammad Makki**

The phenomenon of human migration is exceedingly diverse and multifaceted and therefore sketches beyond the scope of single or case-specific coherent explanations. Owing to the ever-evolving contextual realities, the fundamental idea of human migration has now come to be studied and explored as forced migration and conflict-induced displacement. These themes and other related notions have resultantly managed to secure a distinct position within the broader discourse on migration studies. Multiple set of the complexly interlinked underlying set of determinants has necessitated a deeper and a more sorted approach to analyze the subject in the present times. Around the globe, factors such as unending violent conflicts, marginalization on religious, political, economic and/ or social levels, unwelcoming social surroundings, poor or no access to development, a threat to personal security, poor or no prospects for personal economic advancement and more recently devastating impacts of climate change, have forced people to flee their home countries and/or areas of origin. In this view, it has become more important than ever, to comprehensively uncover every niche of the subjects related to migration and displacement.

It can be contended that the refugee crisis in the twenty-first century has come to influence, shape, and systematically alter the political demeanor of states and thus demands a fair share of attention. Forced migrations and the politics of repatriation has stirred some major debates in the academic circles in the recent past. From the role and identity of refugees in alien space, unrecognized and unregistered, to their paradoxical existence in the host countries; burdening the economy of the host state whilst at the same time contributing to it, refugees are the protagonists in the theatre of forced migration, with the socio-cultural, historical, and political factors serving as the director for all the theatricality that goes around.

Conflict-induced displacement, on the other hand, is emerging as a recent trend of internal migration owing to its unique features, such as politicization, intimidation, and especially the movement of people mostly experienced within the borders of the home state. Owing to the needs of an increase in the aforesaid movements, scholars, policy-makers and international organizations, in

particular, have a critical role to play in these extraordinary times, whilst directing all their energies in systematically defining the various kinds of displacements taking place on the international scene, each with its distinct set of underlying drivers and equally distinct consequences.

The global refugee crises, concerning cases such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and the consequent responses by the world community, have been predominantly discussed around the world. However, this introduction lays more focus on forced migration, especially in view of conflict-induced internal displacement. This attention has been accorded because conflict and its consequent, yet incontrovertible, association with protracted internal displacement and involuntary resettlement remains an understudied area (Muggah, 2003). This was despite the fact that internal displacement crises reached new levels in the last decade; for instance, by the end of 2017, some forty million people were internally displaced due to armed conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations, according to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (Global Internal Displacement Database, 2019). The discourse and literature on forced migration, refugees' protection and assistance, IDPs, resettlement drawn from academics, and practitioner-oriented writings principally. However, the literature on displacement has come to essentially incorporate more nuanced themes, such as de-territorialization, and asserts that the process is inherently forced and involuntary (Hyndman, 2000).

Additionally, the international community has not standardized the protection of the internally displaced persons (IDPs)/ populations; however, the United Nations (UN) through its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) provided a normative framework for the protection of IDPs through its *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*<sup>1</sup> in 1998 (IDPs - Policy and Guiding Documents, 2019). The Guiding Principles are consistent with, and reflect, international human rights and humanitarian law, as well as refugee law by analogy. The principles interpret and apply these existing norms to the situation of displaced persons during various stages of the process. The *Deng Principles* define as internally displaced those

people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or habitual places of residence in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* are also known as the *Deng Principles* for having been primarily crafted under the supervision of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Francis M. Deng.

<sup>2</sup> For more information, see paragraph 2 of UN Doc E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2.

More so, apart from ambiguity over definitional and terminological issues, the process of forced displacement is plagued with persistent confusion and consensus over when the displacement ends and the forms of national or international assistance that the IDPs are entitled to (Mooney, 2007).

The consequences of (forced) displacement and subsequent declines in individuals' entitlements compel concerned national machinery and associated foreign aid agencies to undertake the process of *resettlement* of the IDPs (Cernea, 1997). Concurrently, as with the marring in the literature on (forced) migration, the literature on resettlement of IDPs dwells in uncertainty over the distinctions between 'voluntary' or 'involuntary' resettlement (Muggah, 2003). Additionally, humanitarian assistance is rarely sustained during the entire resettlement process: a factor inadequately considered in the design of relocation programs (Cohen & Cuenod, 1995). Adding to the deficiencies in literature, up till the 1970s and 1980s, the 'development' discourse provided meager analytical attention with link to displacement and resettlement (Muggah, 2000); however, over time, the convergence between humanitarian and developmental spheres has contributed in addressing the increasing plight of the IDPs (Klugman, 1999; Holtzman, 1999). Furthermore, it is argued vehemently that in post-conflict or conflict-affected countries the re-establishment of (liberal) peace necessitates the utilization of military assets, humanitarian, economic and social interventions; essentially, (post-conflict) developmental interventions (Duffield, 2010; Richmond, 2009).

The aforementioned themes bear relevance to the refugee and internal displacement crises in Pakistan. Pakistan's decades' long accommodation of the Afghan refugees has been discussed and addressed over the years, and this edited volume also highlights those recurring themes such as (voluntary) repatriation and resettlement. However, more recently, the literature has focused on various studies discussing and exploring the dynamics of post-conflict peacebuilding and transformation in Pakistan in view of internal displacement (Aslam, 2008; Chaudhry & Wazir, 2012; Ishaque, 2016; Khan & Nyborg, 2013). In this book also, a contribution by Ahmad, Yousaf & Kakar, 2020, covers the IDP crisis in North Waziristan (see also Hameed, 2015; Javaid, 2016; Yousaf, Khan, & Hussain, 2018) and the experiences of the displaced in camps. However, it is crucial to note that because of the contextual realities of IDPs in Pakistan, an in-depth analysis of the processes of conflict-induced forced displacement and involuntary resettlement have not been discussed alongside post-conflict development and rehabilitation.

Keeping in view these debates, the introduction also outlines a set of recommendations which have been principally collated from the contents of the chapters in this book. These recommendations present a synergized understanding from the sections and chapters, in order to elucidate areas and themes, which require added attention of forced migrations, i.e. one of the most pressing issues of the decade.

## ***Balancing Standardized Responses with Context-based Solutions and Interventions***

The underlying reasons for displacement and migration have diversified by leaps and bounds in the previous decade owing to the multi-faceted nature of political and socio-economic determinants at play. In this view, the understanding of the entire phenomenon has become largely context-based, calling for distinct definitions in order to avoid ambiguity in terms of the agreement on the designation of an individual as an IDP, a TDP, a forced migrant or a refugee. Therefore, there is a need to comprehend that the existing standardized responses to human migration, especially in times of crises, need to be updated accordingly. In addition, despite trying to reach global consensus, the world states need to converge their understandings on contemporary issues and devise conflict/country-specific responses, which primarily include the input of states in closer proximity to the state in distress. In view of the aforementioned international efforts, national legal frameworks and laws governing migration need to be incongruent to ease the migrants at various junctions of the process of migration. Moreover, the growing world population should also be kept in view of devising the concerns for humanity at large.

### ***Political Understanding of the Context***

Though forced migrations are not entirely new for the world, the understanding of the phenomenon over the past decade has largely seen them as a consequence and/or aftermath of conflict; forcing people to flee their homelands in hope for better livelihoods or simply in order to have a chance at living in an unthreatening environment. However, with the increasing relevance of discourses on forced migrations in the current times, there is an equally heightened need to take into consideration the political context in which the refugees are forced to flee their homes and resettle in an entirely different setting. In a similar sense, a due amount of attention needs to be dedicated to understanding the impacts endured by the host governments when accommodating the said influx of refugees. The fact that in most cases, decisions pertaining to accepting refugees within the borders of a state or simply closing its doors off at them, are driven by political imperatives of the said state cannot and must not be ignored. Simply put, forced migrations are normally conceptualized as the movement of people unsettled by some violent conflict to a place where they seek refuge. However, there is a grave need to determine if a reverse forced migration can be conceptualized in the current times? This reverse forced migration would entail the movement of refugees from the place where they sought refuge, back to the place from which they fled. An insight into the factors deemed necessary by the refugees for their resettlement in their respective areas of origin needs to be understood. Additionally, scholars must dedicate the focus of their scholarships to uncover the questions related to deportation; especially determining if it can also be categorized as a kind of forced migration? Lastly, there is a need to understand

deportation as distinct from being a result of legal procedure, conforming to the international law of refugee protection. Rather, it needs to be seen and understood in the context of political imperatives intended for the fulfillment of various pursuits such as to placate right-wing anti-refugee' demands. The domestic political scenarios demand due consideration when elaborating upon the issue of forced migration and its related subjects.

### ***Short-term and Long-term Intervention Plans***

To address the issues of IDPs and their resettlement, there is an immediate need to seriously plan short-term and long-term interventions. Immediate action is required to provide shelter, food, medicines, security, clean drinking water, sanitation, etc. to those who have returned or are willing to return their home countries/ areas of origin. Long-term interventions, though sought as the need of the hour, remain challenging because the IDPs, mainly the returnees, need to rebuild their homes and businesses in order to restore their livelihoods in the area. For this reason, reconstruction or new construction of infrastructure is needed to ensure the effective provision of health, education, roads, and other services to the local people. The aforementioned requisites for the returnees to start over require an enormous amount of resources for which the government needs support from other organizations.

### ***Addressing Trauma and Psychological Distress of Protracted Displacements***

Be it as a result of conflict, marginalization on a social or economic basis, or as a voluntary decision to resettle for better prospects for advancement — the choice to move from one's place of origin is never an easy one to make. When understanding the issue of forced migrations and refugees, it is of critical significance to accord due amount of attention to the psychological trauma that the refugees and IDPs endure in the process of leaving their respective places of origin and resettling into a society which is nearly unknown to them. Additionally, challenge to completely integrate with a group of people with different histories and cultural affinities is also bound to further deepen feelings of alienation in the refugees upon resettlement. This difficulty in terms of keeping up with highly multi-culturalist host societies with special reference to the psychological baggage of having been displaced from one's homeland, need to be understood with a dedicated focus in the broader academic discipline of forced migrations and displacement.

### ***The Need for Further Research and Academic Rigour***

The academic fraternity needs to dedicate serious attention to re-defining responses while bearing in mind the core contexts behind the movement of individuals from their home countries to other places. In addition, and more importantly so, quality discourses on the issue of forced migrations and displacement, preferably by the local authors hailing from the geographical belt



that has been experiencing the effects of migration since decades must be produced regularly in order to showcase and comprehensively highlight the indigenous experiential perspective on the issue. Especially concerning Pakistan and the conflict-induced displacement in the northern belt of the country, local academic accounts on the issue need to publish for both, national and international audiences.

With these discussions in view, this book is divided into two parts: (I) efforts towards the management of forced migration: analyzing repatriation, resettlement, and return of displaced populations, and (II) social ramifications of forced migrations: analyzing the responses of displaced populations. Both categories include discussions on refugees and IDPs. The first two chapters in *Part I* address the Afghan refugees. Sökefeld (chapter one) discusses the politics of deportation from Germany to Afghanistan where he elucidates upon the ‘voluntary’ return migration of Afghan refugees. In which he concludes that there lies the difficulty in distinguishing ‘forced’ from ‘voluntary’ migration, and further points out that even ‘voluntary return’ migration is not devoid of relations of force. Mahar (chapter two) discusses the Afghan and Pakistani economic refugees that are suffering from shifts in the German asylum regime. He stresses that the right to the political refuge is increasingly being defined by narrow ideas of deservingness and humanitarianism which characterizes economic refugees as undeserving. By using ethnographic material and three particular case studies, his chapter takes a critical look at the practices, facilitators, and subjects of “voluntary” assisted returns of rejected asylum seekers in Germany. Mushtaq & Kayani (chapter five) also draw attention to the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. They discuss the shaping of the security paradigm between Pakistan and Afghanistan by taking theoretical inferences from ‘regional security complexes’ and by outlining the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors of forced migration pertinent to this case.

The contribution by Kamruzzaman (chapter three) elaborates on the Rohingya refugee crisis which has been characterized as the systematic genocide of the Rohingya Muslims by the Myanmar Buddhist regime. Kamruzzaman reviews the underlying failures of the international community to arrive at a sustainable and dignified resolution to the refugee crises and the growing fears of radicalization and disenfranchisement in the displaced Rohingya. Elahi (chapter four) focuses on the case of internal displacement in Swat, Pakistan, and the impact and influence of the conflict and displacement on the social and political structure of the society and how it contributed to the development of ‘new’ structure and political change in the Swat Valley.

*Part II* of the book lays more emphasis on the cases of conflict-induced internal displacement. In doing so, Razzaq (chapter six) explores ‘host-stranger’ relations to understand the role of cultural traits of ‘strangers’ (displaced populations) and the compromising situations that might result in case they refuse to assimilate and submit to the cultural characteristics of their dominant ‘hosts’. He compares the Urdu speaking Muslim migrants of 1947 and the

IDPs/ TDPs of northern Pakistan to elucidate his case. Ahmad, Yousaf & Kakar (chapter eight) focus on the lived-experiences of the IDPs from North Waziristan living in Bannu, Pakistan. They use a qualitative approach to unveil the process of the forced displacement of IDP from North Waziristan, the reasons for living off-camp, and socio-economic problems the IDPs encountered in their everyday lives. Their findings present the context-specific problems and issues encountered by the IDPs of North Waziristan. Zeb and Abdullah Wazir (chapter nine) build on the impact of conflict-induced displacement and the loss of indigenous language(s). They use the conflict between the Taliban and security forces in South Waziristan and the consequent displacement to stress on the impact on *Warmaro/Ormari* language as it has brought the language to the brink and danger of extinction, which had survived for centuries as the mother tongue of Burki tribe in Kaniguram, South Waziristan. The authors also present a set of recommendations to address the loss of indigenousness of the displaced people of South Waziristan. Lastly, the work by Sawal, Shah & Khan (chapter seven) discusses the case of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the socio-economic transformation overtime which has sustained their economic status and defined their underlying reasons to stay in Pakistan or choose to repatriate to Afghanistan.

### *Acknowledgment*

This book is based on the papers presented at the one-day International Conference on “The Impacts of Conflict-Induced Forced Migration and Prospective Responses” held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Conference was jointly organized by the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS) at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, and the Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan, Islamabad. Given the importance of the subject, CIPS is thankful to Dr. Steffen Kudella, Resident Representative of HSF, for sharing the financial expenses of the event.

We deeply acknowledge the presence of the guest speakers who graced the event, especially H.E. Mr. Bernhard Schlagheck, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Pakistan, who was invited as the Chief Guest to the event, and Major General Muhammad Jaffar HI (M) (Retired), Rector NUML, Mr. Igor Ivancic, Assistant Representative (Protection) at UNHCR, Ambassador Farukh Amil, former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations (Geneva) and other dignitaries. We are also especially grateful to the speakers who revised their papers based on the reviews and feedback given to them and to the anonymous reviewers. Lastly, the event would not have been possible without the help of the HSF Staff and the student organizers from CIPS, so we are grateful for their commitment and assistance.

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## **PART I**

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### **Efforts towards Management of Forced Migration: Analyzing Repatriation, Resettlement and Return of Displaced Populations**

## **Forced Migration, the Other Way Round? The Politics of Deporting Afghans from Germany**

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**Martin Sökefeld**

This chapter asks whether deportation can be considered a form of forced migration. It starts with a brief discussion of the concept of “forced migration” and the difficulty to distinguish ‘forced’ from ‘voluntary’ migration. A legalistic account would argue that deportation is not a form of forced migration because it follows the rules of law, while forced migration is a consequence of unlawful or catastrophic events. I argue, instead, that today the refugee regime in most northern countries is less geared towards providing lawful protection to persons in need than to prevent their permanent residency. The case of Germany shows, for instance, that less and less Afghans are accorded refugee protection although the security situation in Afghanistan is deteriorating. Disregarding the danger for deportees, deportations to Afghanistan are enforced. Many volunteers and activists supporting refugees consider this as illegitimate or even unlawful and organize resistance and protest to prevent deportations. Deportations are not devoid of force. I conclude that also ‘voluntary’ return migration can be a matter of force even if no physical force is employed. Here, the structural force of a refugee regime is at play that denies refugees a future in the country where they sought protection.

### **Introduction**

When considering the phenomenon of forced migration, one assumes displacement to be a consequence of violence, natural disasters, or perhaps large-scale infrastructure projects. People who have to leave their homes because they were destroyed by an earthquake, by civil war or by the construction of a dam come to mind. Additionally, one probably tends to associate forced migration with countries like Syria, or, in the neighborhood of Pakistan, with Afghanistan, where for decades, people have had to leave their homes because of open violence, threats to life, and constant insecurity. The concept of forced migration is normally not applied to deportations from a country like Germany, where the removal of unwanted persons is supposed to work according to the rule of law. In this chapter, however, it is argued that

deportation can be considered as a form of forced migration. Drawing from real-life examples in this regard, the chapter discusses the politics of deportation from Germany to Afghanistan — an illustration of ‘forced migration’ that is particularly disputed in the former country. The chapter begins with a brief discussion on the concept of forced migration and the difficulty of distinguishing ‘forced’ from ‘voluntary’ migration. In doing so it is argued that nowadays deportation is much less a consequence of legal procedures than of political imperatives. The following section offers an outline of the German politics of collectively deporting Afghans in the context of right-wing anti-refugee mobilization, pointing out that these deportations are based on the government’s assertion that Afghanistan is safe enough for refugees — a claim that is contradicted by all evidence. The sections that follow focus on the deportations from Bavaria as a federal state that deports Afghans with particular determination, and on activism and strategies to avert such deportations. The conclusion sums up and, reiterating the difficulty to distinguish forced from voluntary migration, points out that even ‘voluntary return’ migration is not devoid of relations of force. The article is based on long-term observation of deportation politics in Germany and on the analysis of media and official sources.

## **Forced Migration and Deportation**

While forced migration is by no means a new phenomenon, academic interest in the subject is a more recent affair. *Forced Migration Studies* came into being only in the early 1990s as a supplement to the older discipline of *Refugee Studies*. There is an ongoing debate about whether or not Forced Migration Studies and Refugee Studies – or forced migrants and refugees, for that matter – should be considered separately. The argument for *not* collapsing both categories is largely a legal one as ‘refugee’ is a category of international law, defined by the Geneva Convention, while a ‘forced migrant’ does not fall in the said category. Emphasizing the legal category, James Hathaway (2007) argues against the trend to consider refugees as just one kind of forced migrant. As a legal scholar, he limits the category of ‘refugees’ to those who have been formally recognized as such by a state. He points out that refugees are special, because they are exempt “from the usual right of governments to impose immigration or other penalties for illegal arrival or presence [...] which makes absolutely clear that the refugee protection system is a self-operationalizing, fundamentally autonomous mechanism of human rights protection” (Hathaway, 2007, p. 354). Hathaway does not admit the hard-to-dispute fact that whether or not a person who has had to leave his or her country is recognized as a refugee in some other country is much more a question of political context and interest than of categories of international law. Furthermore, he asserts that forced migrants and refugees “in fact share little other than the shared symptoms of involuntary movement” (Hathaway, 2007, p. 359). However, it can be ascertained that most academics, except perhaps

some legal scholars, would agree that the ‘shared symptoms of involuntary movement’ are nothing to belittle.

In his critical assessment of the history of the disciplines, Chimni (2009) points out that the introduction of Forced Migration Studies followed mainly Western policy concerns i.e. that after the end of the Cold War, the vector of the predominant conceptualization of refugees turned from the east-west to the south-north direction. Policymakers in the ‘West’ (which had become the ‘North’) were interested in schemes of governance that took into account all ‘forced migrants’. It can be argued that legal protection was much less a concern in this context than how to *prevent* people from becoming refugees in the legal sense. Academic and governmental perspectives also turned to internally displaced populations, i.e. people not considered refugees because they did not cross an international border. Again, it is safe to assume that governmental interest focused particularly on preventing ‘IDPs’ from becoming ‘refugees’. Seen from the perspective of the affected people themselves, however, legal and categorical distinctions do not particularly matter so much. What counts for them is the perception and experience of fundamental insecurity and existential threats that trigger their move to places wherein hope for safety.

Accordingly, most social scientists would not limit the concept ‘refugee’ to the narrow legal category enshrined, for instance, in the Geneva Convention. Instead, they would include refugees in the larger category of forced migrants (Castles, 2003). Casting doubt on the analytical value of the legal category ‘refugee’, Castles argues that, for instance, a fall in the global number of refugees in the second half of the 1990s was mainly due to the “non-arrival regime” of refugee-receiving countries set up “to prevent refugees from entering and making asylum claims” (Castles, 2003, p. 14). The refugee category has largely become a plaything of political protagonists. In Europe, the ‘non-arrival regime’ largely collapsed in 2015, but in the subsequent years, governments expended a great deal of effort in raising legal and other barriers to reduce or stop new arrivals. In Germany, for instance, new ‘packages’ of asylum law were introduced that were meant to make the recognition as refugees in the country more difficult, to also discourage other refugees from entering the country. At the same time, legal and administrative provisions were changed to facilitate the removal of rejected asylum seekers.

Force, thus, plays multiple roles in the trajectory of refugees, as it not only triggers the departure from their original places, and is often a constant travel companion, but it also operates to prevent them from reaching their intended destination. Force does not necessarily stop once the destination has been reached. In parts of Germany, for instance, asylum seekers are forced to live in particular accommodation centers, where there are kept in difficult circumstances, largely isolated from the local population. These accommodation centers are also intended to facilitate the deportation of asylum seekers in case of their non-recognition.



Are deportees ‘forced migrants’? The greatest difficulty in answering this question lies in one’s approach to analytically distinguish ‘forced’ (or ‘involuntary’) from ‘voluntary’ migration. People who leave their homes for economic reasons are conventionally categorized as ‘voluntary’ migrants. Accordingly, the figure of the ‘economic refugee’ has gained notoriety in the northern countries of reception. They have come to be considered as ‘bogus asylum seekers’ who were not actually forced to leave their homes but embarked on migration just for their economic gain. However, that force is effective at many levels. This can be explained considering the concepts of violence; for a long time, *structural violence* has been recognized as a significant form of violence in addition to direct or physical violence. Structural violence works, as the term says, through social and institutional structures that result in life situations experienced as insecure and perhaps, unbearable. If a person makes an effort to leave, for instance, a situation of poverty and utter hopelessness, is this a matter of voluntary choice or of force? In such cases, the categorization of persons as ‘economic refugees’ is much more a reflection of the ‘non-arrival regime’ of the receiving countries than of the causes of migration.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to such cases, deportation leaves no scope for voluntariness once deportees have been apprehended. Antje Ellermann calls deportation “the state’s most heavy-handed weapon of migration control” (Ellermann, 2006, p. 294). Deportees are forced to leave the country where they sought refuge, and they are often put in detention centers and, ultimately, forced to board an aircraft. At times also, direct, physical violence is used to achieve the goal of deportation. Deportees are then handcuffed and immobilized when transported to another country, sometimes with fatal consequences.<sup>2</sup> Deportees are obviously forced to (re)migrate; they are (re-)moved. Deportation is “a form of an international movement that is all push and no pull”, writes Matthew Gibney (Gibney, 2013, p. 117), who then goes on to ask why is deportation thus normally *not* categorized as a form of forced migration? According to Gibney, forced migration is not just a *descriptive*, but also an *evaluative* category; ‘a term that is inflected with a particular normative framework’, namely that of the liberal state. In this framework, only people who have been displaced by some force that is considered illegitimate are considered as forced migrants. In contrast, Gibney continues to argue that the “deportation power in liberal States is generally viewed as a power that is correlative with the State’s right to control the entry of non-citizens i.e. immigration. The immigration control powers of States would indeed be very limited if States had the power only to prevent non-citizens from entering and not to expel them once they had arrived” (Gibney, 2013, p. 119).

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<sup>1</sup> On the discussion of force and volition in relation to migration from Afghanistan and Pakistan, see Erdal & Oeppen (2017).

<sup>2</sup> In Germany, the case of Aamir Ageeb is notorious – a refugee from Sudan, who in 1999 died of suffocation because of police action on a regular Lufthansa flight. This case triggered a major anti-deportation campaign.

Accordingly, deportations are seen as working according to legal procedures, in which case the force of deportation is the legitimate force of the law. But even if one accepts the liberal state framework, the legality of deportation is by no means self-evident. In the case of rejected asylum seekers, Gibney points out, there is a very thin line between the illegal *refoulement* of refugees prohibited by international law and legal and legitimate deportation. This line “is determined almost entirely by the amount of procedural diligence a State shows in adjudging claims to protection” (Gibney, 2013, p. 125). In many countries, however, the concrete provisions of asylum law are obviously based much less on legal principles than on political imperatives (Scherr, 2015). In Germany, for instance, asylum laws have always been changed when it was considered politically necessary to reduce the number of refugees in the country. And laws have always been changed in a way that makes asylum more difficult. Asylum law is a clear case of legal opportunism, in that it is subject to other political considerations. In addition, the procedural application of the law is often questionable or outright faulty. This is clearly expressed by statistics; while in 2015 some 78 percent of Afghan asylum seekers were accorded protection (either asylum or subsidiary protection) by the German Federal Agency for Asylum and Refugees (Bundesamt für Asyl und Flüchtlinge, BAMF). This rate dropped to 61 percent in 2016 and 47 percent in 2017 (Pro Asyl, 2019). This rapid decrease is not the result of an improvement in Afghanistan’s security situation, and therefore a reduced need for protection – the situation in Afghanistan did not improve at all, as was evident –, but of increasingly restrictive asylum policies. It is the result of the German government’s ‘deterrence strategy’, intended to prevent further immigration from Afghanistan and to limit the chances of protection for those who have reached Germany (Pro Asyl, 2018). At a meeting in Brussels in November 2015, the German Federal Minister of the Interior said, “At the moment, our concern is the great number of refugees from Afghanistan. We want to send the signal to Afghanistan, Stay there! We will return you directly from Europe to Afghanistan!” (Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2015). The minister clearly was not speaking of law but politics. This politics, however, is turned into law. Such political imperatives have resulted in a highly uneven situation for Afghan refugees in Europe. According to the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), Afghans have “faced the largest variation in recognition rates in Europe, with the rate varying from 6 percent to 98 percent, depending on the country, with no apparent reason for the divergence lying in the nature of the cases” (ECRE, 2019, p. 1).<sup>3</sup> In Germany, 60 percent of the negative asylum decisions by the BAMF that were challenged before a court were corrected, and the claimants were accorded protection by the court (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2018a). In the first six months of 2019, the BAMF gave only 2,667 Afghan

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<sup>3</sup> See also Kooijman (2018) and Parussel (2018), who present slightly different figures but the same overall image.

refugees the right to stay, while in the same period the courts accorded protection to 4,485 Afghans.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, not all court decisions are straightforward.<sup>5</sup> Overall, asylum in Europe often seems to be much more a matter of luck than a matter of law, and this applies to the deportation of rejected asylum seekers, as only a small number of all rejected persons are actually expatriated. Accordingly, at the end of his discussion of whether deportation is a form of forced migration or not, Matthew Gibney affirmed that the procedures often fall below the basic standards of liberal justice (Gibney, 2013, p. 125). He concludes that while his argumentation does not prove that deportations are always an illegitimate practice, one cannot simply assume that it is a legitimate practice and therefore distinct from forced migration (Gibney, 2013, p. 128). Natalie Peutz adds that while experiences of forced migration and of forced removal may be analogous, deportees are perhaps sometimes worse off than other forced migrants: “Refugees and migrants are controlled and ‘protected’ populations; while they lack a political voice, they remain relatively visible within the public sphere. Removed persons are unaided and unprotected — a superfluous reminder that some would rather erase than have to account for” (Peutz, 2006, p. 240). It is not surprising then, that deportations are highly contested — particularly to a country like Afghanistan, where deportees are returned and left to a highly insecure environment and where the legitimacy of deportation is particularly doubtful.

## **German Politics of Deporting Afghans<sup>6</sup>**

While migration from Afghanistan to Germany started with students and carpet traders in the 1950s, the inflow picked up with the arrival of the first refugees after the Soviet invasion of the country. Since then, every new twist of conflict in Afghanistan has taken more Afghan asylum seekers to Germany. The latest peak came in the *summer of migration* in 2015. In 2016, Afghans filed 127,012 applications for asylum in Germany (BAMF, 2017, p. 24), and altogether, around 250,000 were living in Germany by 2017, when the government tried to reduce this figure.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, the protection quota for Afghans decreased dramatically, as established in the previous section, and deportations were considered as an important instrument in this regard.

In December 2002, i.e. one year after NATO troops, including German troops, had started their ISAF engagement in Afghanistan, the conference of the ministers of interior affairs, both of the federal government and the German

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<sup>4</sup> See Tageszeitung (2019). The court figure also includes cases from the previous year.

<sup>5</sup> One significant issue is the juridical construction of “danger” (Tiedemann, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Part of the following is based on Sökefeld, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> There are many more persons of Afghan origin in Germany as already in 2004, 40 per cent of persons of Afghan origin in the country had been naturalised (Baraulina et al., 2007, p. 8f; Haque, 2012).

federal states, decided that deportations to Afghanistan would be suspended because of the (in)security situation in Afghanistan. Only criminal offenders were exempt from this general suspension, and so only sporadic deportations of Afghans with a criminal record took place. From 2013 to 2015, for instance, fewer than ten Afghans were deported per year. From 2015, given the pressure and electoral success of right-wing factions mobilizing against refugees in Germany, the federal and several federal state (Bundesländer) governments were keen to reduce the number of Afghans by increasing deportations and remigration. The government of Bavaria stood at the forefront of this move, together with the federal government. Arguing that parts of Afghanistan were safe enough for deportees — also because of the efforts of German troops to enhance security in the country — the federal government signed a ‘Joint Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in the Field of Migration’ in October 2016 with the government of Afghanistan. This declaration was an agreement for the readmission of refugees, and it referred to the German contributions made to ‘Afghanistan’s development and civilian reconstruction effort including the establishment of a high-quality education system, and water and energy supply’, emphasizing Germany’s ‘significant support for Afghanistan to build up its military and police force.’ The declaration reiterated commitment to the protection of asylum seekers and refugee rights, stipulating that humanitarian conditions and individual threats to possible returnees would be taken into account, and it specified that voluntary return should be preferred to deportations.<sup>8</sup> According to the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, the German government had threatened to suspend its development aid of several hundred million Euros per year if the Afghan government would not sign the agreement (Spiegel Online, 2016b). Similarly, the European Union (EU) threatened to make its aid to Afghanistan ‘migration-sensitive’ by “linking it to the [Afghan] Government’s policy on migration and return and possibly to the implementation of the ‘Joint Way Forward’”, as revealed through a leaked EU ‘non-paper’ on EU-Afghan cooperation (European Commission, 2016; The Guardian, 2016).

Two months later, on December 14, 2016, the first *Sammelabschiebung* (collective deportation) from Germany took place when 34 Afghans were put on a special chartered flight from Frankfurt to Kabul. Originally, the deportation of 50 persons had been planned, but some were spared following emergency appeals to the courts (Spiegel Online, 2016a). On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019, the 30<sup>th</sup> collective deportation took place and by that mark altogether exactly 800 persons had then been deported this way since December 2016.<sup>9</sup>

Following the devastating bombing of the German Embassy in Kabul on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017, which killed at least 150 people and wounded more than 300 (Spiegel Online, 2017a; Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2017a), the critical debate about

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<sup>8</sup> The document was made public by Pro Asyl (n.d.).

<sup>9</sup> See <https://thruttig.wordpress.com/2019/12/04/deutscher-afghanistan-abschiebeflug-nr-30-in-kabul-eingetroffen-wird-laufend-aktualisiert-mit-gesamtubersicht/>

deportations to Afghanistan gained momentum. A *Sammelabschiebung* that had been scheduled for take-off on the very day of the bomb attack was called off, albeit — officially — not because of the increasing insecurity in Afghanistan but because the German embassy was not operative (Tagesspiegel, 2017). The federal government refused to issue a general ban of deportations but limited potential deportees to persons with a criminal record, potential terrorists, and persons who were considered as refusing to clarify their identity (Spiegel Online, 2017b).

Deportations of such persons continued, and limited restrictions were lifted after the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a new security assessment of Afghanistan in summer 2018. On 6<sup>th</sup> June that year, Chancellor Angela Merkel declared in the Parliament that Afghanistan, or at least Kabul, was safe enough for the deportees (Spiegel Online, 2018a) even though the country, and especially its capital, continued to be hit by deadly bomb attacks. The WHO sees Afghanistan as “one of the most dangerous and crisis-ridden countries in the world” (WHO, 2017), while the Global Peace Index 2018 ranks Afghanistan 162<sup>nd</sup> out of 163 countries (Vision of Humanity, 2018). United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) concluded that “given the current security, human rights and humanitarian situation in Kabul, an International Flight Alternative (IFA) or an International Relocation Alternative (IRA) is generally not available in the city” (UNHCR, 2018, p. 114), thus contradicting the statements of the German government and the decisions made by German courts contending the Afghan capital to be safe enough for the deportees. In her very elaborate expert report on the security situation of deportees in Afghanistan, the German anthropologist Friederike Stahlmann points out that they are particularly vulnerable because they mostly lack the dense family networks that are a prerequisite for both securing a livelihood and general protection in the country (Stahlmann, 2018, p. 152; Stahlmann, 2017). Deportees from Germany are in particular danger because they are targeted *as* deportees – as persons that have been ‘contaminated’ by the West. The German government’s frequent proclamations that mostly criminal offenders etc. are deported adds to this notion because returnees are suspiciously perceived as criminals in Afghanistan, although these proclamations are mostly false and the majority of deportees has no criminal record at all. For instance, 50 out of the 69 persons that were deported on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, and who gained certain notoriety because the Federal Minister of the Interior boasted in a press conference that 69 persons were deported on his 69<sup>th</sup> birthday, had not committed any criminal offense (Tagesschau.de, 2018). Most returnees live under constant fear, even if they are not personally threatened, and many hide somewhere and do not dare to go out (Oeppen & Majidi, 2015, p. 3). According to long-term research by Schuster and Majidi (2013), these conditions force returnees and deportees to leave Afghanistan again — and as soon as possible. In a recent study, Stahlmann determined that 90 percent of all deportees suffer violence within two months of their return to Afghanistan, with

more than half of them being specifically targeted as a result of their deportee/returnee status (Stahlmann, 2019, p. 278).

Together with the federal government, the Bavarian state government particularly puts a great deal of effort into effecting deportations to Afghanistan. In the German political and legal set-up, the federal states are responsible for the implementation of deportations. The great majority of deportees are deported from Bavaria, while the other federal states are much more restrained in this regard. In fact, some states have even suspended the practice. In 2018, around 60 percent of those deported from Germany to Afghanistan came from Bavaria (Tageszeitung, 2019)

The government employs a twofold strategy to legitimize deportations. First, deserving and undeserving refugees are distinguished, assuming that a clear distinction between the two categories is possible. Those who are considered undeserving, and are therefore not accorded a right to stay in Germany, have to leave the country — if necessary, by being deported. Second, it is asserted that Afghanistan is safe for deportees. According to this reasoning, the unrelenting enforcement of returns, deportations included, is the basis for the acceptance of the law of asylum in Germany. In order to mark undeserving asylum seekers, a new vocabulary has been coined that largely replaces the earlier ‘bogus asylum seekers’ and ‘economic refugees’. Now, the *Straftäter* (criminals), *Gefährder* (potential terrorists) and *hartnäckige Identitätsverweigerer* (persons who persistently refuse to clarify their identity by withholding documents, or who are unsuccessful in procuring documents) exemplify those who do not deserve protection, who pose a danger to the German society and who therefore have to be deported — even if they may suffer harm in the country to which they are returned. According to the current logic of integration, such people have refused to integrate by violating the rules of *Zusammenleben* (living together) in Germany.

It is easy to challenge the two arguments. The distinction between deserving and undeserving persons is quite malleable, but it is obvious that many of the deportees are actually deserving in terms of the German discourse of integration, in that they have jobs or are undergoing professional training (if they have received the permit to do so), they have learned the German language and many of them have family in the country. The government’s emphasis that non-integrated, undeserving refugees have to leave does not allow the conclusion that those who are integrated are allowed to stay. On the contrary, quite often deportees are arrested at schools or workplaces, perhaps also because it is much easier to apprehend ‘well-integrated’ persons, who follow their daily routine, than absconders. The assertion that Afghanistan is safe is problematic that it should not merit further debate — even a cursory glance at the news from Afghanistan should be sufficient to prove it wrong. The fact that

Afghanistan, Kabul included, is unsafe, particularly for deportees, has been convincingly shown by Friederike Stahlmann (2019).<sup>10</sup>

In order to fully comprehend the issue of forced migrations, it is of vital significance to understand the Bavarian focus on deportations in the context of Bavarian (and German) interior politics. For decades now, asylum politics has been a very hot topic in Germany, and right-wing mobilization has been a standard result of increasing numbers of refugees and immigrants.<sup>11</sup> The early 1990s, when large numbers of refugees from the Balkan wars traveled to Germany, were notorious for racist attacks on immigrants, some of them with deadly results, as well as for electoral gains in favor of extreme right and racist parties. However, the refugees arriving in summer 2015 were positively welcomed by a considerable section of German society (Sökefeld, 2017). All over the country, many initiatives were set up to support these refugees, and many Germans became engaged in such commitments to solidarity. Among them were many who had never been in touch with refugees before, and support for refugees became a booming sector of civil engagement in the country. Yet, at the same time, right-wing groups started to mobilize against refugees, referring to what they considered the ‘foreign infiltration’ and particularly the ‘Islamization’ of the country by the refugees. When it became apparent that a newly established right-wing party, the ‘Alternative for Germany’ (Alternative für Deutschland; AfD), was able to capitalize on this movement, the federal government shifted from a position of welcoming the refugees to a position of much more control and restriction, in particular by initiating packages of more restrictive laws of asylum. The Bavarian party Christian Social Union (CSU), which for decades has held the government of Bavaria and was also a part of the coalition heading the federal government, took a particular lead in this initiative. The CSU is a conservative party with a Christian background, and its leaders feared that pro-refugee policies would alienate many of their conservative voters, who then might shift their support to the AfD. Especially before the Bavarian elections of October 2018, the CSU took significant steps to boost its hardliner profile in asylum policies, by strictly enforcing deportations and thus intending to prevent the projected swing of voters to the AfD.

Political scientist Antje Ellermann pointed out that because deportations are highly controversial in Western countries, frequently triggering protests and the

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<sup>10</sup> The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs urgently warns against travel to Afghanistan, giving the following details: “Whomever travels [to Afghanistan] in spite of the travel warning has to be aware of the danger of violence committed by terrorists or criminals, kidnapping included. Also, journeys organised by professional travel agencies diminish the danger of becoming a victim of violence or kidnapping” (translated by M.S.), retrieved from: [https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/afghanistan-node/afghanistansicherheit/204692#content\\_1](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/afghanistan-node/afghanistansicherheit/204692#content_1). Of course, this advice is meant for German citizens, not for deportees.

<sup>11</sup> For an analysis of the dynamics of right-extreme mobilisation against refugees; see Rucht (2018).

solidarity of citizens with deportees, governments take efforts to execute them in a hidden and almost invisible way (Ellermann, 2009). In Germany, a public campaign against deportations started following the incident in 1999 when a deportee to Sudan died due to mistreatment by security personnel on a regular Lufthansa flight. Subsequently, more and more special charter carriers were engaged for deportations, in order to evade the public gaze. For similar reasons, deportees are mostly arrested at their dwellings in the early hours of the morning. Despite this, the great wave of volunteer support for refugees that arose from summer 2015 also created new visibility, as now many more citizens than ever before have close relations with refugees and, of course learn about the deportation of their mentees.

The CSU and like-minded politicians did not take into account that their repressive asylum policies would estrange voters on the other side of their vote bank. The government is now facing a dilemma in terms of the (in)visibility of deportations. This is so as on the one hand, they are executed stealthily, to preempt protests from refugee supporters, but on the other hand, they have to be made public, to placate potential right-wing voters. Many of the refugee support initiatives are based on Christian circles and church communities that find these policies increasingly unbearable. Many of the volunteers became desperate when the young Afghans they had supported for years, helping them to learn German and to overcome bureaucratic hurdles for permits for professional training, for instance, were suddenly apprehended and deported, producing shockwaves of fear among all Afghan refugees. The government increasingly antagonized these volunteer supporters. Before the elections, several party members publicly renounced their membership in the CSU in protest, with some moving to the liberal Green Party. In the elections, the CSU lost more than 10 percent of the vote, compared to the previous election, resulting in the party's loss of an absolute majority in the Bavarian parliament, while the Green Party gained almost 9 percent (Spiegel Online, 2018b). The Green Party won around 170,000 votes from erstwhile CSU voters (Welt Online, 2018), a development that a few years earlier would have been completely unimaginable. Commentators concluded that the CSU had indeed lost many of its more liberal and Christian supporters due to its uncompromising politics of asylum (Süddeutsche Zeitung Online, 2018b).

## **Protesting and Resisting Deportations**

On 31 May 2017, police entered a vocational college in Nuremberg, in order to arrest Asif N, a 20-year-old Afghan, for deportation. While Asif did not resist and entered the police car to be driven away, a group of his fellow students who realized what was going on sat down in front of the car, to prevent its departure. More and more students joined, and over the following hours, more than 300 supporters joined the protest. Violent clashes with the police followed, with pepper spray and batons employed along with the detention of some of the protestors. After a few hours, Asif was finally taken away, while the protests



continued. Protestors marched to Nuremberg Foreigners Registration Office. Civil society organizations and the political opposition vehemently criticized the police for removing a person from a classroom, and a trade union condemned the ‘inhuman’ approach of the Bavarian government (Süddeutsche Zeitung Online, 2017b; Spiegel Online, 2017c). Authorities had planned to put Asif on the deportation flight that was later called off due to the bombing of the German embassy in Kabul. The Foreigners’ Registration Office wanted to detain him, pending later deportation, but he was released in line with a court decision the following day (Süddeutsche Zeitung Online, 2017c).

This was probably the most high-profile protest against the deportation of an Afghan from Bavaria, but it was by no means the only attempt to prevent removal. In recent years, a multifaceted set of initiatives and activists engaged against deportations to Afghanistan has developed in Bavaria. According to studies on voluntary commitments, such engagement for refugees has multiplied and diversified since 2015. Ulrike Haman and Serhat Karakayalı (2016) point out that the ‘summer of migration’ dramatically changed the composition of volunteers in Germany; on average, volunteers engaging with refugees have become older, and more and more people in rural areas and smaller towns are helping, while before such commitments had been concentrated in bigger cities. The authors interpret this as the normalization of engaging with refugees. While before 2015, the slogan ‘Refugees Welcome’ and campaigns against deportation were largely limited to leftist activists and some more or less spontaneous political initiatives organized by refugees themselves (Danielzik & Bendix, 2017), it now became part of a mainstream ‘welcome culture’. Most of the new volunteers who started to engage with refugees in 2015 had more of a humanitarian than an explicitly political agenda. Their main aim was to assist the local ‘integration’ of the newly arrived migrants in their villages, towns, and cities, but they sought to prevent friction and local conflicts. Their commitments did not challenge the political framework of the German asylum and immigration system, in contrast, for instance, to the activists of anti-racism networks like ‘Kein Mensch ist illegal’ (no human being is illegal) or ‘No Border’, who demand the abolition of border controls and consider the freedom of movement a universal human right.

Yet, while both federal and Bavarian state governments publicly call for the integration of refugees, emphasizing the need for them to learn the German language and to undergo training in order to prepare them for the labor market, the administration in Bavaria is very restrictive in giving work and training permits to refugees whose applications for asylum have been rejected. Rejected asylum seekers are instead expected – or, forced — to leave the country. For many volunteers, however, the legal distinction between a refugee and a rejected asylum seeker does not make much sense, since they know their mentees as persons who need support, who want to stay and who are eager to ‘integrate’. Many employers also wish to employ rejected asylum seekers, because in many economic sectors the workforce has become very sparse.

The contradiction between the government's integration rhetoric and the actual practice of deportation triggers protest and action in support of deportees. These are cases of person-centered protests (Probst & Bader, 2018) and do not imply any fundamental challenge to the logic of the German asylum system, as they largely take for granted the distinction of deserving and non-deserving refugees. However, such protests signal serious estrangement from a government that is perceived as not honoring its own principles — or rather, as using such principles as a smokescreen to hide a dirty practice of almost indiscriminate deportation. By protesting and appealing on behalf of Afghans who are arrested at their schools or who are taken out of their professional training placements and workplaces, volunteers affirm the paradigm of deservingness and its concomitant logic of integration. This logic is ratified by the volunteers' emphasis that a particular Afghan on the verge of being deported is, in fact, 'well-integrated' and therefore deserves to stay.

Besides volunteers, employers also assert the usefulness of their Afghan employees if they are threatened by deportation. The Bavarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce sometimes supports such Afghan employees (or rather their employers), but this happens through political backchannels and is not made public. Activist organizations such as the Bavarian Refugee Council use similar channels with individual politicians to save specific Afghans from deportation. After the Bavarian elections of 2018, having lost its majority in the state parliament, the CSU had to form a coalition government with the regional party Freie Wähler ('Free Voters'). In their election manifesto, Freie Wähler had vowed to review the strict deportation program of the Bavarian government, and so holding them to their word, activists now regularly approach them in the case of 'integrated' deportees; "If by such means, we get one or two Afghans off each deportation flight, we have to consider this a success", reported a member of the Bavarian Refugee Council (Personal Communication, Stephan Dünnwald).

In addition to emphasizing an Afghan's deservingness and 'integration', pointing to the heightened vulnerability of particular persons is the most promising strategy to avert deportation by political means. In early November 2019, for instance, Hossein A., a mentally handicapped and ill person who had arrived in Germany in 2010, was taken into custody for deportation. Hossein had a brother and an uncle in Munich, but no family in Kabul. His mother lived in Iran. A petition to the Hardship Commission of the Bavarian Parliament was lodged on his behalf, but it was rejected by a majority vote of CSU and Freie Wähler Members of Parliament on the day of his imminent deportation. Only immediately before the deportation flight's departure, and after many protest appeals, did the Bavarian Minister of Interior Affairs (CSU, too) cancel Hossein A's immediate deportation (Bayerischer Flüchtlingsrat, 2019).

## Conclusion

Forced migration is normally conceptualized as the movement of people unsettled by some violent conflict to a place where they seek refuge. An important question to answer is that ‘Can a reverse forced migration; from the place where people have sought refuge back to the place from which they have fled, also be perceived? Is deportation a kind of forced migration too? It has been argued in this article that deportation is today much less a result of legal procedure, conforming with the international law of refugee protection, than of political imperatives intended for the fulfillment of various pursuits such as to placate right-wing anti-refugee demands. Deportation is rarely voluntary, and in the case of deportations to Afghanistan, the force in deportation is also not mitigated by heightened diligence in the legal-political procedures that result in deportation. Furthermore, it is argued that the aforementioned cannot just simply be regarded as a juridical question. While deportations may be legally established, deportees’ supporters who protest and write petitions and appeals consider them as illegitimate.

That deportation is a form of involuntary removal is beyond question, and yet there are also programs for the state-assisted ‘voluntary return’ of failed asylum seekers to their countries of citizenship. The ‘voluntariness’ of such return is highly disputable too. For most returnees, it is simply the last opportunity to escape the compulsion of deportation and to evade the specific hardships that come with this particular course of action (Dünnwald, 2013; Feneberg, 2019). Afghans do not use this opportunity frequently; in 2018, only 403 Afghans moved from Germany to Afghanistan under this program,<sup>12</sup> while in early 2019 18,568 of them were forcibly obligated to leave the country (‘vollziehbar ausreisepflichtig’)<sup>13</sup>. Thus, most Afghans without legal status in Germany are not deported, but this does not mean that they are — or feel — safe. On the contrary, their deportability (De Genova, 2002) looms over them, creating the utmost uncertainty and insecurity.

Some feel unable to withstand this uncertainty. In summer 2019, Asif N., the young Afghan whose deportation was prevented by his fellow students in May 2017, ‘returned’ to Afghanistan (Nordbayern, 2019a). In an interview, he conveyed that he had no longer been able to withstand waiting. He was neither allowed to work nor to undergo training since his initial arrest, and his second asylum application had been rejected and that he would have to wait months or years again for the appeal. He gave up. When asked why he left Germany, he said, “[In Afghanistan] I can do what I want, without permits. I do not have to go to the authorities, time and again. I am simply there. In Afghanistan, one dies once, you know — in Germany, you die every day because of stress. Many say there is peace in Germany, in Afghanistan there is war. But Germany is like a cemetery for me; you simply lie there but you cannot do anything, you cannot

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<sup>12</sup> In the first six months of 2019, numbers went down to 138 persons (Deutscher Bundestag, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> MIGAZIN, 2019.

move.” When asked if he planned to return voluntarily? He said, “No”, emphasizing, “I do not go there voluntarily. Here I am helpless and I cannot pass my life here without anything. They force me. For me, this is a new flight. I go back to a country where I fled when I was 13 years old. Return means that you go to your city, to your family and friends. But I cannot go to my family. I have never been to Kabul. This is not a voluntary return; it is a new escape route. I flee from the crap system here” (Nordbayern, 2019b, translation MS).

Asif could have stayed in Germany for the time being, waiting for his eventual deportation, but instead, balancing potential danger in Kabul and his actual situation in Germany, he preferred to leave, as he could no longer bear the uncertainty and the paralyzing asylum system. For sure, although he was not physically forced to leave by being put on a plane in handcuffs, his departure was not voluntary. He felt forced. In his case, the German asylum-system proved effective in creating a situation that drove him out of the country before the actual force of deportation had to be used.

### *Acknowledgment*

I am very grateful to the Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan (HSF) and the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS) at NUST for inviting me to the conference where an earlier version of this article was presented. While the findings presented here are not a direct result of our research project Return to Pakistan: The political economy of emotions in return migration, the article would not have been written without this project and I am very thankful for the German Research Council’s very generous funding of the project. In addition, I am indebted to the very valuable comments of the anonymous reviewer and of Usman Mahar.

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## **The Management of Refugee Repatriation: How Voluntary are ‘Voluntary’ Returns from Germany?**

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**Usman Mahar**

Conflict-induced migration led Germany to welcome over a million people following the “long summer of migration” in 2015. As a consequence, getting asylum in Germany is becoming ever more difficult. Amongst other so-called undeserving economic refugees, the Afghan and Pakistanis are suffering from such a shift in the German asylum regime that aims to restrict migration. Increasingly strict asylum policies frame the right to stay according to an ever-narrowing understanding of forced migration in Germany. While the right to the refuge is increasingly being defined by narrow ideas of deservingness and humanitarianism to seek out deserving political refugees, two forms of removal are simultaneously employed to deter the people considered undeserving economic refugees. These two forms of removal are termed as ‘deportations’ and ‘voluntary repatriations’. Focusing on the latter form of removal, this chapter discusses the voluntariness and sustainability of return to Pakistan by assessing it through three scales; the role of coercion, information, and assistance in “voluntary” return. It starts by questioning contemporary ideas of deservingness when it comes to the right to be mobile, and rather provocatively tries to blur the alleged humanitarian division between two categories of mobile bodies: the so-called deserving political refugee and the underserving economic refugee/migrant. Respectively, the two are differentiated as the victim of various forms of persecution and the seeker of better economic conditions. Then, using ethnographic material and three particular case studies, the chapter takes a critical look at the practices, facilitators, and subjects of “voluntary” assisted returns of rejected asylum seekers in Germany. Questioning this very voluntariness via the three scales, it asks if “voluntary” returns can be sustainable as a mode of repatriation.

### **Introduction**

Two legalized forms of expulsion are at the disposal of any government that wants to send back displaced populations, irregular migrants or other illegalized “undesirables” (Agier, 2011) to “safe countries.” Namely, deportations and

“voluntary” repatriations. The discourse on deportations in Germany is fraught with controversy for various contemporary but also specific historical reasons — the German word for deportation ‘*Abschiebung*’ comes with particular historical baggage (Estrin, 2016; Sökefeld, 2019b; Stokes, 2019). Keeping that in mind, as well as the fact that there is ample work addressing the issue of deportations in Germany and elsewhere (see De Genova & Peutz 2010; De Genova 2016; Peutz 2006; Sökefeld, 2019b), this chapter will not address this particular form of removal. Instead, the body of text that follows will be focusing on the “voluntary” returns of rejected asylum seekers.

More and more people are starting to show up at the doorsteps of *Fortress Europe*<sup>14</sup> for various reasons, and according to some estimates, the number of successful entrants will reach 200 million<sup>15</sup> by 2050 (Smith, 2019). For various sociopolitical reasons, some of them defensible but most of them based on unfounded claims<sup>16</sup>, the EU (in general), and Germany (in particular) are taking various steps. These steps include an array of arsenal to guard *Fortress Europe*, from the securitization of its physical borders to questionable deterrence techniques employed in the countries of origin and transit (Meany, 2019). Concurrently, based on particular ideas of “deservingness” stricter measures are being taken to control, manage and if necessary then remove<sup>17</sup> those who have somehow made it into the fortress (Sökefeld, 2019b, a). In the policy quarters of Europe and beyond, it is being argued that Europe needs protection against exploitation at the hands of “bogus” asylum seekers and *economic* refugees. A clear difference, it is asserted, needs to be drawn between a *genuine* refugee (henceforth *political* refugee) and a *chancer* migrant (henceforth *economic* refugee) so that the limited capacity to dish out compassion can be effectively employed. Such a vision and form of humanitarianism seems to fuel our collective apathy, even antipathy towards “bogus” asylum seekers, irregular migrants and undocumented citizens today — epitomized in the old German term- *Wirtschaftsflüchtling* ‘economic refugee’ (Stokes, 2019).

An ever narrowing understanding of a victimized (deserving) *political* refugee and an ever-expanding idea of an exploitative (undeserving) *economic* refugee are simultaneously defining the difference and vision mentioned above. Somewhat provocatively, however, I would like to blur the distinction between the *political* and the *economic refugee* by taking a different approach. Instead of seeing the two through the humanitarian lens, the treatment of the two

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<sup>14</sup> The European Union is a major site for both internal migration and immigration from other parts of the world. The term ‘fortress Europe’ is sometimes used to refer to the way Europe controls its borders and detains immigrants, as well as to its negative attitudes towards immigration (Hagen-Zanker & Mallett, 2015).

<sup>15</sup> I would like to point out that Smith’s (2019) figures and alarmist arguments have been challenged by Anderson (2019).

<sup>16</sup> The rhetoric of the alt-right and ultranationalist parties who claim foreigners are responsible for the exploitation of state support and stealing of the jobs amongst other unfounded claims.

<sup>17</sup> As mentioned above, through deportation or various forms of “voluntary” remigration/return; sometimes also known as assisted voluntary return/repatriation or ‘self-deportation’.

categories of people needs to be analyzed through the lens of social responsibility. It should be quickly pointed out that in no way whatsoever does this argument aim to reduce the suffering of a person — *a refugee* — who flees a war, political and religious persecution, or any acute form of violence (Galtung & Fisher, 2013). Nevertheless, some profound questions need to be reflected upon. Should ideas of deservingness<sup>18</sup> be predicated on forms of violence and suffering? Should it be evaluated according to the generalized situation of the country of origin? Where does our collective responsibility start and end? Should we, for example, differentiate between someone who flees from war or acute violence fearing for his life and someone who fears for her life due to economic or structural violence (Farmer, 2006; Galtung & Fisher, 2013) as far as the right to asylum is concerned? While it is reasonably easy to furnish a *yes* to such a question based upon utilitarian<sup>19</sup> ideas of pain and suffering, it is perhaps easier to argue for a *no* using the Kantian notion of the categorical imperative (Driver, 2014; Rohlf, 2018).

In reality, however, such questions rarely make it outside the classrooms of moral philosophy, and political realism seems to be in control when it comes to the topic of migration or refugees. Sökefeld (2019b) for example, shows us how the “politics of deportation” in Germany point out the thinly veiled attempt at curtailing extreme right-wing support. Parties like *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) have gained considerable electoral ground by positioning themselves in radical opposition to the CDU’s “open door policy” towards refugees and “economic migrants”. Epitomized by the ‘*willkommenskultur*’<sup>20</sup> attitude and ‘*Kein mensch ist illegal*’<sup>21</sup> movement the German centrist parties feel that their hospitality towards the alien-other may be alienating people at home. The solution seems to lie in the strict differentiation between the economic migrant and the refugee based on ideas of deservingness and humanitarianism. Here it is worth mentioning that this is a trend that is not unique to the politics of mobility and migration in Germany but resonates with the refugee politics of western Europe since the so-called refugee “crisis”. Germany is, however, unique in the sense that it has been in a “permanent state of refugee crisis” as noted by the historian Lauren Stokes. In a recent article Stokes (2019) traces the roots of the current politics of deportations in Germany as far back as the 1950s and 60s. He recounts how in 1965 four hundred people were deported from the Zirndorf camp near Nuremberg on account of being “economic refugees”. In the preceding years, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) had

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<sup>18</sup> As dictated by current regimes of (im)mobility and humanitarian vision.

<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill would certainly back such a stance.

<sup>20</sup> *Willkommenskultu* is a German term which means “welcoming culture”, it expresses the wish that all foreigners and migrant people encountered by these institutions may be accepted and particularly not be exposed to discrimination.

<sup>21</sup> *Kein mensch ist illegal* is an international network of local immigrant and refugee rights advocacy groups. It began as a conference on June 28, 1997, and later developed into a national campaign. Additionally, more than thirty anti-racist groups present at the conference issued an appeal for greater attention to migrant workers' rights, such as healthcare, education, and housing for migrant workers.

decided to allow, even encourage people from the socialist East to apply for asylum in order to access the labour market in Germany. However, when people were able to acquire a work permit to move out of refugee camps with relative ease, several experts started to raise questions about the asylum procedure. Stokes (2019) quotes the Bavarian Interior Ministry's "foreigner expert" Werner Kanein who at the time complained that the refugee camp had become "a central employment agency for citizens of certain states, and the filing of an application for asylum is only a necessary formal requirement" (p. 33). While the Bavarian Interior Ministry was worried that refugee camps had become "labour recruitment agencies" the neighbors of the Zirndorf camp saw its inhabitants not as a pool of labor but as unwanted criminals in their town. Stokes further noted that the term "economic refugee" appears to have developed around this time. With such competing political interests and demands from the refugee, the development of a new category was inevitable.

### **Deservingness and Deportability: Cause and Effect**

Today, the ideal migrant should be someone who offers excellent human capital to the host nation. Shukla (2016) claims that in practice the demand to be a "good migrant" is even more extreme — which only an outstanding athlete, a scientific savant or an artistic prodigy can fulfill. In such times, a refugee not only gets the short end of the stick but seems to be stuck in a paradox. On the one hand, he or she should be able to scarcely function to even claim asylum (see Ticktin, 2011). On the other hand, he or she should be ready and eager to integrate and not become a burden on the state's welfare system. If a person tries to act out of self-interest or employ his or her human capital, chances are he/she will be marked as an *economic* refugee; someone who "deceitfully tries to blur the distinction between the political and the economic status out of self-interest" (Meany, 2019). However, if a person is not able to learn the local language or not able to get off of social welfare, then he or she is not trying hard enough to integrate. Apart from drawing a strict differentiation between the *deserving* refugee<sup>22</sup> and the *undeserving* "economic" migrant/refugee<sup>23</sup> the state simultaneously places one's efforts to integrate as a caveat (for a detailed discussion on deserving/undeserving see Sökefeld, 2019b).

When faced with such a predicament an asylum seeker is bound to think and act out of insecurity. Here, drawing upon Nicholas De Genova's (2002, p. 439) idea of 'deportability' it is argued that the possibility of deportation is not the only source of insecurity and anxiety, so is one's ubiquitous chance of being considered an undeserving<sup>24</sup> refugee. This insecurity as such is not only a legal

<sup>22</sup> Someone who is worthy of humanitarian aid and refuge.

<sup>23</sup> Someone who is seen as exploiting and undermining those very humanitarian values.

<sup>24</sup> For Pakistanis in Germany being considered a deserving refugee is largely based on hope. Hopes of a better future that rest on the shoulders of the "humanitarian" German state. Most of my interlocutor's talked about the "*insaniyat*" 'humanity' or 'human kindness' in Germany. They presented me with anecdotal examples, comparing Germany to Pakistan where there is no humanity "*koi insaniat nahi*" (see section 'Three Returnees').

worry but something that continually affects a refugee's subjectivity. Whereby an existential fear dictates their actions, choices, and decisions in the host country. As such, deportability in the broadest sense of the word is used here to ask the following question. Why is the German state resorting to a strict division between the *political* and the *economic refugee*, bringing an ever-increasing number of people into the fold of deportability?

In his essay *Nations Rebound*, Sökefeld (2019b) points out that the very process of limiting the movement of particular foreign bodies and not others is a way to re-territorialize and rebind nations, ironically, to counter the re-emergence of rightwing nationalism. Seemingly, challenges by rightwing nationalists can be nipped in the bud by this logical differentiation between the *political* and the *economic refugee*<sup>25</sup>. However, Sökefeld (2019b) asserts that “a neat analytical distinction between ‘refugees’ and ‘migrants’ is as impossible as is the distinction between deportation and [‘voluntary’] remigration” (p. 94). If deportation and “voluntary” return cannot be neatly separated into two distinct categories, it would make sense to question the voluntariness of “voluntary” returns. While political and social activists regularly challenge deportations on various grounds<sup>26</sup>, “voluntary” return seems to be accepted on face value and goes mostly unchallenged. As such, this chapter tries to problematise the issue of *Assisted Voluntary Return* (henceforth AVR) programs. Moreover, it challenges some of the uncritically accepted tenants of AVR.

## **AVR Over Deportation?**

Apart from being considered, more ethical as compared to deportations and politically less divisive, there is an important economic aspect for the propagation of AVR programs (Schuler & Zacharakis, 2016). Deportation infrastructure and processes have cost Germany in the millions over the last few years (Bundestagdrucksache, 2019; Macgregor, 2019; Schuler & Zacharakis, 2016; Vettori, 2019). Single deportation can end up costing tens of thousands of Euros in transportation alone. On the 31st of July 2018, for example, a chartered flight carrying only eight Pakistani deportees and fifty security personnel cost Germany €462,685 (Bundestagdrucksache, 2019, 48). At the cost of around €60,000 per deportee, this particular flight was relatively expensive, but even the cheapest chartered flight to Pakistan cost the German state around €10,000 per deportee in 2018 (Ibid, p. 48-50). In addition to the transportation costs, one must consider the fee of hiring the security personnel; the bureaucratic expenses; the policing, apprehension, and detention before deportation, not to mention the cost of all the unsuccessful arrests. Deportees

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<sup>25</sup> Sökefeld (2019b) uses the term migrant (while I use the term economic refugee).

<sup>26</sup> It is worth mentioning here that more and more deportations are only challenged based on ideas of “deservingness” and integration efforts of the refugee rather than a principled stance of one’s right to refuge or better yet to be mobile (Gerver, 2018; Peutz, 2006; Sökefeld, 2019b).

are flown back on chartered flights due to practical and political reasons<sup>27</sup>. Since pilots and crew on such chartered flights refuse to fly without security, each deportee<sup>28</sup> is accompanied by a minimum of three security personnel, adding considerable transportation costs. In comparison, an AVR compensation<sup>29</sup> — or reintegration support/payment as it is called — ranges from a few hundred Euros to a couple of thousand, and an economy class airfare on a commercial airline.

There is no doubt that “voluntary” returns are cheaper and politically less divisive as compared to deportations. However, whether they are voluntary is a lot less clear. We know that the ethics of deportation are routinely (and rightly) questioned based on ideas of human agency and freedom to move. Sökefeld (2019a) for example, brings into question ideas of choice, will, and agency when he questions whether a “deportation is a form of forced migration?” Should we not hold all forms of return migration — forced or voluntary — accountable to the same standards? On its surface, the term *voluntary* takes care of such doubts in the case of “voluntary” returns. However, reflecting on the assumed voluntariness is not only essential to a critical understanding of “voluntary” returns but also necessary for this form of repatriation to function sustainably.

## **The Research Material and Methods**

Before proceeding further to what AVR entails — as far as the subjects of these returns are concerned — it would make sense to address some methodological concerns. In the absence of an anthropological ‘field site’ in the traditional sense of the word, multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork was carried out around Munich, Germany, and various parts of Punjab, Pakistan. Returnees at different (pre- and post-repatriation) stages of the repatriation process were sought after as interlocutors. Other important research partners included individuals and organizations that manage and administer AVR programs, such as return counselors in Germany and reintegration partners in Pakistan.

A mixed-method ethnographic approach was adopted. In addition to a detailed recording of behaviors, witnessing of events, and sharing of experiences through participant observation, the ongoing research has already recorded several hours of qualitative interviews with returnees and return counselors over six months. The gathered research material is further augmented by twenty-five semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. This included but was not limited to: (1) Listening to the experiences, hopes, and aspirations of Pakistani asylum seekers in different settings (in refugee camps as well as AVR counseling centers); (2) listening to return counselors and

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<sup>27</sup> Apart from the visibility of resistance on the part of the deportee (which had led many passengers to boycott certain airlines), a furtive flight avoids staged protests and activist interruptions.

<sup>28</sup> The deportee is already in handcuffs that are sometime chained to his/her ankles.

<sup>29</sup> Below I have given some concrete figures.

discussing AVR with them at public forums; (3) spending several days with returnees and their families at their homes in Pakistan talking about their return and reintegration. Using this material and three case studies in particular this chapter tries to contextualize AVR for the readers.

## Three Returnees

### *Ali R.*

After spending four years in Germany Ali R. recently arrived back in Pakistan at the age of 55. He was assisted by a voluntary return counseling center in Munich. Ali received a letter of deportation once his application for asylum and the subsequent appeal was rejected. Around the same time, Ali had a bicycle accident and had to go through a surgery. Owing to his medical condition Ali was allowed to stay in Germany for another year. Once he had healed and saw no prospect of getting legalized, he approached *Coming Home*, a return counseling center in Munich. At *Coming Home*, he was promised around €1500 with in-kind assistance of €2000<sup>30</sup> and a flight ticket to Pakistan. Ali accepted and returned to Pakistan within a month. He is more or less content with how things turned out. In his hometown of Mandi Bahauddin Ali shared with me in great detail why he would never be able to forget the German *mehman nawazi* (hospitality) and *insaniyat* (humanity). Expanding on this, he explained how he was given a place to stay and a stipend by the Germans. Talking about his accident, he said that even though his asylum was rejected, they made sure he was healthy and fit to return — *wadia log ne* (they [Germans] are amazing people) he added. Whereas in Pakistan he had worked for decades, but he could not even ensure a decent living for his family. He explained how he was able to build a modest house, get his daughter married, and is now busy setting up a small corner shop — all with his European savings plus the return assistance.

### *Jamshed B.*

Jamshed B. was “advised” by his district administrative office (*Landsratamt*) handler to visit the same return counseling center in Munich. Sharing in detail how little agency he had in this process, Jamshed explained how it was more an ultimatum than advice. As such, the *instruction* to visit the return counseling center was the only option available to him upon the rejection of his asylum application and his multiple appeals. If he did not want to be deported or take the risk of becoming an absconder by leaving for another country, he better return through AVR, he was “advised”. Jamshed was told if he tried to leave for Spain (his second choice after Germany) he would be apprehended and returned to Germany where he would face prison as punishment and then deportation. According to Jamshed, only a *sach bolne wala* (someone who

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<sup>30</sup> Plus another €1000 after 8 months of his return.



speaks the truth) and *kanoon ki pasdari kerne wala* (someone who abides by the law) would return through AVR. The rest he said, find various ways to cheat the system. He repeatedly emphasized that he would have never returned if he was presented with another choice. However, with deportation looming over his head, he had no other option. He confided in me that he will be leaving for Dubai soon because it was not safe for him in his village as an ex-leader of a Shia youth-group. He said he would have moved to another part of Pakistan, a bigger city perhaps, only if he had the recourses to move his family. He, along with his wife and children currently lives at his in-laws which is considered to be a source of shame in Pakistani society. Jamshed's failed migration to Germany and the current effort to move to Dubai is a way to find a solution to get rid of this shame and as well as the sectarian troubles. Jamshed, unlike Ali, regrets coming back.

Jamshed was very clear that he did not trust the Afghan translator but had no choice but to go through the process. Moreover, neither did he see the return counselors as people who cared about his *razamandi* (consent)<sup>31</sup> and *marzi* (accord). Speaking about AVR subjects in general Jamshed said: "Wouldn't they have tried to help us stay in Germany if they cared about our consent [...] they only wanted us to leave and we had little choice in that [...] if there would have been consent, I would not have returned [...]"

### **Hassam A.**

One of my other interlocutors took back his asylum appeal before it was processed to return through the same program. Hassam A., like Jamshed, regrets returning to Pakistan and holds social and psychological pressures responsible. These were exacerbated by his father's death — forcing him to take the somewhat risky decision to return to his village in Azad Kashmir<sup>32</sup>. He came back with zero savings and has yet to receive the money that was promised to him a year ago.

According to one of his friends — a German volunteer who had taken upon himself to help the twenty or so Pakistani asylum seekers in his village of Bad Tölz — Hassam had integrated quite well during his time in Germany. However, it seems that Hassam could not cope with the pressure and precariousness of waiting and the possibility of rejection. In other words, he was not sure if he will make it into the category of deserving, a question that his ill father had often asked. When his father passed away, he broke the chain of insecurity (and deportability) by forfeiting his asylum appeal and "voluntarily" returning. Sökefeld (2019), in this edited volume also discusses deportability in the case of an Afghan asylum seeker which may be worth reading for a more comprehensive understanding of the term. The case of Asif N. discussed in Sökefeld's essay is particularly insightful.

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<sup>31</sup> 'wilful agreement' — from "*Razi*" which means to agree.

<sup>32</sup> Some thirty kilometres from the Line of Control between India and Pakistan.

## Voluntariness and Sustainability of AVR

Keeping AVR counselors, facilitators, and subjects (or clients as they are called) in mind, this section will focus on the voluntariness and practices of AVR to determine its sustainability as a mode of repatriation. Taking a critical look at some of these practices voluntariness and sustainability of such returns are put into question. This section starts by introducing three complex and important situations that involve return facilitators, return counselors and especially returnees, by placing them on a scale. It is then argued that these situations and their respective scales can help third party observers and host countries to determine the voluntariness of AVR-subjects and hence the sustainability of AVR programs. Furthermore, these scales can help to address legitimate concerns around such forms of repatriation. The scales have been termed as follows (1) The Choice Scale; (2) The Information Scale; and (3) The Assistance Scale.

The rest of the text draws upon examples and material from my ethnographic fieldwork in addition to the three particular stories of “voluntary” return mentioned above to address each of these scales in detail. The concerns brought to the table will not only help in a better understanding of AVR as a form of repatriation but also show how it affects various stakeholders — from the client or the subject of a return to the counselor.

### Scales of Voluntariness

#### *i. The Choice Scale*

While return counselors and facilitators<sup>33</sup> are supposed to only advise and assist, at times, willingly or unwillingly they become part of a system — a mobility regime if you will — that wants particular asylum seekers and refugees to remigrate to their country of origin. This call to remigration is often based on a very limited understanding<sup>34</sup> of human suffering, deservingness, and one’s right to be mobile. When harsh conditions and policies<sup>35</sup> make the lives of asylum seekers difficult in the host country and lead people to return to their country of origin through AVR, how can we distinguish choice from coercion? If the decision to return is made out of free will/choice, there should be no coercion on the part of the returning state. If living in a state of insecurity and deportability (De Genova, 2002) is a structural part of the refugee condition and a source of humiliation, social isolation, and other forms of unfreedom, then it can be argued that the decision to return cannot be based on choice but rather coercion. By removing such pressures as much as possible, policymakers in host nations like Germany can ensure that what counselors are providing is

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<sup>33</sup> In Germany, Pakistan or elsewhere.

<sup>34</sup> See discussions on deserving/undeserving; acute/structural violence; political/economic refugee good/bad migrant; (Farmer, 2006; Shukla, 2016; Sökefeld, 2019b, a).

<sup>35</sup> Such as but not only prohibition on work.

only objective advice and the returnee's decision to return is informed mainly by free will and choice rather than coercion.

Another pressure that leads to coercion is the pressure of performance on counselors and AVR program coordinators — whose performance is mainly measured by the number of people they can swiftly remove from the host country. Shedding light on this issue a return-counselor in Germany shared how a colleague of her's felt guilty, was severely unhappy, and left as soon as she was able to get another job. This counselor was about to leave the return counseling center herself and was glad that she will leave the [emotional] stress behind. Here, I want to argue that AVR can only be a sustainable mode of repatriation — in the eyes of facilitators as well as returnees — when coercion is largely if not completely taken out of the equation<sup>36</sup>. If it is used as a last resort on the part of the returnee to escape imminent deportation, it is very likely to put the voluntariness of “voluntary” returns in question. The Choice Scale can help us understand how choice or coercion is experienced or deployed by various stakeholders of AVR.

## *ii. The Information Scale*

The Information Scale can help us understand the varying levels of ‘information’ and ‘misinformation’ that inform a returnee's decision to return. For example, asylum seekers might return due to *misinformation* when they come to believe that their asylum-application stands little to no chance — in the case of Pakistanis, this might be statistically correct. However, that is at best an assumption based on a simplified understanding of deservingness and needs to be carefully assessed on an individual basis rather than probability. In most instances, there is so much pressure on counselors that they do not even want to listen to the stories of their clients. During my observations, the counselors would stop the clients if they tried to talk about their asylum cases. Their stories and asylum applications were irrelevant; they were told far too often. Essential information, like the asylum seeker's religious affiliation, was ignored (this becomes esp. important if the client, or the subject of a return, belongs to a persecuted minority). During one of my observations, the counselor was unaware that the client was a Christian, even though it was quite evident from his Pakistani Christian name.

The point here is not whether the returnee will be in any real danger once he or she is back in the country of origin. In most cases, the question of safe return<sup>37</sup> has already been decided upon by the time the asylum seeker comes to the return counseling center. A significant number of prospective returnees only visit a return counseling center once all other doors have closed — they are

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<sup>36</sup> Amongst other things, deportability or fear of deportation should not inform an asylum seekers decision to return.

<sup>37</sup> Legally speaking, and with regards to Pakistani asylum seekers, *refoulement* is generally not an issue.

likely to be placed on a deportation list if not already on one (see choice scale above). What I hope to inquire here is much more straightforward than the principle of nonrefoulement: How likely is it that the client (potential returnee) is being misinformed by counselors? With confidence, I can assert that such is indeed the case.

Logic dictates that the information required to make a choice should come before the action of decision making. But clients in the Munich based return counseling center were provided with most of the necessary information only *after* they agree to return. The “counseling session” only begins once the client has provided the counseling center with their identity documents. Many clients try to delay that process to get a concrete understanding of what they might be getting themselves into. However, it was noticed during counseling sessions that counselors carefully maneuvered themselves not to provide any information that could lead the client to say no to the expected “voluntary” return. While counselors see their engagement as “open and unbiased,” Cleton and Schweitzer’s (2020) analysis of “voluntary” return counselors’ strategies resonated with my own. According to them, counselors use one of three strategies to induce return upon the rejection of asylum: “Firstly, by identifying existing aspirations [to return] among potential returnees [...] Secondly, by merely obtaining informed consent to return ‘voluntarily’ [...]. Thirdly, by actively inducing the wish to return [...]” (Ibid).

All the strategies as outlined by Cleton and Schweitzer (2020) were observed during my fieldwork at the counseling centers in Munich and Augsburg, however, the second strategy was the most practiced. For example, Pakistani returnees have to sign a waiver that they will be fully responsible for whatever happens to them upon return — especially with regards to legal repercussions they may face as a consequence of leaving Pakistan through “illegal” means. This information is only given to the client once they have signed the “voluntary” return consent, rather than during the course of the counseling session<sup>38</sup>. At this point, it is quite difficult for the prospective returnees to reassess their decision to return for various reasons. Firstly, due to the absence of a “firewall” between the different authorities involved, all the information and documentation provided during the return counseling session make it harder for the client to reevaluate the situation (in the context of legal formalities). Deportability starts to play an even more significant role in how the subjects of return see themselves at this point. “Illegality” and deportation not only seem more probable than before, but the clients are constantly reminded about this during the counseling session if they share their reservations about the return. Secondly, by this time, the clients have likely already informed the family that they are heading back<sup>39</sup> home, which is likely to desensitize the effects of information that discourages return. Thirdly, most

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<sup>38</sup> See the choice scale for the kinds of pressures on counsellors that lead them to use such techniques of what I would call misinforming.

<sup>39</sup> Which may also kill the collective familial hope of getting legalised in Germany.

Pakistani returnees are not only illiterate but have little to no understanding of the kind of legal consequences they may face upon return. To make sure that the clients sign the waiver, they are told that it is a mere “formality” and no-one has ever landed into any trouble. A caveat is sometimes added in the form of a lighthearted joke about the possibility of a corrupt official demanding a bribe. No effort is made to inform the clients about the legal consequences, as that may add to their reservations.

Another form of misinformation is miscommunication that mostly occurs due to language barriers but also other kinds of cultural misunderstandings and mistranslations. During my observations, translators rarely spoke the native language<sup>40</sup> of the client and only spoke very basic Urdu. On one occasion, apart from mistranslating, the translator started to diagnose a client who wanted to have a medical checkup before departure. “You are fine, it’s just stomach gas,” the translator said to the client who had hoped to get his abdominal pain checked before his prospective return. The client was not convinced by the translator’s prognosis, nevertheless, the translator proceeded to communicate his intuition to the counselor instead of the client’s concerns.

### *iii. The Assistance Scale*

The Assistance Scale helps disentangle necessary ‘financial assistance’ from questionable ‘financial inducement’ that may affect the voluntariness of return. As already explained above, returnees receive a ‘reintegration payment’ for returning. In the case of my interlocutors, the EU and Germany, for the most part, fund such forms of repatriation through various programs. The amount can vary depending on the client’s legal and application status; whether it is pending or processed, accepted, or rejected. And, is given in various forms; pre-departure cash in Germany, post-departure cash in Pakistan, as well as in-kind assistance<sup>41</sup>. Governmental and non-governmental partner organizations are tasked with carrying out this assistance in Germany and Pakistan.

Firstly, I claim that such payments need to be carefully made so that they do not set a bad precedent for the moral imperative attached to giving refuge. The philosopher Micheal Sandel (2012) argues against such an economic approach in his book *The Moral Limits of Markets*. Citing a plethora of examples, he states that money is not the right tool to tackle certain issues. Especially if the issue at hand has a moral or social aspect, monetary payment should be used with utmost caution as it has the propensity to crowd out ethical and social responsibilities. In that vein, I argue that something such as giving refuge or in this case, ensuring reintegration should be a social responsibility rather than a financial obligation. Mollie Gerver (2018) makes a slightly different but equally valid point in her book on the ethics of refugee repatriation and argues

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<sup>40</sup> Punjabi in most cases.

<sup>41</sup> For example, purchase of assets or stock for a business i.e. not in cash.

that such payments may reinforce the idea that refugees are unwanted members of society — an idea that is already propagated for various political reasons.

Secondly, monetary incentives may be counterproductive to reintegration. As such, figuring out the right balance between financial assistance and inducement is essential. In other words, fiscal incentives to the point of inducement are not only questionable when it comes to determining voluntariness, but can be detrimental to well-intentioned reintegration support. Like Jamshed, some of my other returnee–interlocutors, are already preparing to leave Pakistan again after their “voluntary” return. In line with Cleton and Schwitzer’s observations (2020) my returnee interlocutors did not want to return but were coerced, misinformed, and or induced into taking that decision and hence most of them want to leave again. They will probably do so through the very high-risk irregular means that the reintegration support is supposed to discourage!

## Conclusion

Deportations and repatriations (whether involuntary or “voluntary”) have a chequered history in Germany. At times, the removal, even extinction of the “undeserving” has been legitimized based on nationhood or religion. At other times based on a differentiation between the *economic* and the *political* refugee<sup>42</sup>. The politics of removal in Germany points to a constant negotiation between competing political, economic, and social forces. In this process, it seems that the refugee or the migrant *Other* lacks any real agency or choice.

The recent German law which makes it easier for companies to hire skilled labor from outside Europe is a reflection of this negotiation. While the law aims to boost Germany’s economy through an injection of foreign labor, it simultaneously incorporates obstacles to prevent *economic* refugees from using the German asylum system as a backdoor. One would assume that the reason would be to deter *economic* refugees as they might take the place of more “deserving” political refugees, but it is more likely that such measures are intended to counter challenges posed by right-wing parties like the AfD. This is not the first time that *economic* refugees and migrants are portrayed as chancers and scroungers threatening German prosperity and resources (see Stokes, 2019). Amongst others, people affected by such discourses are Afghans and Pakistanis<sup>43</sup>.

In the text above, I try to show how a newcomer’s time in Germany is marked by differences and lack of agency in the process of integration. Rather than being seen as a newcomer, the person is seen as an asylum seeker, an *economic* or *political* refugee, a migrant worker, an undocumented/irregular migrant, or through another category that defines his or her legal status and rights. The legal

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<sup>42</sup> Often founded upon ideas of deservingness.

<sup>43</sup> Most of whom have a job and contribute to the German economy.

status, in turn, structures their respective deportability and insecurities – affecting their choices and agency with regards to their potential and actual return or removal<sup>44</sup>. This leaves ample room for a social responsibility based debate about mobility and migration but for this chapter, I tried to problematize the process of removal and in particular the so-called AVR or ‘voluntary returns’. I took three rather simple concerns and placed each of these concerns on a scale with two opposing factors. The difference in the two factors of each scale, I argue, can help in assessing the voluntariness of return in AVR. Moreover, the scales make visible certain practices of AVR that are integral to understanding a form of repatriation that is being advocated as a sustainable and ethical alternative to unethical deportations. Using examples from my fieldwork and the perspectives of my interlocutors, I first addressed what I called the *Choice Scale* by characterizing the difference between choice and coercion in the decision to return. The second scale, namely the *Information Scale*, grappled with the issue of information versus misinformation. The third scale looked at the subtle but vital difference between financial assistance and inducement and is hence called the *Assistance Scale*. As the names suggest, each of these scales points to a problematic situation that needs to be addressed if returning countries like Germany<sup>45</sup> do not want AVR’s voluntariness to be put into question. Critically assessing AVR with regards to coercion, information and assistance can not only help make AVR more voluntary and sustainable<sup>46</sup> as a mode of repatriation but should be the only way to proceed with AVR if at all.

### *Acknowledgment*

This chapter is an outcome of ongoing anthropological fieldwork for a DFG-Funded research project ‘Return to Pakistan: The Political Economy of the Emotions of Remigration’ at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (project website: [www.affectivemigration.com](http://www.affectivemigration.com)). I would like to thank Clara Cornaro, Desiree Hetzel, and Martin Sökefeld for their valuable input. In addition to Martin’s constructive feedback and review of this chapter, I am grateful for his constant support and supervision.

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<sup>44</sup> In addition to the example of Hassam A. above, see the instance of Asif N. provided by Sökefeld in this very edited volume.

<sup>45</sup> Perhaps also Pakistan when it comes to the repatriation of Afghan refugees.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Sustainable’ alludes to a dependable/longterm solution for the repatriation of irregular migrants.

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## **Uncertainty to Safe & Dignified Repatriation of Rohingya Refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar: A Rising Threat to Regional and Global Peace**

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**Md. Kamruzzaman**

Rohingya Muslims have been identified by the United Nations as one of the most persecuted people in the contemporary world (Rohingya Refugee Crisis, n.d.). In their home country, Myanmar's Rakhine State, they have been marked as illegal migrants (Bengalis) or outsiders for decades despite having more than a thousand years of historical background as original nationals of the country. At least 750,000 members of the minority Muslim community fled the August 2017, military crackdown in Rakhine and have taken shelter in Bangladesh, raising the tally of the stateless people in Bangladesh to more than 1.1 million (BSS, 2019), including the already existing 400,000 due to previous crackdowns since the 1980s (Dhaka Tribune, 2019). Several attempts of repatriation have failed as the Rohingya community did not respond to the joint initiative of Bangladesh and Myanmar on grounds of safety, dignity, and rights. Till date, Myanmar has not reconstructed the destroyed villages in Rakhine State where the displaced Rohingya people had lived before the August 2017 military operation, which has been marked by the United Nations as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" (UN News, 2017, para. 1; see also Safi, 2017) and akin to genocide. In the prevailing circumstances, no possible peaceful repatriation has been devised for millions of displaced Rohingya people who continue to reside in Bangladesh's cramped camps in the southern district of Cox's Bazar. Many of the Rohingya have tried to migrate to other countries through risky sea routes, resulting in frequent incidents of the boat capsizing, costing hundreds of lives. Amid uncertain and subhuman living conditions in Bangladesh's camps, the risk of radicalization among Rohingya youth is increasing. In light of this ground reality, the key solution of the crisis is the sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees to their home country with safety and dignity. Otherwise, the crisis shall hamper regional and global peace in the near future. This chapter elaborates on how uncertainty is looming over the sustainable Rohingya repatriation and its adverse impact on regional and global peace and stability.

## Introduction

The Rohingya refugee crisis spurred by persistent, state-led persecution by Myanmar has led to the displacement of more than one million Rohingya people (Kipgen, 2013; Lewa, 2009; Zarni & Cowley, 2014). As a result, the Rohingya have to lead a restricted life in Bangladesh's cramped makeshift camps mainly made of bamboo and tarpaulin sheets on muddy floors with little aeration and singular door entrances. Many of these tents are located on the steep slopes of the high hills, with risks of being crushed by landslides in monsoon season. Moreover, the life of the Rohingya refugees is further complicated as five to six persons have to reside in single rooms without any privacy or comfort, similar to conditions in a prison (Vince, 2019). Their living conditions are also deteriorated by the fact that the Bangladesh government has not sheltered them with the 'refugee status' and they are rather considered as 'displaced' or 'stateless' people without permission for work outside the squalid camps (Rahman, 2010; Ullah, 2016; UNHCR, 2018). Resultantly, without the opportunities to earn a living for themselves, they are completely dependent on relief items or donations. This has added to the rising frustration that is gripping the stateless people of Rohingya due to uncertainty regarding their lives. The hope of returning to their homeland in Myanmar's Rakhine State seems to be fading away with passing time as Buddhist-majority Myanmar government has not shown any sign that gives any confidence to the Rohingya that the country wishes to take back its nationals with safety and dignity.

However, the vast majority of uneducated Rohingya refugees know little about the trends and developments in the external world, the persecuted people are suffering through perils in another country. Years-long horrendous experiences in the homeland and helplessness in host countries have made the Rohingya community conscious of the uncertainties of the future. They have become fully aware that without safety and full citizenship rights, their return to their home country, Myanmar, is detrimental to their well-being. The displaced Rohingya community also feels that their future in Bangladesh has no hope; rising concerns that their stay in Bangladesh is not a sustainable solution to their predicament. On one hand, they have no peace in the uncertain life in Bangladesh, and on the other hand, they cannot return to Myanmar without citizenship rights and safety guarantee. Adding to their misery, due to the incompetence of the international community to resolve the crisis, the Rohingya refugees do not see any possibility of their citizenship rights being restored and them being able to return to their homeland in near future. These uncertainties have developed legitimate fears in the Rohingya that without guaranteed safety, their lives in Rakhine State may be endangered once again and they may face the same cycle of atrocities.

Bangladesh, a country of above 165 million people is also not in a position to ensure all-basic rights of the persecuted Rohingya refugees with its limited resources (Ullah, 2011). The overcrowded South Asian country has repeatedly

urged the international community to share their due responsibilities to Rohingya refugees along with Bangladesh. The country has repeatedly expressed at different occasions that Rohingya refugees are not Bangladeshi nationals and Bangladesh must not be subjugated repeatedly to cater to all persecuted people of Myanmar. The country has also appealed to the wealthy states several times to relocate a portion of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh to their countries. However, due to the reluctance by the other neighboring states to get involved, the Rohingya issue has been largely defined the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar (Parnini, 2013; Parnini, Othman, & Ghazali, 2013). However, the current circumstances require a change in the lives of Rohingya people through sustainable repatriation to their home country with safety and dignity. Because, in this situation, it is becoming increasingly realistic that these frustrated people may be prompted towards illegal activities, including radicalization, drug peddling, trafficking, prostitution, etc.

Tens of thousands of Rohingya people in Myanmar continue to live in military-run internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps which are fenced by barbed wires. Despite this, the Rohingya diaspora is spread around the world, and Rohingya people have blood relatives in both Myanmar and Bangladesh's refugee camps. Nevertheless, the conditions of Rohingya refugees in both states continue to be deplorable; without basic human rights including education, medical treatment, and free movement. Bangladesh has already put restrictions on the internet and mobile SIM cards for Rohingya refugees at camps (HRW, 2019). Similarly, the Rohingya people residing in Myanmar's Rakhine State have no right to freely move from one town to another. Such restrictions on a community within its homeland in the contemporary civilized world are unprecedented. These conditions indicate that the Rohingya are at risk of losing their existence as a nation in the near future. In such a situation, there is a huge risk of radicalization among the young generation of the whole community worldwide, which if happens, can prove to be detrimental to global peace and tranquility. In the era of science and technology, the world is considered a single global village, and as a result, the atrocities conducted on Rohingya people in Rakhine State are realized all over the world. In order to draw attention to the hardship of the Rohingya, the United Nations has already termed the atrocities against the Rohingya minority in Rakhine as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing" (Safi, 2017; UN News, 2017, para. 1). Given the magnitude of this humanitarian crisis, the real possibility of the peaceful repatriation and resettlement of Rohingya with full citizenship rights might mitigate the issue.

In this view, this chapter discusses the case of the Rohingya refugee crisis and in doing so; it traces the origin of the Rohingya and then details the contention surrounding their citizenship. The chapter then indulges in outlining the persecution of Rohingya and their consequent forced migration to Bangladesh, and the efforts and measures taken by the world community to address the issue. Lastly, it highlights the consequences of the failures to resolve the Rohingya

refugee crisis and its impact on regional and global peace. The chapter concludes with summarizing the arguments presented in the chapter and provides certain recommendations, which require attention to find a durable and sustainable solution to the Rohingya's predicament. In composing the chapter, the author uses primary as well as secondary literature to build and support arguments for the issue of Rohingya refugees and the need a peaceful resolution.

## **Brief History of Rohingya**

According to available historical documents, the term Rohingya is derived from the word *Rohai* or *Roshangee*, a terminology that was later altered to 'Rohingya'. Rohai and Roshangee denote the Muslim people inhabiting in the old Arakan (Rohang/Roshang/Roang). The Rohingya community traces its origin to Arabs, Moors, Turks, Persians, Moghuls, Pathans, and Bengalis. Because of the North Arakan's close overland ties with East-Bengal it is found that after Bengal came under the rule of Muslims in 1203, the cultural and political influence of the Muslims was of great significance in the history of Arakan (Yunus, 1994, pp. 11-12). It is also recorded that the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>-century Arab geographers mentioned Jazirat-al-Rahmi or Rahma to mean the Kingdom of Raham that was later converted to "Rohang/Roshang/Roang" (Ibid, p. 10). So, history aids in establishing that the Rohingya community has at least a thousand years of lineage tracing back to their lives in Myanmar. Rohingya community also has a golden history of its language, culture, and heritage in Arakan (now Rakhine).

Moreover, the Arakan has a history of 2000 years as an independent country before it became a part of Myanmar in 1785. Additionally, in the fifteenth century, Rohingya Muslims established a great Arakanese Empire known as 'Maruk-U Empire' (Imtiaz, 2014, p. 13). Corroborating this in his book, Yunus mentions:

About 788 A.D. Mahataing Sandya ascended the throne, founded a new city (Vesali) on the site of old Ramawadi and died after a reign of twenty-two years. In his reign several ships were wrecked on Ramree island and the crews, said to have been Mohamedans, were sent to Arakan and settled in villages (Yunus, 1994, p. 17).

Citing historical sources, Yunus also stated in his book that during the same period Muslim *faqirs* and *derveshes* (saints) used to visit Arakan coast. Even in recent history, according to historical records from the British period up to the 2010 election, there were Muslim participants in all Myanmar's parliamentary elections and they served the nation as lawmakers as well as ministers (Strangio, 2015). Even most Rohingya civilians were given voting rights in 2010 national polls, resulting in two parliamentarians at Myanmar's lower house of parliament and one at the upper house from the Rohingya community. Two more Rohingya lawmakers were also elected in the regional parliament in

Rakhine State (Roughneen, 2015). However, before the November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 national elections, Muslim candidates were declared disqualified for contesting elections which lead to the disenfranchisement of Rohingya Muslims. Even a Muslim parliamentarian, Shwe Maung, who was elected in the 2010 election as a candidate from the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), declared to appeal before the court. He was turned down from the voting race by the excuse that his parents were not Myanmar citizens (McLaughlin, 2015). Thus, proving that Rohingya civilians were the original citizens of Myanmar and the suspension of their citizenship rights is unlawful and unconstitutional.

## **The Persecution of the Rohingya**

The greater part of the Rohingya community are now stateless and living as displaced people abroad while the smaller proportion of their population continues to reside in their home country as illegal inhabitants, or Bengalis. The recent atrocities against the Rohingya date most recently to the controversial 1982 Citizenship Law of Myanmar, which rendered the citizenship rights of the Rohingya people invalidated (Cheesman, 2017; Haque, 2017). The 1982 Citizenship Law altered the citizenship status of the Rohingya indefinitely. It was promulgated not long after the mass return of Rohingya who fled in 1978, and it distinguished between three categories of citizenship: citizenship, associate citizenship, and naturalized citizenship. Furthermore, it issued color-coded Citizenship Scrutiny Cards consistent with the accorded citizenship status — pink, blue, and green respectively (HRW, 1996). This change in citizenship allowed the Buddhist-majority Myanmar government to use this law as a tool of genocide and committed crimes against humanity against the Rohingya community.

As a result of the persecution, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar formed by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), in its detailed findings published in September 2018, has pointed out clear pieces of evidence of the genocidal intent of the Myanmar Army in their August 2017 crackdown that was started in the guise of so-called ‘clearance operations’. The findings have also been recommended for proper investigation and trial. It says, “senior generals of the Myanmar military should be investigated and prosecuted in an international criminal tribunal for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.” (UNHCR, 2019, p. 1) Amnesty International, a London-based global movement against human rights abuses, marked the Rohingya refugees as a “trapped” and “deprived” people who are confined in a vicious system of state-sponsored and institutionalized discrimination that amounts to apartheid. The Amnesty added that the Rohingya people had been facing “systematic, government-sponsored” discrimination in Myanmar for decades and the repression has intensified drastically since 2012. As much as that they are even denied access to Sittwe Hospital, the highest-quality medical facility in Rakhine State, except for extremely acute cases (Amnesty International, 2017).

There is also a tendency to complete the termination of Rohingya people from Myanmar. Myanmar's state forces as well as extremist Buddhists have been engaging in brutal crackdowns on Rohingya Muslims for many years. During the Second World War, a hundred thousand Rohingya people were killed while fifty thousand others were driven out to East Bengal by the Rakhine communalist in collusion with Burma Independence Army (BIA) (Imtiaz, 2014, p. 15). The barbaric attack of 1942 left an indelible black mark in the minds of Arakanese and to illustrate the sufferings, Yunus writes:

... The assault was so great; hundreds of innocent men, women and children were murdered. The Rohingyas were defeated. Many people of the village jumped into the river or hid in the forest. The swimming people were shot dead. With their long swords the inhumane Maghs [Buddhists] brutally butchered the half dead men, women and children. Those alive in the slaughter were stabbed with the pointed spears and cut into pieces. Rohingya girls and women after having been raped were murdered and the children were mercilessly slaughtered. The Maghs of the neighborhood carried away their cattle, rice, paddy and even clothes. Costly things like gold and silver were taken by the Thakin [communist] leaders and other booties were given to savage plunderers. The waters of Lemro river turned red with the blood of innocent victims. ... More than 100,000 Muslims were massacred. Thousands of Muslim villages were destroyed (Yunus, 1994, pp. 56-57).

From 1942 to 1999, the successive governments of Myanmar against Rohingya Muslims carried out more than twenty major operations of eviction. For example, one of those notorious operations is 1978 "Naga Min" or "King Dragon Operation" (Ibid, p. 118). According to a study titled "Forced Migration of Rohingya: The Untold Experience" conducted by a consortium of researchers and organizations from Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Norway, and the Philippines, details that during the August 2017 crackdown, Myanmar Army and extremist Buddhists killed over 24,000 Rohingya Muslims while 18,000 Rohingya women and girls were raped. Moreover, 41,192 Rohingya people suffered bullet wounds, over 34,436 were thrown into the fire and some 114,872 beaten up by Myanmar forces. The estimated number of houses burned stood at 115,026 while some 113,282 houses were vandalized (The Independent, 2018). Unfortunately, Myanmar has not changed its brutal policy on Rohingya Muslims over the years. According to a September 2019, update report of the United Nations fact-finding mission, some 600,000 Rohingya people are living in "deplorable" conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine state, facing systematic persecution and are living under the threat of genocide (Naing & Nebehay, 2019). Furthermore, in such a case, the risk of radicalization (Selth, 2018), trafficking (Ahmed, 2020), prostitution (Rashid, 2020), drug peddling (Alsaafin, 2018) and other criminal activities (Uttom & Rozario, 2019) has increased manifolds.

Furthermore, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Andrew Gilmour in a statement issued in March 2018, focused on this issue very clearly and said: “The ethnic cleansing of Rohingya from Myanmar continues. I don’t think we can draw any other conclusion from what I have seen and heard in Cox’s Bazar” (UN News, 2018). Additionally, many international organizations including the UN have condemned the role of Myanmar at different platforms. At the 38th session of the Human Rights Council held on July 4, 2018, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said that as of mid-June, there had been 11,432 new arrivals in Bangladesh. He further said, “All the newly arrived refugees who have been interviewed by the OHCHR (The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) described continuing violence, persecution, and human rights violations, including killings and the burning of Rohingya homes.” (OHCHR News, 2018, para. 6)

### **The Possibility of Repatriation of the Rohingya**

Repatriation or returning to their original country, Myanmar’s Rakhine State, with due rights and honor is undoubtedly the sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis. Because simply put, a nation who fled genocide, ethnic cleansing, gang rape, arson attacks, and other gross human rights abuses and was forced to migrate to another country, where they are living just as stateless people have their future laced with uncertainty. In order to find a solution to the Rohingya refugee crisis, Bangladesh, the host of above 1.2 million Rohingya people, and Myanmar, accused of breaching human rights of its nationals, on November 23, 2017, signed an *Instrument on Rohingya repatriation* with mutual consent to start repatriation of displaced people (Rohingya) to their homeland within the next two months. The two Asian neighbors struck the Instrument at the government office of Myanmar’s de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The then Bangladeshi foreign minister AH Mahmood Ali and Myanmar’s Minister for State Counsellor’s office Kyauw Tint Swe were the signatories of the instrument (New Age Bangladesh, 2017).

Since the very beginning of dealing with the repatriation issue with Myanmar, the diplomatic performance of Bangladesh seems to be less than below standard. Even, in the November 2017 Agreement, many vital factors were unclear: there was no deadline for completing the repatriation process; no clear instruction on if it took a long time then what will be the treatment of Rohingya refugees regarding their basic rights like education, employment, etc. More than two years have already elapsed since the signing of the Instrument, but there is no visible development of repatriation of the Rohingya. Additionally, if Myanmar exhibited adherence to the Instrument in order to find an acceptable solution to the Rohingya crisis and had shown the inclination to take back its nationals, the Suu Kyi administration would have stopped torturing Rohingya Muslims and worked on developing a congenial atmosphere in Rakhine State. But the country has continued its inconsiderate behavior with the persecuted Rohingya Muslims. Despite UN statements and warnings before the



international community about continuous human rights abuses in Myanmar, the authorities of the Buddhist-majority East Asian country failed to show any decrease in its atrocities. On the other hand, the Suu Kyi administration continued to claim that they were ready for repatriation and to receive Rohingya who had fled.

The latest significant attempt of Rohingya repatriation failed in August 2019, as no Rohingya responded to the UNHCR-led plan of repatriation, on grounds of safety, rights, and dignity (Ellis-Petersen & Rahman, 2019; Al Jazeera, 2019). Adding to the concerns of the Rohingya and the states aiming for sustainable repatriation, Myanmar authorities have not restored the citizenship rights of Rohingya or amended the controversial 1982 Citizenship Law. Furthermore, one Rohingya refugee at Kutupalong Refugee Camp in Cox's Bazar, Master Abdur Rahim, who was a school teacher in Rakhine before the August 2017 exodus, told the author, "without full citizenship rights, resettlement in the same place in Rakhine State from where we fled the August 2017 crackdown, as well as safety guarantee with the presence of the international community, no Rohingya will return" (mentioned in Kamruzzaman, 2019c, para. 2) The table below displays the responses and conditions set forth by Rohingya refugees to the Myanmar high profile team in July 2019, in Cox's Bazar.

**Table 3.1:** Prerequisites by Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh for Repatriation

Conditions	Status
Restoring Citizenship Rights before the Repatriation Process	Not fulfilled
Amendment of the Controversial 1982 Citizenship Law of Myanmar	Not fulfilled
Safety Guarantee under the Presence of UN Peacekeeping Forces	Not fulfilled
Resettlement back to the Habitual Places of Birth and Residence from where Rohingya were Forcibly Ousted after Repatriation	Not guaranteed
Trial of Myanmar Army Officials Responsible for Atrocities Including Rapes and Killings in Rakhine State	Not fulfilled
Allowing UN Probe Body to Visit Rakhine State for Conducting an Inclusive Investigation on the August 2017 Military Operation	Not fulfilled

Since the demands of Rohingya refugee representatives were not accepted or paid any attention, they vehemently rejected the repatriation attempts. At that time, despite the presence of concerned officials from both countries and the presence of vehicles ready for carrying Rohingya refugees to Myanmar, not a single Rohingya refugee responded to the initiative. The international communities and rights' bodies also urged to not impose repatriation on the

Rohingya, which resulted in the failure of the recent most effort to negotiate the return of the displaced Rohingya (Ellis-Petersen & Rahman, 2019).

## **Review on Failure to Reach a Peaceful Solution to the Rohingya Crisis**

In order to analyze the several Rohingya repatriation attempts, there is a need to look back at the background of the atrocities that the Myanmar authorities launched against Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan submitted his report on how to reach reconciliation between different communities including Rohingya in Rakhine State. This committee popularly known as *Anan Commission* led by Kofi Annan along with three foreign and six local experts was formed by the administration of Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The Commission presented its report on August 24, 2017. The report was appreciated worldwide for its recommendations to restore peace in Myanmar. No ethnic groups, including Rohingya, had anything to oppose the proposed recommendations. But very surprisingly, a few hours after the presentation of the report, violence broke out in the western Rakhine State with an accusation that armed Muslim insurgents, Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), had reportedly attacked security guards in the border region with Bangladesh. As a result, at least 71 people including 12 security personnel and 59 ARSA members had been killed in deadly clashes (Lone & Naing, 2017). Citing this incident as an excuse, the Myanmar Army started massive operations across the Rakhine State on August 25, 2017. Rohingya community leaders and many critics have raised questions over the credibility of Myanmar's claims on ARSA attacks to defend military operations. Many have termed it as a mere drama staged by Myanmar to launch genocide against Rohingya and oust them from Rakhine State.

It has been documented that the military operation of the Myanmar Army in Rakhine State was fully pre-planned to drive out the Rohingya Muslims from the state. It is expected that this issue will be more clear after the judgment of the UN Court on a genocide lawsuit against Myanmar. On November 23, 2019, African Muslim state Gambia on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) filed a genocide lawsuit against Myanmar at the UN top court, International Court of Justice (ICJ). However, reviewing all other documents and facts it can be contended that Myanmar would resist accepting and resettling the Rohingya refugees, which were ousted through a brutal and bloody military operation. The repeated attempts of the country to convince Rohingya refugees to agree to the repatriation process are merely another rouse. Otherwise, Myanmar must have fulfilled the basic prerequisites of the persecuted Rohingya community to make the repatriation process a success. High profile delegation team from Myanmar visited Bangladesh's Rohingya refugee camps and held a series of meetings with Rohingya representatives in 2019. In all meetings, Rohingya representatives put forth their demands (see Table 3.1) but there has been no concrete response from the Myanmar side.

Professor Yanghee Lee, following her closing visit to Bangladesh as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, lamented over Myanmar's haughty attitude while addressing a closing press briefing in capital Dhaka on January 23, 2020. She condemned Myanmar's repeated negative approaches to various UN initiatives to investigate the situation in Rakhine State. Lee also labeled the denial of her entry in Myanmar as UN Representative by the Suu Kyi government as a loss for Myanmar itself. She said, "my only regret is that Myanmar did not allow me to enter the country and I did not have the opportunity to be engaged with Myanmar authorities as well as affected Rakhine State." (mentioned in Kamruzzaman, 2020a, para. 6) The UN Representative repeated the UN's disappointment over the lack of engagement exhibited by the Myanmar authorities.

In another similar incident, during December 2019, a visit to Bangladesh by Myanmar delegation, the delegation members showed their inclination to take Hindu Rohingya people on a priority basis, but Hindu representatives said they would go back to Rakhine together with Muslim members of the Rohingya community. This depicts that the Rohingya community (Muslims and Hindus) as a completely held little confidence in the colloquial commitment of Myanmar, and minority communities do not feel safe under the Suu Kyi administration. As a result, Rohingya representatives reiterated to the Myanmar delegation that they would repatriate to Rakhine State if their demands of safety and security under international supervision and citizenship with recognition of ethnicity were met (New Age Bangladesh, 2019).

Moreover, an interesting and informing study by an Australia-based think tank, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), released a report (based on satellite analysis) in late July 2019, on Myanmar's preparation of repatriation of Rohingya refugees in Rakhine. The institute's International Cyber Policy Centre combined open-source data with the collection and analysis of new satellite imagery to assess the status of settlements in Myanmar's northern Rakhine State which were burned, damaged, or destroyed in August 2017. Their research mapped the current status of 392 Rohingya settlements, identified by the UN as damaged or destroyed during the 2017 crackdown, and found more than 320 settlements with no sign of reconstruction. Based on the satellite images provided by the UN Operational Satellite Applications Program, the think tank claimed they also found new proof of crackdowns in 2019, in addition to around 60 settlements that were subject to demolition in 2018 (Kamruzzaman, 2019b). The aforementioned events and data depict that Rohingya as a nation has faced enormous atrocities by the Myanmar government, therefore, in such circumstances; the process of repatriation seems unachievable.

## The Impact of Repatriation Failure: Threat to Regional and Global Peace

This section of the chapter details the data collected by the author, especially emphasizing the outcome of failing to resolve the issue of the displaced Rohingya. In that, the author in 2018 at Cox's Bazar Balukhali Rohingya Camp interviewed a 30-year-old Rohingya Majhee (Rohingya community leader in Bangladeshi camps) Abdur Rahin, told that none of his family members were alive and they had been killed by the Myanmar Army. And amid such a situation, he was performing his role as a community leader to maintain discipline in the camps. He told the author, "I am grateful to the Bangladesh government for sheltering us. We want to survive as Rohingya Muslims in our own country with citizenship rights" (Kamruzzaman, 2019c). The author came across certain other members of the Rohingya community as well who were trying to cater to the needs or provide guidance and support to their fellow displaced community members.

Recently, in another development, the Bangladesh government has permitted aid agencies and NGOs to operate primary-level education among Rohingya kids with Myanmar's curriculum (Kamruzzaman, 2019a). The whole world appreciated the decision (Al Jazeera, 2020). But amid poor structure and lack of facilities this initiative has little scope to outcome a good fruit. Moreover, in today's globalized world, the issue of any gross human rights abuse perpetrated on a particular community or forced migration of over a million people cannot be treated as an internal matter of a state. Members of the Rohingya diaspora have almost spread all over the world so this crisis has eventually evolved into a global crisis.

**Table 3.2:** Rohingya Diaspora across the World

Countries	Registered	Unregistered	Total
Myanmar			850,000
Bangladesh	1400,000	200,000	1,600,000
Saudi Arabia	270,000	200,000	470,000
Pakistan			450,000
Malaysia	100,000	100,000	200,000
India	—	—	50,000
UAE	—	—	50,000
Thailand	—	—	5,000
Australia	—	—	5,000
United States	—	—	5,000
European Union	—	—	3,000
Jordan	—	—	1,300
Indonesia	—	—	1,200
Canada	—	—	1,100

Nepal	—	—	800
Sri Lanka	—	—	650
Japan	—	—	560
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,693,610</b>

*Source:* Data provided by the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) and published by Turkish state-run Anadolu Agency in August 2019 (Alam, 2019).

According to this data, the United Kingdom (UK) was still considered as part of the European Union and so Rohingya refugees living in the UK were included in the EU. Besides, approximately 150,000 Rohingya people still reside in IDPs camps in Myanmar's Rakhine State. As per that data, the total number of Rohingya people worldwide is around 3.7 million. Of them, above 2.8 million are living out of their home country, which means that above three-fourth or nearly 77% of the persecuted people are now out of their homeland and they have no scope to visit their home country. Less than one-fourth of Rohingya people are living in their motherland as illegal citizens who are deprived of all basic citizenship rights and confined in their villages. Nearly 18% of them are restricted in IDPs camps which are like open prisons for them.

However, amid such a critical situation the Rohingya population is expanding both at home and abroad. According to a UNHCR Report published in August 2019, some 91,000 children were born inside the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh between August 2017, and August 2019, (Hasan, 2019). This research also finds that thousands of Rohingya Muslims who are living in different parts of Myanmar have hidden their Muslim identity for security reasons. The author had the opportunity to talk to some of them. Their identities have been kept confidential. Moreover, the scattered Rohingya people living either in Europe, or in America, or any other parts of the world have blood relatives in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

During frequent visits to southeastern Cox's Bazar till mid-2019, following the August 2017 crackdown in Rakhine, the author observed dozens of Rohingya refugees who were still waiting for their relatives in Myanmar who were supposed to migrate from Rakhine to Bangladesh crossing the River Naf, a border river between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Before imposing a ban on using mobile phones in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, it was frequently seen that Rohingya people were trying to contact their relatives in Rakhine state and other parts of the world. Logically, the destitute living conditions of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh's camps and lingering hopes for meaningful repatriation with safety has multiplied the frustration among the persecuted people that may easily lead them to radicalization, especially in cramped makeshift camps in Bangladesh. The radicalization in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh does not mean that Bangladesh will be the only country affected by it.

Highlighting these concerns, in a conference in Delhi in August 2019, the then Bangladeshi High Commissioner in India, late Syed Muazzem Ali urged the global actors to work effectively for peaceful repatriation of Rohingya for the greater interest of regional and global peace. He said:

Permanently disposed people have the potential to impact regional security in ways we have not yet imagined. It is in that context that their safe return is important, not only on the humanitarian ground but also on security grounds. If it is not solved at the soonest, this could be a serious destabilizer in our whole region (Chauhan, 2019, para. 9).

Related to the aforementioned, Saudi Arabia has started putting pressure on Bangladesh to take back 42,000 Rohingya refugees who have Bangladeshi passports. The issue also came up for discussion at a conference of Bangladesh ambassadors in Abu Dhabi on January 13, 2020, where Bangladeshi diplomats working in the Middle East countries took part in the conference. The issue was even marked as a challenge for the relations between the two countries (Ejaz, 2020). Bangladesh's foreign minister, however, claimed that he did not receive any formal statement either from Saudi Arabia or from the Bangladesh embassy in Riyadh. He stated, "We do not know about any Rohingya refugees going to Saudi Arabia or returning with a Bangladeshi passport." (Dhaka Tribune, 2020, para. 2)

Lack of due role by major powers, especially such as China and Russia in the Rohingya issue has also been criticized worldwide. Professor Yanghee Lee also condemned the controversial role and support of both the countries in favor of Myanmar in the following words, "I am regretful, I have said it many times. It is shameful for those two states [...] especially China cannot become a global leader without respecting human rights" (mentioned in Atik, 2020). So, the Rohingya issue has not remained a national issue of Myanmar; it has now become a global issue. This issue is also playing a role as an indicator in measuring the moral position of the superpowers in the global ranking. Therefore, sustainable Rohingya repatriation has been a pressing issue in contemporary times and remains crucial for peaceful relations among many countries.

### **The Way Forward: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter presents the case of Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh and the significance of its resolution and relevance to global and regional peace. In that, the chapter maintains that the sufferings of the Rohingya have not received explicit and rightful attention that has resulted in substandard living conditions for Rohingya in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Furthermore, in the Rohingya issue, where satellite images, video contents, and statements of genocide survivors have believably proven genocide, ethnic cleansing, gang rape and other brutal atrocities in Rakhine State, the international community has remained largely

silent. Their involvement is restricted to convincing Myanmar to cooperate and accommodate Rohingya Muslims.

While, admittedly, there have been efforts to address the issue, however, they have resulted in unfavorable circumstances. Such as, the lawsuit filed by the Gambia in the UN top court can be marked as a positive development; consequently, in an interim order, the ICJ has directed Myanmar to take necessary steps to avert any further abuses against the Rohingya community and ensure their safety (Mahtani, 2020). Building on such efforts, and to ensure justice for the persecuted Rohingya community, the Muslim world must come forward more effectively following the example set by the Gambia. For instance, if Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh work together with a united voice for justice and peaceful repatriation of Rohingya refugees, the world leaders would be bound to take necessary steps. Unfortunately, the divisions in the Muslim world are weakening the legitimate rights of the persecuted Muslims worldwide and the Rohingya community is one of them.

Until peaceful repatriation is started, Rohingya people should be treated as human beings. Especially, rights to education must be ensured, otherwise, rising frustration in the displaced Rohingya may prompt them towards radicalization and extremist tendencies. Moreover, psychological attention should be expanded for the mental health safety of the persecuted community. Restrictions on mobile SIM cards and the internet in the refugee camps should be lifted so that the feelings of restriction and confinement among Rohingya refugees must not add to the frustration among them. The behavior of Bangladeshi law enforcers as well as the army must be more humane towards the Rohingya community and there should be monitoring over such matters. Additionally, diplomatic pressure on Myanmar should be increased. In that, all Muslim countries should cut diplomatic ties and bilateral trade with Myanmar until the country takes back its Rohingya nationals with citizenship rights and safety. The united Muslim world should also engage countries like Japan, China, Russia, the UK, US, and persuade them to restrict their economic ties with Myanmar until peaceful and sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees is reached. Furthermore, the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission is also a dire requirement at the Rakhine State before repatriation has to take place.

Another significant consideration requires attention towards building-up confidence among the Rohingya refugees to return to their own country. However, for developing this confidence an exemplary justice must be done by the ICJ. In that, the investigation process by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the Rohingya genocide should also be sped up. Both ICC and ICJ have to work in their ways and if the need arises, information or documents should be exchanged (Kamruzzaman, 2020b). For the greater interest of peace, people from all communities need to speak up for justice for Rohingya. Otherwise, a trend of injustice will be established across the globe where the persecuted remain helpless against the power of the force.

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## **The Effects of Conflict and Internal Displacement on the Social Structure and Political Change in Swat, Pakistan**

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**Noor Elahi**

**T**he militant conflict in Swat valley during 2007-2009 and the flood crisis of 2010 combined with the government of Pakistan military operation against the militants had caused the internal displacement of more than 1.2 million people from the region. These crises have significant internal and regional effects on the economy, physical infrastructure, social and political development. This study focuses on how these conflicts and displacement crises have influenced the social and political structure of the society and contributed to the development of new structure and political change in the Swat valley of Pakistan. Qualitative research method, including formal/informal interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation were applied for this research. The study revealed that conflict and displacement radically changed the social and cultural patterns in terms of social relations, cooperation, trust, and interactions. The conflict destroyed the historical structural system e.g. council of elders (Jirga), men guest houses (Hujra), and hospitality, which were the sources of holding political power and maintaining peace in society. The intense consequences of conflict and displacement along with post-conflict development has encouraged genders of different ethnic classes to participate, and develop a new social and political system, and provide passage for development and change. The displacement brought changes in gender relations where access for women to livelihood resources and social mobility has increased. The post-conflict community development interventions need to be focused on the strengthening of the local social and political system for sustaining peace and development in conflict-affected societies.

### **Introduction**

The conflict involving militancy and terrorism in Pakistan is the product of historical, social, and religious phenomena. These conflicts have significant internal and regional effects on the economy, physical infrastructure, social and political development (Mustafa, 2013). Historically, several causes documented for the emergence of conflict in Swat valley. After the merger of

Swat state in 1969 with the government of Pakistan, the formal institutional mechanism of Pakistan took over administrative control and implemented its judicial, constitutional, and political rules. In the post-merger period, these institutions failed to deliver their services (Rome, 2011). Many studies (Aziz, 2010; Aziz & Luras, 2010; Avis, 2016; Hussain, 2011; Orakzai, 2011; Rome, 2011) suggested that the pre and amid conflict grievances being created by formal institutions were the important factors behind Swat conflict. Other aspects identified in Swat conflict include the lack of government control over the mobility of the militants, weak civil security institutions in term of latest arms and training to combat terrorism, inequality in the judicial system and distribution of resources, misuse of state resources and *Rawaj* (Customary laws), political parties failure; the notorious role of religious leaders, poverty and high ratio of unemployment among the young generation as well as lack of awareness about religious and formal education (Avis, 2016; Rome, 2011; Aziz, 2010; Elahi, 2015; Hussain, 2011; Salman, 2012; Orakzai, 2011). Resultantly, the kingpins of militant organization which fueled the conflict in Swat easily exploited the unaddressed grievances of people (Avis, 2016).

During the period (2001-2005), the Taliban spread in the whole Swat valley and considered the region as their safe haven. Mullah Fazlullah; the militant leader and son in law of the founder of the Tehreek Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) expedited the movement in Malakand division (including, Lower and Upper Dir, Buner, Swat, and Shangla districts) (Rome, 2011). The objective of the TNSM was to compel the government of Pakistan authorities to enforce Islamic law and the judicial system (Salman, 2012). This time he directly approached the Swat and established their Markaz (center) in Koza Bandi. His famous speeches on FM radio for addressing the grievances through the establishment of Islamic society, the judicial system, and the equal distribution of resources motivated local people in Swat (Aziz, 2010).

The conflict in Swat valley was volatile during 2007-2009, and the militant extended their political control over majority areas by attacking political activists, police personal, traditional local leaders (nationalist), and the elected representatives of district government like Union Council *Nazims* (Mayors). Taliban used the Markaz to resolve all kind of civil and criminal cases, which directly affected the political Jirga system (informal institution of Pashtun society which resolves the disputes among individuals or groups) as well as disabled the government of Pakistan writ in the area (Ali, 2012; Rome, 2008). Besides these, they targeted the informal institutions like Hujra's (Guesthouses), Jirga (council of elders), and even Mosques to disturb the symbols of unity and social structure 'referred as Pakhtunwali or Pashtunwali' (a way of life or code of ethics for Pukhtoon<sup>1</sup> ethnic population) in society. These conflicts involving militancy and terrorism not only affected the law and order and security, rather it had deep imprints on the very social and economic

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<sup>1</sup> A larger ethnic group living across northwestern border of Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan.

fabric of the Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA)<sup>2</sup> and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as northwest Frontier Province) regions (Salman, 2012).

Several efforts were made to bring peace to the whole Malakand region through peace accords between the government of Pakistan and militants. The last agreement made in February 2009, with Sufi Mohammad (founder of the TNSM), which brought ceasefire in Swat for a short period, but the situation worsened when some of the militant groups within the Swat extended their activities in the surrounding district of Buner and Dir and refused to lay arms and stop their activities (Rome, 2011). Upon breaking the agreement, the then provincial coalition government led by Awami National Party requested the federal government of Pakistan to launch a full-fledged military operation against the militants in Swat. In May 2009, the military operation named Operation Rah-e-Rast (the straight path) was launched which ended in September 2009, caused the internal displacement of more than two million people from the Malakand Division including 1.2 million only from Swat (World Bank and Asian Development Bank, 2009). The people displaced to other districts of KP including Mardan, Swabi, Charsada, and Nowshera. Some of them lived in camps, some hired houses on rent while many families lived with relatives in KP province, Islamabad the capital of Pakistan, and other parts of the country. The living in camps itself was a new experience for the IDPs, as there was low security, no proper separate system for setting and gathering particularly for females. The threat and terror of kidnapping of children and abusing were at high risk. Lack of *pardah*<sup>3</sup> system and amalgamation of women with a new population have high psychological and behavioral marks on the mind of people. Living far from their relatives and neighbor and out of the social system for a long period affected the living pattern of many men and women (Elahi, 2015). Although the host communities supported and cooperated with IDPs at maximum in terms of food, living commodities, and provision of spaces.

The argument is that all these crises — religious radicalization and insurgencies followed by conflict involving militancy and terrorism, and military operation as well as internal displacement – have both direct and indirect costs/influence on society (Mustafa, 2013). The direct cost of conflict refers to the damages to the physical structure including the loss to human life and livestock, damages to public infrastructure, a factory building and residential housing, etc. The indirect cost of conflict may include the destruction of family structure, violation of women and children rights, reduction in educational opportunities and employment, political system/affiliation, effects on trade and their

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<sup>2</sup> Federally Administrative Tribal Areas are semi-autonomous regions lies in the northwest of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan. FATA composed of seven tribal agencies (Districts) and administered by Federal government of Pakistan directly under 1973 constitution. FATA regions have been merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on May 31, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> The practice in certain Muslim societies of screening women from men or strangers, especially by means of a curtain.



networks, delay in the development project, welfare cost, security and social bonding, and many other macroeconomic impacts (Mustafa, 2013). The focus in this chapter is on the indirect cost of the conflict and limits its emphasis on the influence of conflict and their consequences incurred thereof on the social and political structure in Swat valley. The following sections of the chapter explain the historical background of Swat and examine how the militant conflict, followed by armed operations and internal displacement during the last decade influenced the social and political structure in the Swat valley of Pakistan.

## **Brief History and Geography of Swat Valley**

The history of Swat goes back to more than two thousand years. The rich resources, scenic beauty, and clean water attracted many invaders including Alexander the Great 326 BC, the Buddhists, and the Chinese<sup>4</sup>. At that period, Swat was in the full shine of Gandhara Civilization and the people were more developed in the social and cultural aspects (Qayyum, 2010). At the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Mahmud of Ghazni (a Muslim leader from Afghanistan) began his invasion of India and also conquered Swat and established the Muslim rule. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Yousafzai tribe of Pukhtoon ethnicity migrated from Afghanistan to Peshawar valley and entered the Swat valley in the 16<sup>th</sup> century spreading their strength by pushing out the indigenous inhabitants to upper mountain areas and some to Hazara division of current Pakistan. However, the Yousafzai did not establish a government or a state but lived in tribal fashion (Rome, 2008).

Different religious/powerful personalities ruled the Swat until 1850 and resisted any efforts of the formal establishment of the state system. In 1849 Syed Akbar Shah from the Akhund family established the first Islamic state but after his death in 1857 Swat remained a conflict zone. The British army along with Nawab of Dir attacked Swat in 1895 but could not succeed to capture whole Swat except some portion. In 1915, a local Jirga of different tribes invited Mian Gul Abdul Wadood the grandson of the Saidu Baba (a religious priest) to rule but he refused, and the Jirga then selected Abdul Jabar Shah as ruler. But in 1917 the same Jirga again decided to remove Abdul Jabar Shah and Mian Gul Abdul Wadood was made a new ruler. He strengthened the state through developing the communication system, establishing forts, and spreading the state rule in surrounding areas. The British government in the subcontinent recognized the Swat state in 1926 and a title of Wali (ruler) was given to Miangul Abdul Wadood (Qayyum, 2010).

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<sup>4</sup> The historical details of the Swat throughout the chapter have been taken from various sources such as Barth 1965, 1981; Rome, 2008; Ahmad, 1980; Lindholm, 1980; Qayyum, 2010; Rahi, 2011; Fleischner, 2011; Orakzai, 2011 and Salman, 2012.

The Swat state was merged with Pakistan on 14 October 1969 as a settled district according to article 246 of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973 as part of the PATA. In 1975, the provincial government of the then NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) passed new civil and criminal codes for administering PATA, wherein the decision making powers regarding the civil and criminal cases were transferred to executive authority (Sajid, 2014). Nevertheless, these regulations had various impediments (Zafar, 2011), for instance, bribery, resemblance to the frontier crimes regulations (FCR), misuse of *Riwaj* (customary laws), costly expenditures, lack of speedy and effective justice, and other complications of PATA regulations distressed the people of Swat (Nichols, 2013). The current Swat district is the part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with a total area of 5337 sq. km. The district borders with Buner and Malakand in the south, the Lower and Upper Dir districts to the west, and Chitral and Gilgit to the north. Saidu Sharif is the headquarter but the main town in the district is Mingora situated at a distance of about 160 km from Peshawar the provincial capital. The approximate population of the district is 2.2 million and different ethnic groups such as Pukhtoon (mainly of the Yousafzai tribe), Mian/Syed, Kohistanis, Gujjars, occupational groups and a small number of Hindus and Sikhs are living in Swat valley (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

### ***Social and Political Structure of Swat***

The literature on Pukhtoon society particularly on Swat and FATA regions reveals the influence of the social and cultural sentiments of Pakhtunwali on almost every aspect of the functioning of society (Ahmed, 1980; Haring, 2010; FATA Research Centre, 2013). This may be either the political system that provides a mechanism for conflict and disputes resolution through informal sets of laws, land tenure system, and economic aspects, or social structure that deals with social relationships, family or marriage practices, and social networking. Social Structure can be defined as relatively stable systems of social relationships and opportunities in which individuals find themselves and which vitally affect them, but over which most of them have no control (Greenfield, 2013). Social structure also referred to an organized set of relationship in which member of society or group is variously implicated through social institutions and social practices that control the behaviors of people (Kendal, 2012). The social structure developed in Swat closely corresponds to the Pukhtoon ideal type of relationship between super and subordinate as reciprocal (Barth, 1981). The political system in Swat referred by Barth (1981) as a framework — the sum of all the choices of individuals giving their allegiance to others. The men from other ethnic groups are free to choose a particular group whether for political, social, economic, recreational, or other purposes (Asad, 1972). The political and social system in Swat is drawn mainly from the Pakhtunwali where religion is also an important organ. Pakhtunwali is the core of Pukhtoon social behavior (Ahmed, 1980) and ‘the set of informal common laws and tribal codes that are strictly followed by Pukhtoon’ (Haring, 2010, p. 2). Pakhtunwali characterized by the principles of *Malmastia* (hospitality), *Jirga* (council of

elders), *Hujra* (male guest house), *Badal* (revenge), *Nanawatee* (refuge, asylum), *Ghairat* (honor, chivalry), *Tor* (shame), *Tarboorwali* (agnatic rivalry), *purdha* and *Namoos* (gender boundaries) and *paighor* (taunt) (see Ahmad, 1980; Barth, 1981; Lindholm, 1982; Banerjee, 2000; Kakar, 2007; Spain, 1962). These principles bounded in a structure and process that underpin the social, political, and economic life of Pukhtoon, and provide an alternative form of social organization (Orakzai, 2011).

The political structure developed in Swat was different in many aspects from the rest of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts although the same social and political structure exists in many other districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Swat remained as an independent state until 1969 and was ruled by a king. Secondly, the Swat valley was directly affected by the conflict involving terrorism and militancy as the Taliban almost occupied the whole district and established their rule (Ali et al., 2013). Several military operations were carried out and huge internal displacement took place. Moreover, the Swat valley experienced several political ups and downs such as the state period 1917-1969 of Wali (The Prince) of Swat, the traditional divide of leadership, the merger in a new political and administrative system under alien Provincially Administrative Tribal Areas (PATA)<sup>5</sup> regulations and lastly the Taliban ruling and administration. However, the other districts in KP did not experience such consequences.

The literature on Swat society explains that the social structure and political system, under the customary laws of Pakhtunwali, was very strong in the history of Swat and maintained peace and security in the society through its social network, despite major differentiation in class relations (Asad, 1972; Barth, 1965; Lindholm, 1972). The Taliban movement and their militant network attempt to delink the Pukhtoon from their history and indigenous narrative and have tried to isolate Pukhtoon from the rest of the world (Hussain, 2014). The Pukhtoon political leaders were worried that these movements would radically alter Pukhtoon society and politics as well as would leave behind the society in a movement towards the development (Siddique, 2014). Across FATA and Swat valley, the militants targeted the social and cultural mechanisms to paved ways for promoting their ideology. For example, Jirga, which was replaced by that of traditional leadership control of malik/khans with the Taliban created Markaz to weaken the power and social position of malik (Kerr, 2010). Khan and Mehmood (2016) observed that poor and deprived people were exhausted from vicious acts of Khans resulting in a wide array of grievances. They further assert that people supported militants to confront the Khans. Rome (2011) asserts the same and argues that people faced

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<sup>5</sup> Provincially Administrative Tribal Area (PATA), declared regions- Chitral, Dir (Lower-Upper), Swat and Malakand under clause (4) of article 247 of the constitution of 1973, govt. of Pakistan. The regions fall within the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province under regulation I and II of 1975 Special Provision Regulations (Criminal Law and Civil procedures).

constitutional, judicial, political, and other issues as the formal institutions failed to address the socio-politico-economic grievances of the people. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) hypothesis asserts that the greed including the increased proportion of the young population, lack of education and unemployment, and grievances such as inequality, political repression, and variable of ethnic or religious fractionalization are potential sources of motivation for violent actions in the social and cultural system. Militants exploited these greed and grievances opportunities and persuaded local people that the Taliban would provide speedy justice to them against the inefficiency and maltreatment of formal institutions and vicious informal rules of influential Khans (Khan & Mehmood, 2016). For example, the announcement by the Taliban regarding the equal distribution of lands among those who were poor and those who did not have ownership of any lands formerly, attracted massive local support for militancy in response to the traditional political systems. On the other hand, the main sources of the political authority of Khans were ownership of land, honor, and provision of hospitality (Asad, 1972). This act delinked the Khans and their farmworkers and distorted their social relationships (Hussain, 2014). Similarly, the Taliban attacked the Hujras, which were used to entertain the guests; local or outsiders, and to provide food, shelter, and protection in the form of ‘Nanawatee’<sup>6</sup>. Hujras were sources of political organizations therefore, targeted in order to minimize the role of malik and khans across FATA and Swat regions (Elahi, 2015).

A number of studies have been conducted on causes and determinants of conflict, terrorism, their physical and economic cost, effects on livelihood, poverty, education, and health, etc. (Aziz, 2010; Hussain, 2014; Orakzai, 2011; Rome, 2011). However, a little focus has been given to the social, cultural, and political aspects of society. This study highlights and documents the particular case of the socio-political structure of Swat and to analyze the various consequences of conflict that affected the social and political system of the society.

After the military operation and ousting of militants from the Swat and establishment of the writ of the State in the region, the post-conflict development in the form of resettlement of IDPs, rehabilitation, and reconstruction interventions were initiated immediately. Pakistan’s military took the leading role in post-conflict development along with civil government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The important contribution of the military remained in the construction of infrastructure, rehabilitation of schools and health facilities, and establishment of a de-radicalization center for the affected young generation. Besides, several peacebuilding initiatives were taken involving local communities. Establishment of village defense committees and community policing are the prominent interventions among many others. These development processes have further influenced the internal

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<sup>6</sup> It is a tenet of the Pashtunwali code of the Pashtun people. Traditionally it is used to refer to a request for sanctuary, whereby the host must be willing to fight or die for the sake of anyone who comes knocking at his door seeking refuge, even if it is a sworn enemy.

social system by applying right based and participatory development approaches. The engagement of men and women of various class groups in mainstream development through the formation of different types of community organizations paved ways to develop new social networks (Elahi, 2015). Although the conflict was not over until the end of fieldwork in 2016, and still the insurgencies, target killing, kidnapping, and attacks, on the security forces are there but the direct conflict with insurgents ended and their hubs have vanished.

## **Research Methodology**

The study is based on primary and secondary data collected in two phases through ethnographic study methods, from September to December 2015 and October to December in 2016, for verifying and authenticating the analyzed data by adding more in-depth and latest information. The study is qualitative in nature and focuses on the thematic description. Participatory research methods were applied to collect the data. An interview guide was developed composed of both open and close-ended questions for conducting formal and informal interviews with respondents belonging to different types of social and ethnic classes (84 persons including 27 women), who were directly and indirectly affected by the crises. In addition, 15 key informants including government and NGO officials, elites of the areas, security officials, local researchers, and civil society activists were interviewed in Mingora city and surrounding towns such as Saidu Sharif, Odigram, Charbagh, Fateh Pur, and Madyan. The upper and lower division of Swat valley was considered where two villages Paklea (Upper swat) and Qambar (lower Swat) were selected for in-depth study and to analyze the changing perspective of the social structure and political system at a micro-level. Two Focused group discussions were held with men in both villages in order to get more in-depth information and to authenticate the individual information gathered for this study.

## **The Historical Perspective of Socio-Cultural Transformation in Swat**

The princely state era remained the most progressive period in the history of Swat and has brought many social and structural changes in the Swat society. “Maingul Abdul Wadood — the king of Swat state — put the society on the modern development patterns by establishing the authority of the state to bring peace and order in the Pukhtoon tribal society by applying a mixture of traditional, Islamic and modern norms and values” (Rome, 2011, p. 2). The judicial system was not Islamic, but cases were often decided quickly and at very low cost, however, decisions were heavily influenced by local political leaders also known as ‘Khans’ (Landlord) who had been given the authority to collect fines and taxes during state period (Aziz, 2010). On the other hand, the king also controlled the religious leaders (Mullah) by giving them positions as

Qazi (Judge) in courts. The sharing of power between both political and religious groups put the state in a peaceful situation.

In 1949, Main Abdul Wadood handed overrule to his son Mian Jehanzeb well known by the nickname Wali Sahib. He continued the development achieved by his father and prioritizes the communication, higher education, health, and justice sectors on more modern or westernizes patterns (Rome, 2011; Fleishner, 2011). The Khans become more powerful in gaining control over the land while the other classes particularly tenants, craftsmen, and traders became less privileged and politically dependent on the Khans. However, Wali Sahib maintained his authority, and being a benevolent leader dealt skillfully with Khans and Mullahs (Fleishner, 2011).

After the merger, a new administrative structure like deputy commissioner, assistant commissioner, superintendent of police, judges, etc., were deployed. Although the political, administrative, and judicial interventions in the past brought many social changes in the structure of society. Similarly, several community development projects such as Malakand Social Forestry Project, Malakand Rural Development Project, Promoting Horticulture project, Community Infrastructure project, and Forestry Sector program, etc. have been successfully implemented which has considerable impacts on society. However, the post 9/11 era and particularly after 2005 conflicts involving terrorism and militancy, military operations, and displacement consequences have abruptly changed the social and political fabric of the society which has been discussed in the sections below.

## **The Impacts of Conflict and Internal Displacement Social and Political Structure**

A lot of research conducted on militant conflict and disasters (natural or man-made) in Pakistan particularly in KP province and the FATA areas reflect the impacts of conflict on the social, physical, and economic setup of the region (Avis, 2016; Bangash, 2012; Orakzai, 2011). In Swat, the impacts may be measured from three angles; conflict and displacement, flood disaster, and post-conflict community development, and can be differentiated from other parts of the province in the context of historical outlook as mentioned earlier. This section focuses on the influence of militant conflict and internal displacement on the social and political structure, and the second part discusses the changing perspectives within the social fabric of Pakhtunwali.

Over the last millennium, Pakhtunwali saw phenomenal social changes and transition from nomadism and egalitarianism to feudalism and modernism (Khan, 2014), through several historical consequences that started from the rule of British Empire in 18<sup>th</sup> century who used the land and people of this region against Russia. Thereafter, the Afghan Jihad was used to exploit the people by the US and other allies in the Cold War, and currently the Pakistani state's aims for strategic depth going on in its neighboring countries by using proxies in the

region<sup>7</sup>. The colonial and anthropological writings portrayed Pukhtoon as a fierce and volatile people living by a strict code of honor and feud in a wild and hazardous environment (Banerjee, 2000). In Swat, all the people adhere to Pakhtunwali either ethnically Pukhtoon or not because, since the occupation of Swat in the sixteenth century, the other ethnic groups like Sayyed, Mian, Gujjar, and Kohistani have been influenced by Pukhtoon leadership and culture in the valley. Pakhtunwali composed of several principles, however, this research surround discussion about few tenets or principles of the Pakhtunwali such as honor (Izzat), Jirga, Melmastia and Hujra, which are the compulsory elements of a social and political structure while other principles e.g. Nanawatee, Badal, Tarboor wali, Badragah (usher) are rarely functioning in the true sense and now orally recalled as organs of Pakhtunwali (Haring, 2010).

### ***Effects on Jirga, Melmastia, and Hujra***

Jirga is one of the oldest and strong tenets of Pakhtunwali and part of the political structure across Pakistan and Afghanistan. Jirga can be understood as an informal institution comprised of local elders and influential men to undertake disputes or resolve conflict primarily through means of arbitration, and decisions are binding on parties involved in the conflict (Yousafzai and Gohar, 2005; Ahmed, 1980). The anthropologists and historian quoted Pukhtoon society as acephalous and without written or formal laws (Tainter and Macgregor, 2011). To maintain law and order in acephalous society, assembly-like Jirga is crucial to regulate life and resolve conflict through decisions ranging from local clan level to regional and from minor to larger issues between tribes and even government (Ahmad, 1980). The militants in the very beginning preferred to control the decisions making and conflict resolution processes at the local level and to provide speedy and fair justice to all population-based on Islamic as well as customary laws. The justice system in Swat i.e. informal Jirga system or formal judicial system as already stated was not satisfactory and therefore, affected people welcomed the Taliban courts where they decided hundreds of civil and criminal cases in few months, either fair or not but imposed decisions by force. Moreover, the establishment of parallel courts by the Taliban created tension among khans and government institutions. The landlords or Khans of the Swat tried to establish a *Qoomi* (national) level Jirga in 2007 and involved provincial and federal government to control the Taliban and resolve the conflict peacefully but remained unsuccessful because of the government intervention and lack of trust among different clans (Avis, 2016). Few of the khans who tried to control the Taliban through Qoomi Jirga were threatened and killed (Personal communication, October 2015 & December, 2016). A key informant told that the Swati people could not unite under one leader as they are divided into several sub-ethnic groups. Two members from the swat Qoomi Jirga interviewed told that ‘the last national Jirga was held in 1917 when the Wali (Abdul Wadood) was selected

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<sup>7</sup> Editorial, (Editor), The News on Sunday Islamabad <http://e.thenews.com.pk/pindi/9-3-2014>

as ruler of Swat. Thereafter the state reduced the role of Jirga to clan or village level for minor conflict resolutions. In past, the Jirga was supposed to form *Lashkars* (a group of local people formed to protect the villages or region) to combat militants, external raiders, or robbers but during the Taliban period, the leaders did not succeed. Respondents told that efforts were made to form Lashkar against the Taliban but the government law enforcement agencies including the army resisted against the holding of *Qoomi* level Jirga and Lashkar due to security situation and expected human losses. However, the Jirga members told that they succeeded in conducting Jirga for the development of Swat. The purpose was to pressurize the govt. and NGOs for utilization of the funds allocated to rehabilitation and reconstruction of Swat. The finding reveals that the political role of Jirga has been gone out, however, small scale Jirga like Qoomi Jirga and Swat *Aman* (peace) Jirga were playing important role in conflict resolution at the local level and contributing post-conflict community development initiatives.

*Melmastia* is tied with the honor of the Pukhtoon and it increases the number of social networks particularly of the landlord (Kakar, 2007). Barth (1965, 1981) sees *Melmastia* as a way of validating a leader's political position. According to Lindholm (1982), *Melmastia* is a sort of ritual of friendship, and the warmth and generosity of the host particularly to the foreign and stranger guest. Every village leader has *Hujra* in which guests local or foreigner are housed and feed as they stay there. *Hujra* has been used as a place of decisions making, dispute resolution, and people interaction within the village. The village elders interviewed told that 'Hujra has played a great role in maintaining the social networks in the village as well as the socialization of the young generation. The Taliban attacked *Hujras* to slacken the khans' control over the local people and refrain the common people or guests to visit the *Hujra*'. The militant hired the poor young boys from labor and farmworkers class on payment of 10 to 20 thousand Pak Rupees (\$100 to \$200) per month, which created differentiation and lack of trust between the farmers and khans. The respondents told that this has weakened the social networking and political control of the traditional leader. This further deteriorated the network among landlords and their dependents. The majority of the respondents agreed that the role of *Hujra* and common *Nanawatee* (asylum) has almost gone out because of a lack of trust in local as well as outside guests. The *Hujra* of khans now used for political activities instead of its role of socialization or collective Jirga holding for peace in villages. Although individual patterns of hospitality still exist and everyone cares about the guest beyond their capacity.

In Swat, the landholding is another factor for a strong political position. The dependent honor the landlord and in return, they provide voluntary support, economic reward, protection, and security to their followers. Ahmed (1976) distinguishes between the two socio-political class's organizational setup as *Qalang* (Tax) group known as landlords and *Nang* (Chivalrous) groups -low landholders, pastoral, and hill Pukhtoon. Barth (1981) divided them into unilineal descent (larger landowners [Yousafzai's]), the political leaders, and



the client (small or non-land owner), politically dependent on landlords. These differentiations identify the framework of the social organization maintaining political authority and also boundaries of *Namoos* (honor) and *Purdah* between gender, which is found varying among the Khan families and other groups in Swat. According to the respondents, the militant started attacks on the Khans in the very beginning to decrease their control of the dependent people as well as in the government. The slogan of distribution of land among the dependent population got momentum among the masses and these people supported the militants. The khan resisted against the militant as it was the matter of honor for them to leave their houses and land. However, due to the threat of killing the majority of the Khans shifted to other cities during the crisis and the poor were left behind, therefore, they –the dependent- unintentionally joined the militant group and the khan lost their prestige by not protecting their subordinates. In this way, the Taliban succeeded to some extent to break the social networks between khan and tenants and other dependent ethnic groups by motivating them through the slogan of equal distribution of land and other incentives in properties. The respondents told that the relation between khans and other groups is very fragile and there is a lack of trust because some of the low and landless households supported the new network of Taliban. In the concept of ‘greed,’ it may be inferred here that such conflict does have a ‘greed’ factor to trigger the violent conflict. It was constantly highlighted during the fieldwork that the criminals joined the militant groups not for other purposes but only for making money. The local leaders interviewed believed that the Taliban are not the creation of Pukhtoon nationalist and nor they are all ethnically Pukhtoon; however, the imposing of Taliban on Pukhtoon built was actually to demolish the social and cultural system, which was/is an important organ for their unity.

### **Internal Displacement: Fragmentation in Social System and Households’ Relations**

Huge internal displacement took place during the military operation against the insurgents in 2009. The families and villagers dispersed and lived in different parts of the KP province and the capital Islamabad. The period of the IDPs was almost six to nine months, and during this period they remained very detached from any kind of social and cultural gathering and even economic activities (Din, 2010). Nevertheless, social sympathies, cooperation, and interaction between villagers during sorrow and joys are the important features of the social structure in Pukhtoon society (Hussain, 2014). This kind of isolation in the form of displacement and the radicalization processes in the form of religious militancy affected the social bonds between families and villagers. Before the conflict, the interaction between neighbors was frequent as women freely move to other houses during leisure time and this was a source of socialization where they could share their issues and sort help for each other. However, the ban on women's mobility by the Taliban and the lack of cooperation by khans' families during the critical time of displacement and resettlement, affected the

households' relations. The support from the dependent class young generation and women to the Taliban further deteriorated the social relations. Similarly, male interaction in the common Hujra of both villages remained limited to religious, funeral, and marriage ceremonies. Key respondents told that participation in the marriages, funeral ceremonies are ritual, and the social sympathies under Pakhtunwali are frail. I observed while participating in various gatherings that after the conflict and displacement, individualism in households has increased, and social interaction and cooperation in terms of the trust, support, and collective actions between households have decreased.

For example, during marriage ceremonies particularly of Khans' family, all the village households were supposed to participate in the ceremony and one-time food (lunch or dinner) was to be offered by the bridegroom household. Currently, marriage ceremonies have been limited to only relatives and close neighbors due to fragmentation in social relations. During groups' discussion, it was reported that exogamous marriages were practiced but the conflict again reversed the hierarchies between Khan, Syed, and other ethnic groups. The study found in both villages that Khan families did not give their daughter to any other lower ethnic groups except Syed/Maingan; however, they sought exogamous girl affinity for their son from other groups.

One interesting example repeated frequently during the era of the Taliban was the announcement from Molvis Fazullah that married women living in joint families or extended families are not allowed to speak to their adult brother-in-law or cousins and are bound to maintain purdah. Key informants told that this announcement give legal Islamic justification to many women to separate themselves from their In-laws, which disintegrated the joint family system (Aziz, 2010). Although, men due to the patriarchic values of the Pakhtunwali do not like to separate from joint families without severe differentiation among brothers and first cousins.

Ex-Nazim (Mayer) of the UC Qambar told that currently all the groups in the village even brothers and cousins do not trust each other because of doubt of affiliation with either group; Taliban or Pakistani government intelligent agencies including the army. This phenomenon has highly affected social relations among the villagers. Seventy percent and above respondents in village Qambar agreed that the social relations and cooperation among the households of Khans, tenants, and other external residents (non-Swati) have been fragmented and people rarely participate in village gathering except funeral ceremonies. The effects on social relations and cooperation in village Paklea found a little different due to the low ratio of displacement and non-direct interventions of the Taliban. There was support to the Taliban among different groups but a key informant (professor) said 'that this does not mean that complete family members may be segregated from the social set up'. All the respondents agreed that the Taliban movement has negatively affected the social relations within households and families, however, in post-conflict development, the scenario is changing again, and efforts were made under

participatory development practices to bring social cohesion among different groups.

### **Changing Perspective of Gender Participation**

The Talibanization movement against the slogan of westernization and secularization particularly in the post 9/11 era, and similarly the processes of radicalization have highly influenced the women's economic participation concept in the whole province of KP. The majority of the Pukhtoon still follows the codes of Pakhtunwali and considers women's political participation as against the values of honor under a patriarchal structure. Taliban used such a patriarchal understanding of religion and cultural frameworks to justify the atrocities they commit against women to preserve their traditional roles within the reproductive sphere, within the four walls of home (Bari, 2010). Similarly, several respondents pointed out that being Pukhtoon and Muslim, it was difficult to confront the religious leaders and even the Taliban regarding the issues related to women's restrictions from politics, jobs, and higher education. Because *Namoos*, the compulsory part of social structure closely related to women protection and Purdah, which are strictly followed in Swat and even more restricted in the Khans, Mian, and Syed families. Responses show that every Pukhtoon has to defend the rules of gendered order and in case of any violation; one has the right to react in defense of *Namoos*. Women going out for jobs in different sectors particularly NGOs were not considered a positive sign under Pakhtunwali. Key informants like professors, government, and NGOs officials told that the terms like 'gender equality and women empowerment' were highly opposed by the majority of the Pukhtoon in post-conflict development 'as an affront to the code of Pakhtunwali and patriarchal structure'.

Nevertheless, the militant conflict and displacement on one side disturbed the cultural social network of men and women but on the other hand, the crises and post-conflict community development processes paved ways for formation of the new social and political structure in the form of village development organizations (men and women) assisted by NGOs, and village defense committees (VDCs) supported by Pakistan Army. Several government and NGOs efforts are underway to maximize the women and other class groups' participation in politics and community development interventions in post-conflict development. The purpose of the establishment of men and women committees was to bring them in the mainstream of development and provide them access to the resources. Women have been found to come out of houses for receiving the food items, cash cards, and asking for their rights from officials. The changes among women visiting the market not only for personal shopping but also for the purchase of food and domestic items for households increased during and after displacement, particularly in lower Swat. This may be because of the displacement period, where Swati women saw the host

districts women going to markets for shopping and purchasing household food as well as other domestic items.

These changing perspectives in social relations in post-conflict development provided an opportunity to particularly the young generation to support new political faces instead of the old traditional politicians. At the same time new political party known as Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI)<sup>8</sup>, famous for engagement of the young generation, motivated mass population and have been supported and voted in the 2013 and 2018 election in Swat. PTI won five seats out of six in the provincial assembly and all three seats in the National assembly of Pakistan. About this change, the majority of the respondents said that they are tired of the old traditional political system of nationalist and religious dominant views and are pessimistic that the new political party will work for peace and prosperity of the public. Similarly, the local jirga system, which was supposed to work for political and dispute resolution purposes, now converted their priorities towards community development projects e.g. the Swat Qoomi Jirga equally working with government and NGOs for smooth implementation of the development interventions.

## Conclusion

Historically, the social and political structures developed under Pakhtunwali have been under transition due to many consequences like an amalgamation of Swat state with the government of Pakistan bureaucratic system, institutional reforms, and economic development. Since 2001, the extension of Taliban movement to Swat valley and their terrorist intervention put the valley into a hub of conflict involving militancy and terrorism, which was followed by the Pakistan military operations and displacement of masses during 2005-2009. The establishment of parallel informal institutions for dispute and conflict-related decisions making, terrorizing the government officials, and banning women from education and jobs has put stern impacts on social, economic, and political perspectives of society. The religious radicalization, insurgencies, and internal displacement have highly influenced the basic principles of the social system including the customary laws (Riwaj), the role of Hujra, Jirga, Melmastia, and *Namoos* in the Swat valley. Moreover, the study found adverse effects on social relationships, homogeneity, and collective determinations between various ethnic groups.

Nevertheless, the conflict, internal displacement, and post-conflict development practices have increased awareness and encourage women and men to come out for their rights and develop new social and political affiliations. The formation of men and women development/defense committees supported by the Government of Pakistan including army and

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<sup>8</sup> Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is a centrist Pakistani political party and current ruling party of Pakistan. PTI is a major political party along with PMLN and PPP and largest party in terms of representation in National Assembly as of 2018 Pakistani general election.

NGOs, provided opportunities to coordinate and get united against the insurgencies. The rehabilitation and reconstruction interventions paved the way to the new opening of jobs, vocational training, and labor to both men and women, which has brought changes in their living patterns and supported demotivation towards extremism. The changes in the cultural values for women's education, jobs, mobility to the market, and shopping have been observed. The selection of new faces against the nationalist and religious candidates in national, provincial, and local government elections show variations in the political system. Although, the sustenance is depending on the development policies and strategies of the current provincial and district governments that how they overcome the greed and grievances of the people. This may be overwhelmed through participatory development strategies and practices.

The militant conflict in Swat is over now and the IDPs have returned, while the post-conflict development reconstruction phase is underway, however, there is fear among people that the Taliban may come back. This may be of the reason that the post crises development projects still lack focus on peace and development within the social and political structure, which can potentially be sources of reconciliation and development in conflict-affected societies. Therefore, the majority of the respondents suggested that there is a need to revive and strengthen the role of informal institutions like Jirga and Hujra system not only for conflict resolution but also in maintaining peace and implementation of community development projects. Further studies are needed on the roles of government institutions and NGOs in post-conflict development to focus on strengthening the local social and political structure for sustaining peace and development in conflict-affected societies.

### *Acknowledgment*

The author is thankful and appreciates the support of local organizations Hujra and Environmental Protection Society, the staff of Jehanzeb college, and the Swat University of Swat for their support provided during the fieldwork carried out in Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The author is very grateful to the respondents from various villages who spare their time and provided valuable information. This research is not funded or supported by any organization and it is individual research and the continuation of the author's PhD. study.

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## **Forced Migration as a Security Challenge for Pakistan: The Case of Afghan Refugees**

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**Shireen Mushtaq and Arifa Irshad Kayani**

Comprehending security paradigms becomes a challenging enterprise especially when taking into account overlapping cultural, ethnic and regional dynamics of states. The changing nature of security has led to the inclusion of non-traditional threats of varying nature into the sphere of factors that imperil the security of states. The theoretical paradigm, Regional Security Complex (RSCT) asserts that there are durable patterns of amity and enmity that take the form of a coherent pattern of security based on geography. Barry Buzan asserts that their members, who through the processes of securitization are interlinked within a specific regional territory, socially construct these Complexes. Moreover, the idea of (de)securitization is also used as it is a counter move to the securitization process. Such a security complex with reference to Pakistan and Afghanistan can be viewed in historical-structural perspectives, where pull-push factors due to forced migration played a significant role in complicating the already strained relations between the two countries. Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked by geostrategic proximity that is both a blessing and a curse. A qualitative analysis of the literature reveals that forced migration trends have further complicated the Regional Security Complexes of South Asia, particularly in terms of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Additionally, the existence of a porous border has also been a persistent challenge. Consequently, the rise of non-traditional threats is seen because of the increased refugee influx in the border region of Pakistan. The RSCT thus highlights the role of these complexes in shaping the security paradigm, between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

### **Introduction**

The traditional security paradigm evolved a great deal following the Cold war. The old traditionalist approach was not enough to manage the threat. The role of non — traditional threats amplified dramatically after the cold war ended. Keeping in view the changing nature of threats and challenges to states, theorists of security studies, Buzan and Weaver (2004) posited a new approach that viewed security as a social construct. This redefinition of the concept of

security triggered much debate. Whilst by the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the state-military concept of security, prescribed by realism was the most influential, the Copenhagen school of thought led to uncovering significant alternatives. The cornerstone of this approach is the imperative concept of securitization. Within the Copenhagen school of thought, Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) was described as a regional dimension to international security. The regional dimension prioritizes international interactions based on the (conduct of) regions.

Eventually, a more regional-centric version of state security took place leading to broadened horizons of the entire security paradigm. This widened the conceptual application of the term, which now includes cross border security issues such as terrorism, migration, human trafficking, drug trafficking and consequences of natural disasters, etc. Now the interdependence of security is more intense on a regional scale, especially when it comes to the population within a region that is culturally, historically, ethnically, and geographically linked. A regional complex is described as a set of states whose major security concerns are interlinked — that can essentially not be seen as or resolved in singularity i.e. apart from each other. They are defined by durable patterns of amity and enmity, taking the form of a coherent geographical pattern of security. Buzan (1991) asserts that their members, who through the processes of securitization and a countering process of de-securitization are interlinked with each other, socially construct the Regional Security Complexes. Their inter-subjectivity, use of language, acts, and moves define or securitize the issue. Whether this attempt to securitize is successful or not, depends on the audience that receives the information. The framework entails that de-securitization tends to be viewed as the de-escalating practice of an existential threat to a normal concern.

Such a security complex regarding Pakistan and Afghanistan can be viewed in historical-structural perspectives, where pull-push factors due to forced migration play a significant role. Forced migration, is an open-ended term as stated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). For this chapter, it is defined as ‘the involuntary movement across international borders due to the fear of persecution or threat to life’.

A qualitative approach for data analysis has been adopted as a methodological framework for this chapter. It reveals that forced migration due to war and conflict, have further complicated Regional Security Complexes of South Asia, with reference to Afghanistan and Pakistan. As both Pakistan and Afghanistan are engulfed in this complex that defines their relations, the RSCT thus highlights the role of these complexes in shaping the security paradigm of the region. In order to deal with the refugee situation, Pakistan has favored repatriation and has taken several steps in its domestic policy in its efforts to de-securitize the issue. Pakistan also supports the Afghan peace process to ensure stability in Afghanistan so that refugee inflow can be minimized.

Attempts at repatriation under the auspices of UNHCR have been underway but people continue to flee Afghanistan as instability continues within the state.

This chapter is divided into four sections whereby the first section discusses the theoretical discourse on Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) that has been used to understand the regional complex that Afghanistan and Pakistan are engulfed in and the role of refugees as stimulators of this complex. Following a comprehension of the contours of RSCT in the context of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the next section discusses forced migration as a result of the conflict taking place in Afghanistan for the past four decades. This section also dedicates a special focus on the push and pull model of migration, which motivates people to migrate. It highlights the burden on the state of Pakistan as a recipient to a huge influx of refugees from its neighbor and the turn of events that this situation later took with the emergence of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The last section discusses the relation of RSCT concerning refugees in Pakistan, complications that result from the refugee influx. The concluding section focuses on the response of the UNHCR, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in dealing with this issue, in order to minimize the hot and cold tensions that result between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

### **Theoretical framework: Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT)**

To broaden the concept of security, Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver embarked on the quest to visualize security beyond the traditional paradigm. In his book *People, States and Fear*, Buzan & Weaver (1991) points towards the narrowly founded concept of security, to come to a more informed analysis to view security on a one by one basis. In order to step ahead of the said traditional view on security, he puts forth three levels of analysis i.e. individual, state, and the international system.

According to Buzan, “the concept of security must describe it as a relational phenomenon” (Buzan, 1991, p. 187). This definition of security is similar to the way power is defined in realism; where power is seen as a relative or a relational concept. Based on this relational understanding of power in realism, the position or standing of a state in international politics is usually determined in relations with another. Thus, power also constitutes a relational place in politics. Therefore, the concept of power and security go hand in hand. To better understand security Arnold Wolfers (1952) categorized security as being either objective or subjective in nature. Objectively, security is based on facts and can be understood as the absence of threat. In its subjective sense, for Wolfers, security is the absence of fear to lose the values or perceptions acquired or fear of them being attacked (Freire, 2016). In a later article titled *New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century* Buzan (1991) provided the basis for the assertion that factors including military, economic, environmental, and societal concerns do not act in isolation they have important linkages. The chapter attaches vital significance to these aforementioned

underlying linkages. While military threats take precedence, other sectors are also seen as equally important factors if not more. The reasons behind this shift in the understanding of security lie in the evolution in the perception of security that has taken place over time (Stone, 2009).

The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) by Buzan & Weaver (1991) has widened the concept of security to incorporate a multiplicity of issues. RSCT is a widely recognized theory of regional security. The realist view of security views it as a derivative of power or an alternative to the term power. This was relevant during the era of world wars and the proxy wars. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the concept of security has become more complicated and multidimensional with the constructivist approach that has enhanced this understanding and views it as what Buzan referred to as a 'security package' (McClean, 2011; Karyotis & Patrikios, 2010).

RSCT describes security as a construct placed within a set of units whose processes of securitization and de- securitization are interwoven and the security of the states in this complex cannot be ensured or dealt with separately or so to say, independently of the other state. The situation leads to the formation of a complex. This complex may be durable but it is not permanent. Buzan defined regional complexes as a set of units whose pattern of securitization and de-securitization are interwoven. Thereby meaning that the security of one cannot be separated by the other. The regional complex established though is not a permanent feature nor is it durable (Cruden, 2011).

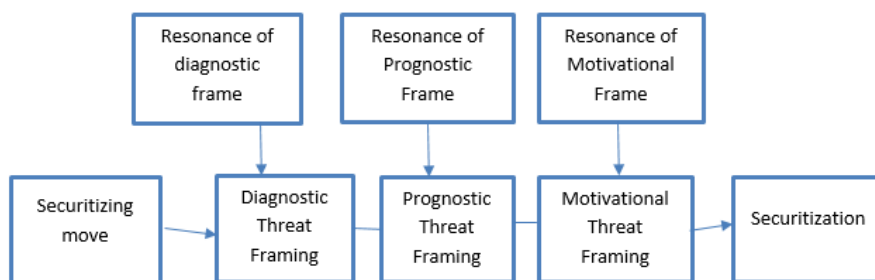
### *Steps to Securitization*

In the process of securitization, a threat is constructed within a political landscape that is then prioritized by actors within a complex as it transforms into an existential threat. In the process of de-securitization, the political community no longer sees the threat as of high priority. Thereby dealing the matter on an ordinary day-to-day basis (Cruden, 2011). The framing of the threat is a dynamic process and requires a lot of attention at the onset of the issue. Figure 1 explains the various stages through which a threat evolves to transform into an existential threat, thus being securitized (Ryhnovska, 2014). The following steps filter issues to be securitized based on the immediacy attached to attending to them;

- i. Identification of existential threats (since not all threats are existential);
- ii. Emergency action — (as the response will vary)
- iii. Effects on inter-unit relations

Securitization, under this school of thought, suggests that when the political actors themselves, the issues in itself, convert a concern of normal politics into an existential threat becomes a matter of security. Weaver (1995) regarded security as a speech act, in which issues are characterized as significantly

important to the state in question. The securitizing actors are people who are placed in the position of power, whereas the functional actor is mainly the media people who disseminate the information. The success of securitization is the ability to specify a threat as ‘us’ against ‘them’. Once this happens, everyone eventually transforms into a securitizing actor. Similarly, de-securitizing is a reverse process, converting/ de-escalating issues from an existential threat to a normal one (Karyotis & Patrikios, 2010).



**Figure 5.1:** Discourse Analysis of Securitization

Source: Dagmar Rychnovska (2014). Securitization and the Power of Threat Framing. *Perspectives*, 22(2), 9-31.

Another important component of the theory is regions. Regional integration and regionalization had been underway even during the Cold war. According to Nair (2009), regions were also defined based on the proximity of interest and agendas respectively. Since the post-cold war era has largely changed the security paradigm of international relations, regionalization now effectively addresses problems of security that were impacting several states at once. The formulation of regions depends on the historical and geographical context, with intense security interdependence. The geographical proximity is a significant factor, this result in a maximized political and military interdependence in terms of threat perceptions. Therefore, the Regional Security Complex (RSC) is a unit whose processes; securitization, and de-securitization are intertwined and their security problems cannot be resolved independently (Buzan & Weaver, 2004).

Units are autonomous within the complex. Although the external actors do play a role to influence the complex relationship. Historical hatreds and friendships and specific issues that trigger conflict or cooperation, and take part in the overall security constellation of fears, threats, and friendships that define an RSC. Patterns of amity and enmity highlight the interactions between the states with the specified regional context. These patterns tend to show the sort of relations that dominates the system like friends, rivals, or enemies. Additionally, there are influences of the background factors such as culture, regional geography that derives relations (Buzan & Weaver, 2009). The amity and enmity among the states guide them to form relations that are marked by either trust or fear. This is not solely credited to the balance of power within the system. The issues that can affect these feelings range from ideology to

territory and from ethnic lines to historical linkages among the actors. A sectoral analysis posits that RSCT divides areas of conflict and cooperation into various components that can occur in inter-unit relations. The process of securitization and de-securitization thus develop into a regional complex that engulfs the politics of the respective states involved. In the case of Pakistan and Afghanistan, the RSCT describes the relations of these two actors based on a range of factors that include close proximate geography and historical linkages. The theory describes the complexity of relations, of the two states, within the region (Buzan & Weaver, 2004).

### Forced Migration and Security Challenges for the Host State

Migration is a centuries’ old phenomenon, with multi-faceted historical dimensions, varying circumstances, and needs for which people have had to choose to move from one place to another. The movement of people from region to region has been noted over time. It has been observed that people moved either mainly due to proximity or to create a spatial distance. The individual, group, and mass migration has been a common feature in history. Concerning the case of Afghanistan and Pakistan, various political, economic, social, and military factors can be responsible for massive migration and insecure environment within Afghanistan. This forced migration can be attributed to the harsh and sometimes impossible security environment of the state of Afghanistan in the past few decades.

**Table 5.1:** Push and Pull Factors of Forced Migration (Authors’ compilation)

<b>Push Factors</b>	<b>Pull Factors</b>
Lack of infrastructure	Availability of Infrastructure.
Lack of basic necessities	Provision of basic necessities
Religious discrimination	Freedom of religious practices
Political instability	Political stability
High rate of criminal activity	Prevalence of Law and Order
High relative poverty	Relative low rate of poverty/economic opportunities
Inhospitable living conditions	Availability of land and resources
War, civil war, insurgency	Relative Peace
Crop failure, drought, famine/ Food insecurity	Food security
Economic instability	Economic stability

The Pull-push model highlights the fact that migrants are pushed by various economic, political, social, and cultural factors for better options/prospects in neighboring or far off areas if possible. Hence, it can be safely assumed that

forced migrations take place due to Push factors. Due to securitization of the Afghan migrants' issue by Pakistan and the de-securitization that takes place as a response to it, the regional complex between these two states is thus established. The referent object being Pakistan, claims the refugee crisis as being critical on the security agenda. Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked by geostrategic proximity that is both a blessing and a curse. The series of political turmoil war and foreign invasions in Afghanistan have especially affected Pakistan. Owing to this geostrategic proximity Pakistan has had to face the burden of decades of conflict in Afghanistan.

The waves of forced migration from Afghanistan especially after 9/11 have compromised the security of the state due to the emergence of domestic and foreign extremists/terrorist or insurgent groups. The US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and the following presence of international troops who were fighting the active insurgents led to the creation of a dangerous security environment in which migration seemed to be the only option. These push factors have only aggravated over time, with waves of migrants' influx within various time frames, either due to invasions or domestic conflicts. The Durand Line is a porous border that has allowed people to move across borders with few limitations in the past. In the aftermath of the Soviet invasion 1979, millions of Afghans migrated to Pakistan to save themselves from conflict and war. The social life of the Afghan people (almost 2 million by 2016) living in border regions was thus framed with the presence of loose border control. According to the UNHCR 2015-2016 report, there are 1.5 million registered refugees in Pakistan (Amnesty International, 2019). The post 9/11 insurrections into Pakistan's territory by the insurgent groups created in the intense security situation, therefore security operations were conducted to clear the tribal belt of insurgents threatening the state. Pakistan and Afghanistan are thus seen as being locked into a regional security complex that affects both and the regional security as a whole.

De Haas opines that migration depends on the overall socio-economic condition of originating state and migration trends can be reduced after improving the socio-economic situation (De Haas, 2010). Push factors in Afghanistan led to the mass movement of people from the area; or in other words mass migration from Afghanistan. These push factors play a very significant role as they cause people to leave one country to find refuge in the next country. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, several push factors were recorded which included economic disparity, ethnic fragmentation, elite domination, and civil strife, topped with massive unemployment and poverty; constituting major causes why people had no choice but to flee. The Push-Pull model put forth by Everett Lee (1966), identified these markers as being common in case of migrations. On the other hand, pull factors were also seen at play with proximity being a key indicator of the movement towards a particular state. Other factors include a reverse of push factors such as ethnic homogeneity, stable political regime, job opportunities, military security, and humanitarian assistance.



## Regional Security Complex (RSC) and Refugees

Pakistan and Afghanistan have a porous border since immemorial times. Their proximity gives them a paradoxical advantage and a disadvantage over each other. Cross border, movement is a common feature within this border region. This cross- border movement owes a great deal to the shared regional dynamics of these two states. The population on both sides of the border shares their ethnic identity and has a close cultural affinity. The Durand Line established in 1893 is therefore only seen as a formality by the population living on either side of the border.

According to Ghulam Umair (1985), the nomads or ‘powindahs’ were used to the routine of moving their cattle from Afghanistan and Pakistan — for winter and summer pastures respectively. These seasonal movements of people numbered around 60,000 each year. Certainly, the impression of a border for these people is entirely different from the one seen and perceived between Afghanistan and Pakistan today (Borthakur, 2017; Omrani, 2009, Bakrania, 2017). Historically, the reality of a porous border was an accepted norm. This has largely changed over time. The invasion of the USSR in 1979 changed the dynamics of this border region. Millions of refugees entered Pakistan as a result of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the years following their withdrawal, as the warring Afghans were left in a civil war-like situation through most of the 1990s. The turmoil did not slow down in the subsequent years with the Mujahideen and the Taliban at the helm of affairs (Stanziel, 2016).

The influx of refugees that arrived in Pakistan constituted of people who had fled war or persecution or those who had been critically injured during the attacks. Every phase of forced migration had a similar set of conditions attached to it, but the perpetrators of war were different. According to Article 1 of the 1951 *Convention on Refugees and Protocol*, a refugee is a term used to describe a person who has fled his/ her country of origin due to fear of persecution. Pakistan hosts a large number of Afghan refugees despite not being a signatory of the convention. During the Aman Ullah and Taraki regime, 400,000 people fled the violence of the communist-led government. This number spiraled out of control once the Soviets entered (Amnesty International, 2019). The first phase of migration from Afghanistan took place between 1979 - 1985 following the coup of Sardar Daoud by Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) just as the Soviets invaded Afghanistan (Khattak, 2003). The second phase began in 1986 and lasted till 1989. This was a phase characterized by all elements of mass migration (Grare & Maley, 2011). The third phase of such migrations was experienced after the Fall of President Najeebullah in 1992, as the mujahedeen came to power after the Peshawar Accords in the same year (Ghufran, 2011). The fourth phase in this Mass Migration lasted from 1996-2001, after the Taliban took control of Afghanistan. Lastly, in the fifth phase, millions of Afghans migrated after 2001 following the war on terror (Khattak, 2003). Consequently, these large numbers of refugees were not provided any legislative cover by the Pakistani state. The lack of legislative backing created

confusion among the refugees and the local population. Domestic legislation would have provided rights and duties to the state and the refugee population as well. However, the lack of legislation and control of the 1980s marked an era of intense activity and manipulation of the refugee population for political benefits. The ruling government was in search of legitimacy throughout the decade which was accorded as soon as the US and Pakistan launched a CIA backed Operation to push out the Soviets from Afghanistan. As the Cold War ended and the disintegration of the USSR took place, structural pressures were erased and the political international order changed rapidly. Unfortunately, the Afghan conflict was left to end abruptly without proper measures to make things right for the state. The US exit strategy lacked proper planning which pushed the country into further conflict and turmoil- a situation that eventually allowed the Taliban to establish control and become a force to be reckoned with (Ghufran, 2011; Grare & Maley, 2011; Khattak, 2003).

The Pashtoonistan issue and Durand Line were two major bones of contentions prior to the refugee problem generated by the invasion of 1979. Afghanistan was one of the states, which opposed the membership of Pakistan in the United Nations due to its supposed claims over the tribal territories on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line. The conflict that began during the Cold War entered its Post-Cold War phase with the same complexity as that of the past. The 9/11 attacks on the United States and the resulting response by the US to attack Afghanistan, forever changed the regional socio-political dynamics- a defining feature of the century (Grare, 2006). The US invasion of Afghanistan brought great challenges in the wake of preexisting conditions- the eventual death toll is estimated to be 70, 000 (Yamin, 2019). Since 2001, Pakistan has had to continue dealing with the burden of unending conflict in its neighboring country. A huge number of refugees that arrived in waves gave birth to a security problem as the porous border had simpler border controls and less of scrutiny. The security problem became pronounced with time as scores of extremists and the Taliban entered the Pakistani society alongside the mass refugee infiltration as a consequence of war. Resultantly, Pakistan faced a lot of instability in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) region. The subsequent threat posed by the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) since its inception in 2007 was the biggest security challenge. Increased threat to national security led Pakistan to conduct counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, in which 2 million people were displaced. This situation directed Pakistan to redirect its focus on domestic security to eliminate the threat (Khan, 2017; Kyle, 2012; Sultana, 2015). The securitizing of this threat took place as the TTP began to conduct suicide attacks and bombings in urban areas of Pakistan. The threat was described as an immediate one that had the potential to destabilize the state of Pakistan from within. Additionally, the threat of external involvement was also observed. The TTP was intent on inflicting damage upon the state of Pakistan; their intentions became pronounced with time, as they attempted to capture lands and impose their rules and laws. In a condition where a state within a state was on the verge of being

created, the refugee problem became an existential threat for the state, especially based on the number of Afghans in the border regions. The terrorist activity had spread to various parts of the country as well with a large number of Pakistani lives lost and damage inflicted to government and private property, loss of reputation as a peaceful state, and the rise polarization that resulted into an on and off support for the Taliban by the locals. All of the aforementioned factors contributed to securitizing the issue as the functional actors also played a role to disseminate the information (Bohr & Price, 2015).

The Taliban and other militant groups had infiltrated the Pakistani soil in an attempt to tarnish the reputation and the security of Pakistan, and to aid their counterparts operating in Afghanistan. Fortunately, the Taliban were defeated due to the timely efforts of the Pakistani government and military. The military operations conducted in FATA followed an action-reaction model, as was manifest in retaliation and insurgency. Continued military operations successfully swept out terrorists from the most affected areas, reinstating and establishing peace in the northwestern region. These areas were largely affected by the presence of the Taliban and other such violent non-state actors who had captured the social and political lives of the people living in the area. The situation was indeed seen and described as an existential threat to the state of Pakistan. Statistical data showing the rise of extremism and incidents of terrorist activity in Pakistan in those years essentialized prompt prioritizing and designation of the issue as an existential threat for Pakistan. This damaged the economic growth of Pakistan as it resulted in a decrease in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), loss of infrastructure, and a constant threat to the internal security regime of the country. The functioning of the illicit economy in these areas further damaged the economy of Pakistan in addition to the increased drug activity affecting the social structure of the tribal societies.

Series of military operations that began in 2002 continues to date. With every operation, the situation in the tribal belt has improved and with time, military operations have become increasingly surgical and need-based. The list of these operations is public, starting from Operation *Al Mizan* (2002-2006) to Operation *Rad ul Fasad* (2017-Present). Several simultaneous operations have taken place to deal with the threat to security. The response to these operations has been mixed. These operations have helped Pakistan re-emerge as a stable country. This is also seen as an important factor to resolve the issue in a more peaceful manner rather than looking at refugees as being the existential threat. Therefore, with time the perception of refugees being an existential threat has been reduced due to measures of de-securitization. The efforts for repatriation and calls for peace have been endorsed by Pakistan who has offered its services to help bring peace in Afghanistan.

## **Repatriation of Afghan Refugees**

Pakistan changed its policy towards the refugees since the early 2000s as the Afghans were stimulated to return to their homes and new refugee flow was

discouraged. Increased activity of the Pakistani Taliban and clashes with the military made it evident that the situation needed more attention than it was actually accorded (Stanzel, 2016). The growth of the refugee population also strained Pakistan's resources; it resulted in the growth of ethnic tensions between communities already residing within the state. Augmented sectarianism and religious fragmentation in Pakistan was presumed to be a result of refugees given the fact that they had come from a different country with a different cultural and societal structure. Later on, Talibanization amplified the trade of drugs, arms, smuggling, and sectarian ethnic strife, creating major problems for the state and the trust deficit between the state and society heightened over time. Other social impacts included the growth in gun culture, madrasah enrollment for education, drug trafficking- that was further used to finance insurgents and ethnic fragmentation (Borthakur, 2017).

Currently, the world hosts 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees. They constitute the third largest group after Palestinians and Syrians in terms of the refugee population (Stanzel, 2016). Afghanistan is still considered the least peaceful country in the world according to a June 2019 report by the Institute for Peace and Economics (Amnesty International, 2019).

In such a case, repatriation is seen as the best option. In Pakistan, the process of repatriation that began soon after the Geneva Accords of 1988, the Najibullah Government in April 1992 made Afghanistan accept 1.4 to 1.5 million refugees under the UNHCR assisted repatriation program. Periodically, from 2002 to 2015 more than 3.8 million Afghan refugees were repatriated making it the largest UNHCR mandate situation for refugees. One in four Afghans has been a refugee. The majority of these Afghan refugees are Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras. Overall, Afghan refugees are present in 70 countries among which 3.5 million i.e. roughly 95 %, are hosted by Pakistan and 2.5 million are hosted by Iran (Khan, 2017; Khattak, 2003). Several steps have been taken to deal with the refugee population from Afghanistan. Synchronized efforts by the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan and the UNHCR have provided a proper mechanism to support these refugee communities. The UNHCR has facilitated the repatriation of 13,000 refugees going back to Afghanistan voluntarily in 2014. The series of efforts thus launched include the adoption of the Afghan Movement and Repatriation Strategy (AMRS) by Pakistan and Afghanistan. On the similar front, the proof of registration cards and the Tripartite Agreement on voluntary repatriation allowed refugees to stay till 2015 (Khan, 2017; Fayyaz, 2018). This deadline was extended to June 2020 (Amnesty International, 2019). Additionally, to register the unregistered refugees NADRA was directed in 2015 to take up the initiative and ensure effective documentation of the refugees living in Pakistan and of the ones leaving the country (Khan, 2017).

The problem of repatriation is, however, more complicated than it seems, even though the process was being facilitated by UNHCR. Even with such state of affairs, many countries have violated the principle of non-refoulment as they

sent Afghan refugees back once their asylum applications were rejected. These countries include Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Finland, and Turkey. Pakistan also sent back 365,000 refugees to Afghanistan following the lead of the aforementioned states (Amnesty International, 2019).

According to the National Internal Security Policy (2014-2018), the challenges faced by Pakistan now with regards to Afghanistan include drug trafficking, unmonitored cross border movements, and the heavy presence of NATO forces who are at war with the Taliban factions. Afghanistan's current situation is continuously marred with violence, instability, weak social and economic conditions, and poverty. These factors became a major repatriation hurdle as rehabilitation and reintegration of displaced Afghans in such a chaotic and unstable state became more and more difficult. Back in 2014, Afghanistan was unable to provide basic living standards for displaced persons (Amnesty International, 2019). Additionally, in 2015 alone, 250,000 Afghans left for Europe. For repatriation to work, returnees need incentives and conditions of stability or what President Ashraf Ghani has referred to as the *pull factor*. This will include several factors such as shelter, food, health, education, and employment (Khan, 2017; Ahmadi & Lakhani, 2017). Such processes of repatriation are vital to keeping the option of going back home open for the refugees. It is also something that is encouraged by the host states, international organizations, and the home states alike. The regional complex in the case of Pakistan and Afghanistan exists due to the presence of these refugees. An overall decrease in their numbers is sure to ease tensions among the two actors.

The Afghan peace process has been of keen interest to Pakistan, as a key stakeholder in the issue. Pakistan supports the peace agreement signed on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020. According to the agreement (Ibrahimi, 2020), it was been settled among other things that, the withdrawal of the US troops will take place in fourteen months, counter-terrorism cooperation between the US and the Taliban will be conducted, in order to halt the usage of Afghan territory for terrorist activity against other states and lastly reduction of violence to ensure a ceasefire and the initiation of Intra — Afghan negotiations shall commence in the days following the signature of the peace deal. The agreement presents a lot of challenges, based on present conditions. The intra-afghan negotiations were to take place during the month of March. Apparent opposition towards the agreement by the Afghan government also appears to be a major challenge. The peace process is expected to pave the way for stabilization in Afghanistan so that the refugees can go back to their mother state. Pakistan has thus been supportive of the initiatives that have the potential to secure peace in Afghanistan.

## **Conclusion**

The RSCT describes the complexity of this relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan that dates back to at least four decades. The influence of culture

and history on geographically proximate states as per Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, results in a regional complex, as it is evident in the case of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This happens due to the processes of securitization and the creation of existential threats through discourses. The process of de-securitization though may begin around the same time but it is not pronounced as the securitization process. The security complex of Pakistan and Afghanistan is thus, multilayered and complicated in the sense that the problems that affect one state's conflict, war or a natural disaster has an impact on the neighboring state. The regional complex places Pakistan in a position of amity and enmity, with processes of securitization and de-securitization that are constantly interlinked, causing/influencing the political and social dynamics of the respective states. The RSCT in the case of Afghanistan and Pakistan highlights the particular dilemma faced by states in close proximity exposed to security problems. This security complex is based on the historical- structural perspective and patterns of amity and enmity (based on trust or fear). The pull and push factors (political, economic, social, and cultural) effect both, state of origin and destination. In the case of Pakistan and Afghanistan, waves of migrations accelerated cross border population transfer. Among the major concerns in the forced migration issue due to conflict that is considered as a major challenge for the host state, especially due to the rise of terrorist activity. Afghanistan has experienced a devastating history of conflict where Pakistan has had to share the burden of it. Pakistan has dealt with the pressure to deal with the refugee problem that in turn led it to also make tough choices for its safety and security in the region.

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## **PART II**

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### **Social Ramifications of Forced Migrations: Analyzing the Responses of Displaced Populations**

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## **Cultural Invasion as a Trigger for Host-Stranger Conflicts: A Comparative Study of Conflict-Induced Migration of Muslims from India and the IDPs/TDPs from the Conflict Zones in the Northern Parts of Pakistan**

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**Raja Adnan Razzaq**

Conflict-induced migration is an ancient phenomenon that has repeatedly altered and reshaped the course of history. The vulnerable section has always responded by fleeing the conflict zones on a permanent or temporary basis. This chapter is an attempt to understand the role of cultural traits of strangers, which put them in a compromising situation if they refused to assimilate and submit to the cultural characteristics of their dominant hosts. Urdu speaking Muslim migrants of 1947 found it rather difficult to adjust to the new environment because of language and different social festivities that were at times taken as offensive and abusive by the locals. Their conflict with the hosts started when they emerged as a new racial identity and began threatening the power corridors. They had to confront the locals to survive permanently. However, the IDPs/TDPs had to face a temporary dislocation for a certain period of time and were housed in purpose-built refugee camps, distanced from the local population to avoid any possible cultural shocks. The concept of Host-Stranger relations is used to understand the fear of cultural invasion in terms of a radical mindset as luggage carried by the strangers that can influence or patronize the local population in the settled areas.

### **Introduction**

The United Nation's Geneva Convention 1951 defines a refugee as a person who:

Owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling, to avail himself of the protection of that country. (UNHCR, 1951)

According to UNHCR, the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are those who have not crossed a border to find safety. They are on the run at home and remain under the protection of their respective governments even if the government is the reason for their displacement. This chapter tends to highlight the similarities and differences in two conflict-induced refugee situations in Pakistan i.e. the arrival of the uprooted Muslim refugees from India back in 1947 and the flow of the IDPs/TDPs after the Pakistan Army's operation against the miscreants in the northern parts of the country, through the lens of cultural invasion/shock. Both the refugees and the economic migrants have equally invited the academic interest of the policymakers and social scientists in the recent past. The refugees can contribute to the economic development of the host community by providing cheap labor force and at the same time a notable refugee market for the local household items. Refugees can also invite international aid and assistance for modern infrastructures such as roads, health, and education-related progress, which the host community can utilize even after the repatriation of refugees (Brathwaite, Salehyan, & Savun, 2018). Having said that, the influx of refugees in the host community, whether from across the international borders or within the territorial limits of the same state, can exhaust the employment opportunities for the locals, resulting in unwanted friction between the hosts and the strangers. At times, it is comparatively easy to rehabilitate the refugees physically but their mental rehabilitation sometimes takes decades especially when they refuse complete assimilation and decide to emerge as a different identity co-existing with the dominant locals.

W.G. Sumner (1906) while discussing the relations between the migrants and the host community, points out four group behaviors i.e. integration, hyper evaluation of the hosts, hostile relations between groups, and the derogatory stereotyping of the strangers' characteristics. The hydra of hatred and hostility raises its head primarily because of economic threats along with fear of cultural imprints associated with the strangers. Once trapped in such a situation the stranger is left with three options for survival i.e. assimilation, pacific coexistence, or animosity.<sup>1</sup> Both cannot ignore each other and the friendship or hostility is dependent upon the very condition in which the hosts encountered the strangers. This forced union sometimes pricks cultural shock/invasion (Sumner, 1906, pp. 12-18).

Cultural invasion is a situation when the indigenous culture of a foreign country or a certain region enters and gradually effects and patronizes the cultural foundations of the host community. When realized, it can cause resentment and even forced repatriation. In severe cases of conflict-induced migrations on an ideological basis, migration and resettlement are often permanently. However,

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<sup>1</sup> Assimilation occurs when a group voluntarily adopts or is forced into adaptation of customs, festivities, life style and language of the dominant group. Pacific coexistence is when both the hosts and the strangers refuse to assimilate into each other's way of life, whilst retaining their own identities but they tolerate and respect each other. They are in animosity when they go beyond refusing assimilation instead they start being intolerable to the other by indulging into offensive practices targeted at the other group.

where the conflict is temporary in nature, the final aim is always voluntary repatriation. The said invasion includes language, food, fashion, music, architecture, and the most important of all-the mindset. Refugee luggage does have both positive and negative aspects. The resulting Host-Stranger conflicts can trigger ethnic/racial riots, quislings, and power play amongst the refugee communities and locals for a rise to power in a promised land.

## **Cultural Invasion and Muslim Migration of 1947**

Considering the first case study of this chapter, i.e., the arrival of the uprooted Muslim refugees from India back in 1947, the fear of cultural invasion amongst the local communities can be highlighted as a starting point to understand the very premise of host-stranger conflicts in migration-induced societies. Approximately, a million lives were lost during the climax of the last colonial drama. Tales of horrendous atrocities became best sellers. Many writers made their names by the stretch of their imaginations. Despite limited resources both the governments used their resources to propagate propaganda against one another.<sup>2</sup> The main argument was that the minorities felt threatened by the majority community; therefore, fourteen million people had to flee from their ancestral homes and head towards an unknown promised land amongst their own people where their religion or customs had the safety that they were really afraid for (Ansari, 1994).

The struggle for the ‘promised land’ proceeded with large-scale communal riots, a massive exodus of people, abduction, and rape of women and seizure of assets and properties in East & West Punjab. Notwithstanding the communal frenzy, there were quite a few instances of one community protecting their neighbors of religion other than their own. The main reason for this harmony was primarily the absence of economic competition, clash of interest, and extremism within those particular localities. District Rawalpindi which was considered to be the epicenter of communal rioting in Punjab did witness cases of harmony and sacrifice where local Muslims risked their own lives to save the lives, properties, and honor of their non-Muslim neighbors. Prominent non-Muslims from Rawalpindi including L.H.Ram, Tirlak Singh and Thakur Das appreciated the efforts by individuals such as Raja Muhammad Azam Khan, Raja Muhammad Ihsan and one Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police Mehr Allah

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<sup>2</sup> Both the governments were in a tug of war situation in order to blame the other for the atrocities committed during the days of partition so they prepared propaganda material in series of books and pamphlets etc. From Pakistan for instance, a series of booklets including Note on the Sikh Plan, Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sang in the Punjab, The Sikhs in Action, Disturbances in East Punjab and the Contiguous areas during and after 1947 and from Indian publications such as Rape of Rawalpindi, After Partition, Millions Live Again, Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab, Out of the Ashes, The Story of Rehabilitation and Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947, Stern Reckoning etc were published as official attempts to create, magnify and even justify the fear of the hegemonic majority community in terms of methods and capabilities for ethnic cleansing, economic dominance and of course cultural imprints.

Bukhsh by posting appreciation letters in the newspapers.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Major M.S. Pathania of the First Dogra Regiment was praised for rescuing more than twenty Muslim girls from hooligans in Ajnala Tehsil in East Punjab.<sup>4</sup> Considering the inexperience of the government as well the people, the welcome extended to the distressed arrivals in West Punjab was unprecedented in the region's history. The refugees were received into makeshift shelters and camps, given medical aid, inclusive of maternity services, and provided with food and schooling for children. The government was also saddled with the evacuation of refugees stranded across the borders. The authorities mobilized the army to escort the incoming refugees.<sup>5</sup> They also detailed a large number of volunteers on the recovery of abductees in both parts of Punjab. The West Punjab Government also took over abandoned houses and lands for allocation to the dislocated people and at the same time drawing out necessary legislation to provide them with a legal cover but their nightmares prolonged for decades. Initially, the migrants were treated with respect and were taken care of not only by the government but also by the masses in general. The Muslim journey from India into Pakistan was labeled as a religious pilgrimage based on the Muslim ideology of the Two-Nation Theory whereas, the non-Muslims had to flee because they wanted to be amongst the non-Muslim majority in times of unrest which was considered likely by most in the years to come.

No doubt, that the other side of the fence did not turn out to be lush green but the situation was not as bad as one would have assumed. Pakistan was a nascent state with very limited resources, no infrastructure, leadership vacuum after the death of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a gigantic refugee problem, issues related to unsettled princely states, the further influx of West Bengal Muslim refugees after the Calcutta riots of 1950, etc. Hence, it took a rather long time to provide the desired facilities to more than six million Muslim refugees. However, the government of Pakistan did everything in its limited capacity to provide relief to refugees and the minorities equally. There were issues of abducted women who were feared to be forcibly converted and married to men of different religions.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, there were grave issues pertaining to 'evacuee property'. Of course, there were reports from both sides that the migrants were not happy on different issues and were demanding either district-wise rehabilitation or even repatriation in some cases. In the case of Pakistan, there were the Ranghar Rajputs and the Meos who were

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<sup>3</sup> The Pakistan Times, Lahore, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1947.

<sup>4</sup> The Pakistan Times, Lahore, 17<sup>th</sup> September 1947

<sup>5</sup> The Army was made responsible for escorting the stranded Muslims from remote areas within India, establishment of transit camps, providing escort to the foot convoys consisting of 40, 000 to 100,000 refugees making a two to five-kilometer-long human chain and guarding the refugee camps. Both the Indian and the Pakistani MEOs initiated a Joint Evacuation Plan on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1947 and transported 38 lakh Muslims and 18 lakh non-Muslims. The army also supervised the refugee movement by railways, military transport (M.T) and by air.

<sup>6</sup>According to a careful estimate about 75,000 women from both the Muslim and non-Muslim populations were either raped, abducted, converted or were forcibly married. For details see Butalia, 1998.

uncomfortable in the new environment and were not satisfied with the allocation in far-flung areas because of being surplus refugees in Punjab and therefore, were forced to migrate from Punjab to either Sindh or other provinces. This resentment resulted in clashes between the camp refugees and the local authorities especially in Bowli Camp near Lahore on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1948.<sup>7</sup> Another important factor was the divided families who could not be reconnected because of the strict border controls after the demarcation of international borders between India and Pakistan. Some migrants hoped to get a bigger chunk of share on the plea that they were wealthy refugees from India without having proof of large holdings that they claimed in the new destination. Having failed in their greedy designs, they began protesting against the authorities and in favor of repatriation. There were a number of refugees from both sides who had left their homes in order to save their lives from the frenzied mob temporarily and had not thought of a permanent settlement in a different land and therefore, they did not sell or transfer their properties. However, following the closure of borders, they could not return to claim what was rightfully theirs. Both the governments to address the issue, signed the famous Nehru-Liaquat Pact on Minorities in 1950 to facilitate those who had been trying to go back to their ancestral villages and cities on one context or the other (Pakistan Treaty Series, 1947-53, 2006, pp. 268-272)<sup>8</sup>

While most experts and policymakers were focused on issues such as communal rioting, exodus, and refugee rehabilitation, they somehow neglected that a huge chunk of the population had begun to cast doubts on their choice of moving. There were many economic reasons apart from the lack of assimilation efforts by the migrants who were sent to live with people of different social backgrounds. There has been an ongoing debate over the issue of Urdu as the national language of Pakistan since 1947. Hardly any local community in Pakistan at the time of partition had Urdu as their mother tongue but almost all sections could understand and speak Urdu fluently. It was under this notion that Quaid-e-Azam chose Urdu as the national language of Pakistan and not Bengali or some other regional language (Ahmad, 2003, p. 268). The Urdu speaking migrant community who were mostly settled in Karachi found it difficult to assimilate within the local Punjabi or Sindhi communities. The locals also had problems while relating to cultural similarities with them and sometimes perceived the cultural festivities of the migrants as offensive. The Muslim refugees from non-Muslim majority areas had non-Muslim cultural imprints. During the early days following migration, they were focused on staying alive but over time, they started to reassert themselves which alarmed the locals. Any cultural or religious festival different from the locals was labeled as abusive. Refugee women who were forced to bath outside their huts by using *charpies*

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<sup>7</sup> The Pakistan Times, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1948. The clash resulted in the death of two camp refugees from the Ranghar Rajput tribe and injuries to eight others including two policemen.

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed study of the Pact, please see, "The Review of the Delhi Agreement", prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Government of Pakistan in File no. 61/CF/50, NDW, Cabinet Division, Islamabad.

as curtains due to insufficient washing facilities were considered by many locals as a taboo and even an immoral invitation. However, the Punjabi speaking refugees easily assimilated themselves in West Punjab but the Urdu speakers found it difficult to adjust in the new environment amongst the Punjabis and the Sindhis. Therefore, they remained stuck with their own identity as *muhajirs*. Eventually, over time, they managed to form a strong political group called the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), which later on was renamed as Mutahiddah Qaumi Movement to include other ethnic/racial groups as members. The local Punjabis and Sindhis were very proud of their indigenous culture and did not encourage the Urdu speaking migrants to integrate or to patronize their cultural imprints on the local communities.

Apart from this Urdu speaking migrant community, the authorities were also very careful to accommodate the unemployed Muslim soldiers who were initially a part of the Indian National Army but later on had opted to be a part of the Pakistan Army. In this regard, the Pakistan Army under Brigadier Stevens coined the idea of establishing the Military Evacuation Organization (MEO) and later the Military Families Resettlement Organization (MFRO) to provide/for the Muslim soldiers and to work for the welfare of their families. In order to avoid any cultural clash with the local communities, they were sent to purpose-built localities under the supervision of the Pakistan Army. One such facility was the Thal Project which was developed by the Thal Development Authority (TDA) and was also endorsed by Quaid-e-Azam himself, the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister Punjab Mr. Francis Mudie. The serving and retired army personal were sent to Thal to make it a livable place for themselves and their extended families. The Central and West Punjab Joint Refugee Council meeting which met on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1948 deferred the demand for resettlement of about ten thousand military personnel with approximately two hundred thousand family members (Report on Military Resettlement in the Thal, 1949, p. 1). This created unrest amongst the higher-ups at the General Headquarters (GHQ) and resultantly a Military Families Resettlement Organization (MFRO) was established under Brigadier F.H. Stevens by the end of March 1948. The objective of the MFRO was to work with the civil authorities with regards to the settlement of soldiers, ex-servicemen with their families, and also to arrange *taccavi* loans (Khan, 1963, p.232). MFRO after a few hiccups managed to acquire 20,000 acres of virgin land in Thal, a triangular area from Khushab to Mianwali and towards Muzaffargarh from the southern borders, by the end of April 1948 (Report on Military Resettlement in the Thal, 1949, p. 2)<sup>9</sup>. Apart from this generous offer by the government, the GHQ also initiated a Refugee Fund and approached the Quaid who responded positively by sanctioning one hundred thousand rupees out of the Quaid-i-Azam Relief Fund (QARF). Making a barren land into a model residential scheme with required plantation and associated essentials was a gigantic task. Sensing the reluctance by the prospective settlers, the GHQ after ironing out the

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<sup>9</sup> Taccavi loans means the pecuniary advance especially to cultivators for implements, digging wells etc.



responsibilities, imposed strict conditions for the new settlers such as providing at least one able-bodied family member for the construction of roads and tillage of virgin land (Ibid, 5). In addition to the military, the civil bureaucracy also worked diligently to make Thal a modern residential project.<sup>10</sup> The fear of a foreign cultural invasion was also witnessed during the initial phase of the Thal Project as the local population viewed the tilling soldiers as invaders with designs to enforce a militarized culture of strict discipline. They somehow started discouraging the family members of the servicemen by picturing hard living conditions especially the dearth of drinking water, the inadequacy of seasonal rainfall, and extremely hot weather. These tactics worked to some extent as the advance parties in Mitha Tiwana could not begin working till July 1948. The MFRO, therefore, threatened to discharge the soldiers from their service in case of refusal. The serving soldiers stayed on but their families decided to move to places with comparatively moderate weather. Francis Mudie, the West Punjab Governor not only sanctioned one hundred thousand rupees with a possibility for even more to the GHQ from the Post War Services Reconstruction Fund but also visited the Thal area to boost the morale of the workers. In order to create awareness about the project and counter-propaganda by the locals, the GHQ started a fortnightly pamphlet *Bahimi Imdad* which was made a regular feature of the military newspaper *Mujahid* (Ibid, 24).<sup>11</sup>

The Muslim refugees from East Punjab and other affected areas of India who managed to get into the Promised Land had bought a one-way ticket i.e. for permanent resettlement. In the process, they learned to survive from the ashes, stayed focused and united, and eventually became notable and competitive opposition. Initially, they were empathized by the local population and were not considered as a threat in the race for power. The refugees migrating from non-Muslim majority areas were comparatively more educated and politically vocal than their hosts. Therefore, they started challenging the authority of the local politicians. Both Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in Centre and Nawab Mamdot in Punjab were labeled as refugee empathizers. Liaquat Ali Khan did develop a liking for fellow Oxbridge Daultana but had to support Mamdot in Punjab. His murder put a brake on the ambitious designs of the muhajir. Later, Ayub Khan adopted an anti-muhajir policy and decided on shifting the capital from Karachi to the suburbs of Rawalpindi right under the nose of GHQ. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto came up with a pro-Sindhi policy and began kicking the muhajirs out of key positions. Zia ul Haq reversed Bhutto's pro-Sindhi policy, began promoting the muhajir, and helped them establish industrial ventures.

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<sup>10</sup> The civil authorities working on the Thal project were assisted by two very committed gentlemen including the Deputy Commissioner of Mianwali Mr. Butter and the Canal Engineer Mr. Farrent. For more details, please read Report on Military Resettlement in the Thal 1948-49.

<sup>11</sup> In Urdu *Bahimi Imdad* means mutual help or assistance.

## **Muslim Migrants from 1947 versus IDPs from the Northern Parts of Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis**

In order to compare the cultural norms of Punjabi and non-Punjabi Muslim migrants from India and the effects of assimilation or no assimilation, the central aim of the study is to highlight few features of the refugee movement within Pakistan due to the ongoing military operations against the miscreants in the northern parts of the country. The Pakistan Army conducted numerous military operations against terrorists and their facilitators across Pakistan. Since 9/11, the army conducted Operation Enduring Freedom (2001-2002), Operation Al-Mizan (2002-2006), Operation Zalzal (2008), Operation Sher Dil, Rah-e-Haq and Rah-e-Rast (2007-2009), Operation Rah-e-Nijat (2009-2010), Zarb-e-Azb (2014-2016) and Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad (2017-till date) to eliminate irritants which threaten the internal security of the state. These operations forced the local population to flee from the conflict zones and head towards the refugee camps. In 2009 alone about three million people from Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) became IDPs (Khan, 2012).

The National Action Plan (NAP) initiated after the Army Public School (APS) Peshawar massacre in 2014 called for a decisive military operation against both foreign and domestic miscreants all over Pakistan ranging from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Balochistan. The authorities were aware of a possible influx from the areas under military operations therefore, purpose-built refugee camps were established in Peshawar, Nowshera, Lower Dir, D.I. Khan, Hangu, Tank, and many smaller camps inside Kurram and Mohmand Agencies to house the incoming IDPs/TDPs. These refugees were initially called as the Internally Displaced People or IDPs. However, the Foreign Office, later on, managed to coin a new terminology for these refugees as Temporarily Dislocated Persons or TDPs but it hardly changed anything. An IDP is not forced to go back to his ancestral place against his will and can prolong his stay but a TDP by definition can be dictated to leave the temporary place of settlement once the host community decides that normalcy has restored to the conflicted area. These TDPs were forced to leave their ancestral homes in Swat, Waziristan, and other areas because of the ongoing military operations conducted by the Pakistan Army against the militants. To provide shelter and other bare necessities, the TDPs were housed in specialized erected camps to avoid any untoward incident with the local population. Their extended family members accommodated those who had relatives nearby, after going through the registration process. The bureaucracy had learned the lesson from the relief and rehabilitation work done for the Muslim refugees from India that the incoming refugees do bring their cultural traits with them which have the potential to prove concerning for the host community.

If the non-Punjabi partition migrants are compared with the Pashtoon TDPs, there is hardly any similarity, as the Pashtoons have almost the same linguistic and cultural background and share a common nationality. So apparently, there

was no imminent threat for a cultural shock that could trigger a conflict between the settled locals and the TDPs. The reason behind encamping the TDPs most likely could have been the paranoia that once these TDPs are allowed to disperse into main cities, it would be very difficult to encourage them to travel back to their homes. In addition, it would have been very difficult to identify the non-combatant civilians from radical locals and foreign elements.

Following the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the missionaries had no 'noble cause' to fight for so they got themselves recruited by different warlords and Maliks for monetary benefits. As the bordering Pashtoons somehow failed or refused to understand the international geographical demarcations and were glued to the idea of linguistic boundaries, the foreign fighters were quick to assimilate themselves in those areas by virtue of marriages and allegiances with the locals. These foreign players were eventually patronized by international terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda for insurgencies and the spread of extremism in Pakistan. The missionaries loved to maintain their distinct identity as Chechens, Arabs, or citizens of Central Asian States and were known for claiming their superiority over the homebred terrorists in terms of Jihadi ambitions. But the population located far from the borders refused to be associated with such gangs of strangers who primarily advocated for primitive characteristics of tribal Islam and therefore, refused to empathize with them resulting in forming public opinion against the dispersal of TDPs in populated areas. Keeping in view the context of cultural invasion, such an influence/ cultural overshadow could have been that of a radical mindset rather than cultural traits. Just as the early days of the establishment of Pakistan when the hydra of cultural differences raised its head, the government emphasized on assimilation by promoting tolerance and integration, in 2020, the authorities are more concerned about the de-radicalization of the population from the concerned areas. The military after neutralizing the terrorist presence began working on the rehabilitation of the radicalized section of the troubled areas. Apart from ordinary camp residents, the authorities took a keen interest in the reintegration of the radicalized youth. In this connection, certain rehabilitation projects were launched to avoid unrest or cultural shock to both the host community and the strangers, mostly detained militants. The said rehabilitation plans had four phases i.e. psychological counseling, correction of their religious views through religious education, formal education, vocational training, and reintegration in the society.

The Pakistan Army initiated and ran certain de-radicalization programs in Swat, Malakand, Mingora, Tank, and Bajaur agency. The most notable amongst those programs was the Sabaoon and Rastoon de-radicalization programs. Sabaoon is a Pashto word that means 'dawn's first ray of light' whereas Rastoon means 'the place of the right path'. These projects were initiated as de-radicalization centers established by the army in September 2009 after the military operation in Swat. These centers aimed to de-radicalize captured child soldiers recruited by the Taliban to be used as suicide bombers all over Pakistan. From 2009 to 2010, 184 child soldiers were brought to Sabaoon to be a part of 18 months-

long training program (Noor, 2013). It was a unique facility for the treatment of radicalized youth up to 18 years of age to start afresh. These child soldiers at Sabaoon were either captured during raids or search operations, handed over to the law enforcement agencies by their own parents or they had voluntarily surrendered to the forces. The juvenile extremists were kept in those centers for a time period ranging from six months to two years where they were provided with psychological counseling, modern educational opportunities, religious counseling, and even vocational training. Apart from these, a similar facility in the name of Mishal was established for adults in Mingora, FEAST for females in Swat, SPARLAY for the families of the militants in Tank and Navi Sahar for adults in Bajaur Agency.

The idea behind all these integration programs was to create an environment where none of the community is threatened by the dominating cultural values of the other, as if unchecked, this imbalance can create resentment between the host and migrant community. Sometimes despite having differences, different sections of local communities unite against a common stranger, whom they fear, can change or influence their indigenous culture or outlook. The declined participation of the locals from the twin cities in the recent sit-in by the JUI (F) is one example to cement the argument.

While making a comparison between the two situations where at times the social background is almost the same and sometimes the socio-cultural background is poles apart, the conflict of interest amongst the stakeholders must be given due consideration. When the Punjabi Muslim migrants from East Punjab crossed the borders and reached West Pakistan, the host community did not treat them as legal aliens because they had so much to relate to i.e., the religion, language, festivities and even some relatives who were there to greet them at the gates. For them, migration was just a change of locality, they found it very convenient to assimilate into the host population and after a few months, they were able to acquire the accent of that locality where they were rehabilitated with such precision that it was difficult to judge whether they were locals or migrants. But in such cases where Urdu speaking refugees were sent into Punjabi dominated communities or when the Punjabis were allocated lands into Sindhi localities, they faced discomfort and eventually failed to integrate into the host population. This failure forced them to create their own distinct circles just like the muhajirs did in Sindh, especially in Karachi. They managed to create a middle class in Karachi and building upon their education and political awareness, at the national level emerged as a pressure group and a force to reckon with. They promoted their culture, food, fashion, peculiar dialect at the expense of being castigated as *Biharis*, *Hindustani*, *Panahgirs*, *Muturwas*, *Tilier*, *Bahiyas*, etc. They were vulnerable to the cultural shock when they arrived in Pakistan but somehow managed to overcome this fear and emerged as a force in the province that can patronize their cultural traits on other ethnic groups. The scenario however is different in case of the TDPs from the troubled areas in northern Pakistan as they are reminded regularly that their stay in the camps is temporary and that they eventually have to return to their

areas of origin once normalcy is reinstated. The host communities near the camps are not worried about a possible cultural invasion and likewise, the camp refugees are not concerned about making an impression on the local communities. Back in 1947, the refugees had one slogan, one platform, and one leader. However, the TDPs from the northern areas have the propensity to come up with many slogans; mostly radical, various platforms; often foreign and numerous ruthless local and international leaders; threatening the very foundations of the state armed with a radical mindset.

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## Analyzing Socio-Economic Transformation of Afghan Refugees in Peshawar

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**Jawad Aziz Sawal, Syed Faiq Sajjad Shah and Asif Khan**

The bulk of Afghan refugees moved to Pakistan after the Soviet invasion in 1979, and also after the consequent resistance that followed. However, even after decades, most of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan occupy menial jobs such as manual labor while some Afghan refugees are considered one of the wealthiest people in Peshawar, Pakistan. Due to the economic status of the latter, Afghan refugees, such as the Karkhano Market and Board Bazar, are dominating the markets and trading centers in Peshawar. In view of this, this chapter is focused on determining the reasons and specific qualities that these Afghan traders have, which have helped them in excelling in the field of business in Peshawar, Pakistan. The chapter focuses on variables such as education, technical skills, the products being manufactured by the Afghan refugees or the services they can provide, or the connections across the Pak-Afghan border that equips them in benefitting from Pak-Afghan transit trade induced smuggling across the border.

### Introduction

Since the last few decades, Pakistan has held the position of one of the top refugee-hosting countries in the world, accommodating primarily the Afghan refugees (Grare, 2006; Khoudour & Andersson, 2017; Omrani, 2009). Consequently, millions of Afghan refugees have been living in Pakistan for many years, beginning in 1979 and then followed by an influx of refugees in the 1990s due to the internal turmoil in Afghanistan and then the United States invasion in 2001 (Khan, 2011; Khan, 2017b; Khattak, 2003). However, most of the Afghan refugees living in Pakistan remain economically constrained and are primarily involved in manual labor, or the services sector such as plumbing, electrician, etc. (Light & Munk, 2016), but a sizable proportion of Afghan refugees own businesses and have achieved economic stability and success. Most of the Afghan refugees chose Peshawar to settle as Peshawar's urbanization offered better employment and financial options after crossing the Afghan-Pakistan border into Pakistan. Nevertheless, initially the major

proportion of the refugees settled in refugee camps while some of the Afghans, who could afford a better living elsewhere, started living in other areas such as Hayatabad Township. In Peshawar, particularly, many of the Afghans came to be known by the immense amount of wealth they possessed which they exhibited in their properties and businesses. Due to this, most of the markets in Peshawar are completely dominated by Afghan refugees, such as the Karkhano and Board Bazar, and especially Karkhano Market where most of the Afghan businessmen have established work.

Despite the economic changes overtime in Peshawar and the status of the Afghan refugees, the underlying reasons for the economic success of the refugees have remained overlooked (Ibid). In this view, this study explores how the Afghans have done so well in Peshawar? In addition, what are the underlying reasons for their (economic) success? Furthermore, the study analyzes the educational level of these businessmen and evaluates whether their status as Afghans living in Pakistan gives them an advantage in establishing their business. As the researchers found that most of the Afghan refugees in Karkhano Market were involved in the retailing business, the study also focused on their involvement in retailing and other ventures, such as manufacturing or production. The study also delves into some of the cultural reasons for the success of Afghans in business in Peshawar, in which variables such as ‘family support’ are studied. Additionally, the researchers analyzed whether Afghan refugee businessmen want to return to their homeland or stay in Pakistan for their businesses, and further probes the satisfaction level of the Afghanis in terms of social and economic matters. The findings suggested that the educational facilities, security situation, and ease of doing business in Afghanistan are comparatively low as compared to Pakistan, which might influence the Afghanis to stay in Pakistan and continue their businesses.

### **Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Literature on Economic Engagement of the Refugees**

In Pakistan, the Afghan refugee population has reached massive numbers as far as five million over the course of the past few decades (Khan, 2017a). The continuous violence and political instability in Afghanistan have discouraged the return of Afghan refugees to their native country (Afghanistan: Challenges to Return, 2004; Afghanistan Refugees, 2019; Bohr & Price, 2015). Due to their prolonged stay, a study has characterized the Afghan refugees living in Pakistan as ‘protracted refugee population’ (Borthakur, 2017; Khan, 2017a). The term protracted points towards the situation where there is no action plan visible, neither any campaign by the government to ensure the return of Afghan refugees back to their country. After the communist takeover of Afghanistan in 1979, many Afghans started fleeing from Afghanistan to Pakistan and other neighboring countries. By June 1979, 109000 Afghans had successfully taken refuge in Pakistan. The process of Afghan migration to Pakistan accelerated after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviet-backed government of



Babrak Kamal in Kabul intentionally displaced many Afghan refugees to make it difficult for the Afghan resistance to taking refuge in the civilian population (Grare, 2011). By the end of 1980, Pakistan was hosting more than 3.5 million Afghan refugees (Ibid).

It was due to this that Frederic Grare, a French Diplomat, termed Pakistan as the ‘generous and ambivalent’ host of the Afghan refugees (Ibid). By using these two words together, it might be confusing in some aspects but they point towards two facts: one, Pakistan has had no consistent policy regarding the Afghan refugees which can be called as ‘ambivalent’ behavior; and second, Pakistan has provided more facilities to Afghan refugees than they were provided within their own country which indicates Pakistan’s generosity (Khan, 2017a). However, Frederic, later in his paper, faced difficulty in justifying his use of the word ‘ambivalent’; the paper accepted that in the early years of Afghan refugees’ arrival, Pakistan helped Afghan refugees on its own, without any help from the international community. Pakistan managed the situation to an extent that many problems that are usually associated with the refugees worldwide, such as the outbreak of diseases and malnutrition, were not witnessed in Afghan refugees living in Pakistan. Refugees were free to settle where they wished to and were free to set up businesses (Grare, 2011). Therefore, by accepting all these facts, Frederic did little in his paper to justify the use of the word ‘ambivalent’ in his paper. However, it can be contended that ‘ambivalent’ points towards the reluctance of the international community to recognize the role of Pakistan in serving the Afghan refugees (Ghufran, 2006). The main problem might be the policy differences between the Pakistani government and the international community on dealing with the unrest in Afghanistan (Armitage, Berger & Markey, 2015; Buzan & Ole, 2009; Cruden, 2011).

The aforementioned behavior of the international community has encouraged critical evaluation of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan and their relation with the local population. Building further on this, Taha & Aamir (2012), particularly analyzed the impact of Afghan refugees on the city of Peshawar. Peshawar, the provincial capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the first major city that comes after crossing the Pak-Afghan border; so many Afghans took refuge in Peshawar. The Afghans with poor economic situation settled in refugee camps in the outskirts of Peshawar while the wealthy and more affluent Afghans started residing in settled areas of Peshawar like Hayatabad Township, etc. They describe that the Afghan refugees living in Hayatabad were well funded by their relatives living in western countries, and received a monetary benefit from the properties they owned in their home country. They contended in their work that the Afghans started businesses and in a short time they took over all the major markets of Peshawar. Furthermore, the paper criticizes the Afghan refugees for many problems in Peshawar, including; smuggling, drug trade, and weapons, and criticized the government for lack of policy for dealing with these problems. Although the paper claims a clash between the local population and Afghan refugees, there were no specifics mentioned in this

regard. But it is clear that if Afghans dominate the markets of Peshawar, differences with the local population are considerably possible. However, admittedly, it is difficult to determine the impact of the Afghan business owners on the local population or local economy (Afghanistan: Challenges to Return, 2004).

It must also be noted that the Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan belong to nearly all economic classes. The income per month varies from 50 dollars per month to 400 dollars per month (Ibid). But in Peshawar, Afghans are not known for their poverty, but rather due to their wealth. After the tragedy of Army Public School (the terrorist attack on school children) in December 2014, the Pakistani government confirmed its intention of voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees (Ahmadi & Lakhani, 2017; Fayyaz, 2018; Ghufuran, 2006)<sup>1</sup>; this repatriation process described Pakistan's intent and policy under which the refugees were not forced to return to their home country; however, forced repatriation is in practice in many western countries (Khan, 2017b). Consequently, in Pakistan, many refugee camps were closed and Afghan refugees migrated from Pakistan, but many refugees with better financial status and good connections stayed behind.

Another informing case study (Habibi & Hunte, 2006), funded by the European Union, presents interesting insights into Afghan refugees. The study focuses and examines the adjustment process of the Afghan returnees after their return from Pakistan. Such an insight on the experiences of resettlement and post-repatriation of Afghan refugees after 2006 was significant as that time was considered as a 'stability period' in Afghanistan (Byrd, 2012). Additionally, the study (Habibi & Hunte, 2006) was significant because it posed questions from the Afghan returnees about who assisted them to find a residence in Pakistan in their initial days as refugees, to which 78 % replied that their relatives had helped them to find accommodation in Pakistan. Moreover, it mentioned that the other 79 % replied that their relatives had helped them in the time of need, and this reiterates the point that the Afghan family system remains strong and vibrant as a social institution. The study also found that 43 % of Afghans who returned had been working as daily wagers in Pakistan, while 37 % owned small businesses or were self-employed. The study also sheds light on the reasons of the refugees to not repatriate, in that the majority of Afghans, some 69 % chose to stay in Pakistan because of the fear of not finding employment in Afghanistan. Almost all the returnees had an income of less than 160 US dollars in Afghanistan, as compared to 400 US dollars of the Afghans living in Hayatabad, Peshawar (Taha & Aamir, 2012). This supports the notion that more affluent Afghans living in Pakistan have not returned to their country because they have better economic opportunities in Pakistan. Hunte's study was conducted in Nangarhar (which has Jalalabad as its capital), a prominent Pashtun tribe native of Jalalabad is Hazarbooz and Dostikhel (see Lawson et

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<sup>1</sup> Also see Pakistan's National Internal Security Policy 2014-2018, <https://nacta.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/National-Internal-Security-Policy-2014.pdf>

al., 2010), who are known as ‘koochies’ in Peshawar. In addition, they are usually known as wealthy merchants in Peshawar. Therefore, Habibi & Hunte’s work has been challenged in terms of the methodology adopted and the questions posed (Khoudour & Andersson, 2017).

Building further on the work by Khoudour & Anderson (2017), the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-funded paper helped to identify specifics of methodology to probe the economic impact of refugees on the local population worldwide. The paper pointed out that the number of refugees was on a rise globally due to conflict around the world, and in that 84 % of this displaced population was mainly living in the developing world, which was substantiated by the fact that nine out of top ten countries hosting refugees were developing countries (Ibid). Given that most of the studies do not specifically deal with the economic impact of refugees on the host country, yet scholars have tried to show both positive and negative impacts on the labor market. Some sectors have made wage changes; however, there is an improvement in other sectors such as retailing and agriculture. This shows that refugees can also be beneficial for the host country. On the contrary, the public sector has shown a decline in the quality of provision of services, due to the burden of refugee accommodation (Ibid).

Whereas, Gillis et al., (1992) contend that when the study of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and their economic status and contribution is concerned, it is important to understand the level of skills they possess. And in this view, the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA) can be treated as an example, especially since it has provided the Afghans in Pakistan an opportunity to indulge in trade activities. Pakistan is bound by a 1965 Agreement of which was modified in 2010, and in which all the goods destined to Afghanistan have to land over in Pakistani seaports and then can be entered into Afghanistan from different border crossings between Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, the Afghan transit trade facilitates cross-border smuggling; the goods are transferred between Afghanistan and Pakistan from different routes, which are mostly unregulated. This is the reason that the Pak-Afghan border is one of the most difficult borders to manage. Adding fuel to the fire, the culture of corruption, which prevails in customs authorities, also plays a major role in this mismanagement (Sharif, Farooq & Bashir, 2000). Under such circumstances, the illegal businesses are sustained on both sides of the border (Taha & Aamir, 2012). There is a strong network of government officials, smugglers, and legitimate businessmen who work in cahoots with each other in making profits for everyone. The legitimate businessmen provide full cover to these illegal trade and later help in parking the capital gains from smuggling (Bakrania, 2017; Sharif et al., 2000).

Adding more to this debate, the cross-border smuggling has multi-dimensional reasons, which include economic, political, geographical, and social tribal factors. Many Afghans have their relatives in Afghanistan who assist their smuggling operations. Tribes on both sides of the borders also work in cahoots

through a special tribal agreement. The data in this regard suggested that most of the goods, which were imported through ATTA before 2001, had no demands in Afghanistan such as television and home appliances and other expensive products including clothing and perfumes, etc., rather these products were more in demand in Pakistan. It is also asserted that the Pakistani high tariffs also encourage smuggling (Hussain, Ullah & Khilji, 2017). However, it also indicates that after the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, a lot has changed in Afghanistan, and on the border region of Pak-Afghan areas on the Pakistani side. It then leads to the question that with the fence recently set-up on the Pak-Afghan border, how much smuggling is possible? This question needs explicit attention and probing. However, the data for this chapter did observe that the markets in Peshawar, which were notorious for selling smuggled goods, are still bustling, such as the Karkhono Market.

## **Methodology**

The study was conducted in the Karkhano Market, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The overall sampling strategy was area/cluster random sampling. Moreover, out of seventeen markets, six markets were selected through purposive sampling. The focus of the study was to find the cultural and economic transformation of Afghan refugees in Peshawar. Only those respondents were interviewed who were Afghans and were willing to respond to the interviewers. Moreover, fifty business owners were interviewed under a semi-structured interview schedule (SSI) for relevant data collection. With the help of SPSS, various methods of quantitative analysis like measurement of central tendency, frequency distribution, were used for the analysis. Additionally, due to the security conditions in Pakistan, the research team decided to avoid direct questions.

Some variables or factors which helped determine the economic transformation of the Afghan refugees included: (i) educational background of refugees and what kind of technical training they possessed (Khoudour & Andersson, 2017); (ii) education or skill set of their employees (Ibid); (iii) relatives and business partners in Afghanistan (Hussain et al., 2017); and (iv) any shares in the business in Afghanistan (Ibid). And building upon these variables, the primary objectives of the chapter focused on (i) finding the socio-economic transformation of Afghan refugees in Peshawar; (ii) determining why some Afghan refugees had done better economically in Pakistan than others; and (iii) to assess the strength and the level of influence that the Afghan businesses hold in Peshawar. The following section displays the findings.

## **Economic and Social Transformation of Afghan Refugees in Peshawar: Data Findings and Analysis**

This section presents the data collected for this chapter and explicates the major findings. The first table displays the age groups that the respondents of the study

belonged to, which were the business class in Karkhano Market, and then a brief explanation of the data findings is mentioned. Following this pattern, this section covers the responses of the survey/ questionnaire utilized for this study.

**Table 7.1:** Age of the Respondents (Afghan Refugees)

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 18	02	04%
18-27	25	50%
28-37	14	28%
38-47	08	16%
Above 47	01	02%
Total	50	100%

The above table shows the age of the respondents. According to the table, 02 (04.0%) respondents were below 18, 25 (50%) were in the age group of 28-37, 14 (28%) were in the age group of 38-47. While 01 (02%) was above 47. The findings from this data indicated that the majority of the respondents i.e., 25 (50%) fell in the age group of 28-37 years.

**Table 7.2:** Age when Entered into Business

Age	Frequency	Percent
10-17	18	36%
18-25	28	56%
26-35	03	06%
Above 35	01	02%
Total	50	100%

According to the above table, the respondents were asked about their age when they started their business. The data indicate that 18 (36.0%) started the business when they were 10-17 years young, 28 (56%) started when they were between the ages of 18–25 years, 03 (06%) started the business when they were 26-35 while remaining 01 (2%) started the business when he was above 35 years. This shows that the majority of the respondents 28 (56%) started the business from the age of 18-25 years, and business was and has been their primary choice of employment and work.

**Table 7.3:** Level of Economic Success (in Business)

<i>Status as economically 'successful'</i>	Frequency	Specification for Positive Response (Yes)		
		Personal Efforts	Family Support	Environment Factors
<b>Yes</b>	42(84%)	30(71.4%)	04(9.5%)	08(19%)
<b>No</b>	08(16%)	08(100%)	-----	-----
<b>Total</b>	50(100%)	38(76%)	04(08%)	08(16%)

The above table shows the views of Afghans about their success in the businesses in Peshawar, Pakistan. The data indicates that 42 (84%) respondents were of the view that they are successful in their business whereas 08 (16%) were not satisfied. Among the 42 (84%) respondents, who were economically successful, 30 (71.4%) were of the view that they are successful because of their efforts, whereas 04 (9.4%) said that they are successful because of their family's support while the remaining 8 (19%) were of the view that the business environment helped them in making their businesses successful. The findings from this set of data indicate that the majority believes and credits themselves for their economic success and stability than external sources.

**Table 7.4:** Educational Stage

Stage of	Educational Stage				
	Primary	Matriculation	Intermediate	Bachelor	No Education
Employers	23 (46%)	12 (24%)	06 (12%)	02 (04%)	07 (14%)
Employees	13 (26%)	15 (30%)	01 (02%)	-----	21 (42%)

The above table gives details about the educational status of both the employers and the employees. According to the table, among the employers, 23 (46%) were primary educated, 12 (24%) had acquired matriculation certificates, 06 (12%) had intermediate level education while the remaining 02 had bachelor's degree. Furthermore, 07 (14%) employers were illiterate. The table further shows that among employees, 13 (26%) had primary level education, 15 (30%) were matriculate, 01 (02%) was intermediate while 21 (42%) were illiterate. The major findings from this data set indicate that the majority of employers i.e. 23 (46.0%) had primary level of education, whereas the majority of employees i.e. 21 (42.0%) were illiterate.

**Table 7.5:** Technical Skill(s)

Technical Skills of	Technical Skill(s)	
	Yes	No
Employers	02 (4%)	48 (96%)
Employees	06(12%)	44(88%)

The above table gives details about the technical skills of the employee and also employers. According to the table, 02 (4.0%) employers had technical skills while 48 (96%) employers had no technical skills at all. The table also shows that among employees, 06 (12%) employees had a technical skill, while 44 (88.0%) employees have no technical skill. The major findings indicate that the majority of employers i.e. 48(96%) and employees i.e. 44(88%) lacked technical skills.

**Table 7.6:** Manufacturing of Products (by Afghan refugees)

Manufacturing of Products	Frequency	Percent
Yes	01	02%
No	49	98%
Total	50	100%

According to the above table, the respondents were asked whether they manufactured any products on their own. The table shows that 49 (98%) respondents said 'no', while. 1 (2.0) respondent gave a response in the affirmative. This indicates that the majority i.e. 49 (98%) of respondents do not manufacture any products on their own.

**Table 7.7:** Family Support to Business

<i>Is your family supportive of your business?</i>	Frequency	Specification for Positive Response (Yes)		
		Father	Brother	All Family Members
Yes	31 (62%)	15 (46.9%)	09 (28.1%)	07 (21.9%)
No	19 (38%)	-----	-----	-----
Total	50 (100%)	15 (46.9%)	09 (28.1%)	07 (21.9%)

The above table gives details about that family support to businesses of Afghans. There were a total of 50 respondents. From which, 31 (62%) of the respondents opined that 'yes' other members of their family had supported their business. Among them, 15 (46.9%) of the participants said that their fathers supported their businesses, 09 (28.1%) said that their brothers supported them while 07 (21.9%) of the participants said that all of their family members support their business. The table further shows that 19 (38%) of the participants said that the family members do not support their businesses.

**Table 7.8:** Business of Import and Export

Import and Export Business / Products	Yes	No
<i>Do you import and export business?</i>	10(20%)	40(80%)
<i>Do you sell imported products?</i>	31(62%)	19(38%)

The above table shows whether the participants have import or export business and to find out whether they sell imported products in the market or not. From the fifty respondents, 10 (20%) respondents had import and export business, while 40 (80%) of the participant did not have any import and export business. The table further shows that whether the respondents sell imported products or not. According to the data, 31 (62%) respondents sell imported products while

19 (38%) respondents did not sell any imported products. The findings show that the majority of the respondents 40 (80%) are not directly linked to the import and export business, but most of them 31 (62%) are involved in selling imported products.

**Table 7.9:** Difference in Costs of Products with other Markets

<i>Whether your products are cheaper than in other markets?</i>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%
Total	50	100%

According to the above table, the respondents were asked whether their products are cheaper than the other markets or they sell their products at the same rates. The data shows that (80.0%) of the respondents said they sold their products cheaper than the other markets, while (20%) of the respondents said they sold their products at the same rates as other markets. This shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 40 (80%) respondents were selling their products cheaper than the other markets.

**Table 7.10:** Experiences of Social Change(s) after Migration

<b>Social Changes after Migration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cultural Practices	21	42
Education	10	20
Attitude	07	14
All of the above	12	24
Total	50	100

The above table depicts how the Afghan refugees felt about the cultural changes when they migrated to Pakistan. According to the table, 21 (42%) participants said that their cultural practices changed after migration. 10 (20.0%) participants said that they got higher education in Pakistan. 7 (14.0%) participants said that their attitude changed. While 12 (24.0%) participants said they feel all the above-mentioned changes occurred after migration. the major finding from this data indicates that the majority of the respondents i.e. 21 (42%) felt changes in their cultural practices.

**Table 7.11:** Extent of Economic Change(s) after Migration

<b>The extent of Economic Changes after Migration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
To some extent	16	32%
Normal	06	12%



To a great extent	28	56%
Total	50	100%

The above table shows how the Afghan refugees felt about the economic changes when they migrated to Pakistan. According to the table, 16 (32.0%) responded that their economic conditions changed to some extent, 06 (12%) responded that their economic condition changed to a normal level. While remaining 28 (56%) responded that, their economic conditions changed largely. The major finding indicates that the majority of respondents i.e. 28 (56%) felt changes largely in their economic conditions.

**Table 7.12:** Business Partnerships with Afghan Relatives

Relative(s) in Afghanistan	Frequency	<i>If yes, do you share business or investment?</i>	
		Yes	No
Yes	43 (86%)	13 (30.2%)	30 (69.8%)
No	07 (14%)	-----	-----
Total	50 (100%)	13 (26%)	37 (74%)

The above table shows if the refugees have any relatives in Afghanistan. From which, 43 (86.0%) participants said that they had relatives in Afghanistan, while 07 (14%) participants said that they had no relatives in Afghanistan. The table further highlights that whether they share business or investment with those relatives in Afghanistan or not. According to the table, among those who have relatives in Afghanistan, 13 (26%) participants share their business or investment with their relatives while remaining 37 (74%) do not share their business or investment with their relatives. The major finding from this data set indicates that the majority i.e. 43 (86%) have relatives in Afghanistan, and among them, majority i.e. 30 (69.8%) share their business or investment with their relative in Afghanistan.

**Table 7. 13:** Reasons for Returning to Afghanistan

Reply	Freq.	Yes		No			
		Motherl and	Relatives	Business	Security	Family settlement	All
Yes	12 (24%)	10 (90%)	02 (10%)	-----	-----	-----	-----
No	38 (76%)	-----	-----	14 (36.8%)	04 (10.5%)	07 (18.4%)	13 (34.2%)
Total	50 (100%)	10 (90%)	2 (10%)	14 (36.8%)	04 (10.5%)	07 (18.4%)	13 (34.2%)

According to the above table, the question was asked from the participants about their home country whether they would like to go back to Afghanistan or not. They were asked to give reasons for their answers. The data in the table shows that 12 (24%) participants said they would want to go back to Afghanistan. Among them, 10 (83.3%) gave the reasons that they considered Afghanistan is their homeland, 01 (8.3%) said he would go back because his relatives live there while remaining 01 (08.3) respondent was not sure. The table further shows that 38 (76%) participants do not want to go back to Afghanistan. Among them, 14 (36.8%) participants said that they do not want to go back to Afghanistan due to their settled businesses in Pakistan, 04 (10.5%) participants said that due to security reason they do not want to go back to Afghanistan as in Pakistan they are more secure, while 07 (18.4%) participants said that due to family settlement in Pakistan they did not want to go back to Afghanistan, while 13 (34.2) participants said that they do not want to go back to Afghanistan due to all of the above-mentioned reasons.

**Table 7.14:** Business Partnerships in Afghanistan

<i>Whether Pakistani businessmen from your markets have any business partners in Afghanistan?</i>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Specification for Positive Response (Yes)</b>		
		<b>Electronics</b>	<b>Cosmetics</b>	<b>Grocery</b>
Yes	14 (28%)	03 (21.4%)	07 (50%)	04 (28.6%)
No	36 (72%)	-----	-----	-----
Total	50 (100%)	03 (21.4%)	07 (50%)	04 (28.6%)

The respondents were asked if the Pakistani businessmen from their markets had any business partners in Afghanistan, and they were further asked to elaborate upon the nature and the type of business they had. In response to this, 14 (28%) participants stated that they had business partners in Afghanistan. Among them, 03 (06%) participants said that they were in the business of electronics, 07 (14%) participants said that transported cosmetics, while 05 (10%) participants said that they were involved with the business of groceries. However, 36 (72%) participants indicated that they did not any have business partners in Afghanistan.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This section presents a discussion on the data findings and analysis mentioned in the preceding section. In that, a noticeable trend which was observed in the data collection was the age in which majority of Afghan businessmen have started their business; which indicated that 36% of the respondents had started their professional life as businessmen from the ages between 10 to 17 years while 56% had become businessmen from the age of 18 to 25, the rest of them started the business after they turned 25. It shows that most of the Afghan

refugees have started doing business from a very young age which itself can be considered as a plus point. Additionally, 62% of respondents claimed to have the full support of their family to work as a businessman which points out that Afghan refugees have a great inclination towards the business which can be very helpful for a new entrepreneur (also see Edelman, Manolova, Shirokova, & Tsukanova, 2016). This also indicates that business and trading opportunities have provided a sustainable source of employment to the Afghan refugees in Peshawar.

Moreover, most of the businessmen in the Karkhano Market who participated in the research claimed to be economically successful in their lives. Their percentage comprised 84% of the total respondents, whereas, 71.4% of them believed that it is due to their personal efforts and struggle, while 19% believed it was the environment in which they are doing their business, and only 9.5 % said that they are well-off due to their family economic status. The present data indicate that 71.4% of respondents who think that they are well off can be considered as self-made individuals, who have achieved prosperity during the stay as refugees in Pakistan. This economic stability of the respondents also coincides with the social values that they hold. For instance, the respondents have chosen the option of being economically stable, within the Pashtun culture of modesty (see Dupree, 1997); when a person declares themselves successful they are completely satisfied with their economic status. Adding further to this, the 'business environment' is very important for any business; if the environment is not conducive, no business can flourish (Duraman & Tharumarajah, 2010) as there are no opportunities or acceptance in the host society to allow the migrants to expand their business.

Furthermore, the relation between economic prosperity and education is co-constitutional (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007). When the respondents were asked about their level of education, the majority of the employers 23 (46%) had primary level of education, and the majority of the employees 21 (42%) were illiterate. It is important to probe more about their businesses as with such kind of nominal or no education how these respondents were able to expand businesses quite successfully. The respondents were also asked if they had any technical skills or any of their staff possessed technical skills. This question was particularly inquired to ascertain if they had been involved in any technical-based business or any complicated engineering operation. In response, 88% of respondents replied that neither they nor any of their employees have any technical skills. We further probed whether they manufactured any of the goods that they sold, to which 98 % of the respondents replied that they did not produce any of the products they sold, which makes it clear that these business owners are not running any complex engineering or technical-based business or doing any kind of manufacturing of products themselves. Therefore, it can be contended that the businesses established by Afghan refugees completely comprise of buying and selling finished goods; they have not established any industrial-based businesses.

The authors also probed from the respondents if they sold imported goods, to which 62% of the respondents replied in the affirmative, while when asked if they were running import-export businesses, the majority, 80% replied in the negative. It can be assumed that this 80 % buy the products from other importers while 20% accepted that they themselves are involved in the import-export business. Furthermore, when the respondents were asked if the products they sold were cheaper from the products being sold in other markets, 80% of respondents replied in conformity. In Pakistan, imported products are usually higher in prices than locally manufactured products (Nakhoda & Pasha, 2017), and using this many notions, Afghan traders in Pakistan are benefitting from the cross-border smuggling routes (Sharif et al., 2000). Most of this smuggling is facilitated by ATTA (Khan, 2017a). The Afghan refugees are more equipped in benefitting from the smuggling trade because they have tribal and family ties on the other side of the border; their relatives and tribal affiliates can handle the Afghan side of the trade for them (Hussain et al., 2017). However, our data collectors could not ask directly from the business owners of Karkhano Market about their involvement in smuggling, therefore, the questions were modified to inquire about their family ties in Afghanistan, and in that around 83% of respondents confirmed that they had relatives in Afghanistan. Furthermore, 30.2% of the respondents also shared properties with those relatives and were involved in business with them.

The Afghan refugees involved in smuggling usually do share business and property with the relatives on the other side of the border (Bakrania, 2017; Hussain et al., 2017), but in this case, only 30.2% traders acknowledged their relationship with their relatives living on the other side of the border. Adding on, when they were asked about if Pakistani businessmen have any business partners in Afghanistan, 72% of respondents said no. It shows that most of the Pakistani businessmen are not involved in smuggling because they have no ties in Afghanistan who could deal with the smuggling operation on the other side of the border. Even if a Pakistani wanted to take benefit from the smuggling routes of the Pak-Afghan border, they would have to form an alliance with the people doing the business on the other side of the border (Bakrania, 2017), which indicates that Afghan refugees enjoy this edge on their Pakistani counterparts. These trends and patterns indicate that the Afghan refugees have overtime established sustainable businesses in Peshawar, Pakistan. Moreover, assimilation has been eased due to cultural and social similitude with the Pashtun across the border in Pakistan that practice similar businesses. However, the smuggling associated with the Afghan refugees can contend as an evolutionary economic adaptation that uses the informal economy as formal and legal employment.

Overall, this study indicates that the success of Afghan refugees – in economic and business terms — seems to be disengaged with human resource development or any technical or economic innovation, or in other words any socio-economic skill(s). Rather, the dots created by the authors in this chapter indicate that most of the Afghan refugees are thriving due to the unregulated

trade in and around Karkhano Market. Furthermore, they do not want to go back to Afghanistan, because they consider Pakistan a more secure place in terms of residence and employment as it offers more business facilities and opportunities as compared to Afghanistan. Yet, there are many variables and phenomena concerning the Afghan refugees in Pakistan that require deeper academic scrutiny and analysis. In that, the exploitable loopholes within the Pakistani system, the relationship between wealthy Afghan refugees and smuggling on the Pak-Afghan border, and the need for accountability measures regarding the Afghan businesses in Pakistan necessitate further probing.

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## **Conflict-Induced Forced Migration & Human Security: Experiences of Off-Camp Internally Displaced Persons in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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**F**orced displacement of people has emerged as one of the main global risks confronted today. Due to the lack of international and national legal instruments to address the displacement of people within their home country, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are exposed to severe human insecurities. In Pakistan, millions of people are living as IDPs and a significant number of them live off-camp. However, little research has been done on the living experiences of off-camp IDPs and human insecurities associated with forced migration. Focusing on the lived-experiences of conflict-induced IDPs from North Waziristan living in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this study unveils the process of their migration, the reasons of living off-camp, and socio-economic problems they encounter in their everyday lives. To gain in-depth insights into the issues, a qualitative research approach was adopted to conduct the study. In-depth interviews were conducted with 17 IDP families living off-camp using a snowball sampling technique. The collected data was analyzed through thematic analysis approach. The main findings of the study show that the IDPs were living off-camp because of the lack of basic services in camps e.g., food, clean drinking water, security, sanitation, separate restrooms for females, and especially due to the issue of female *purdah* (veil). As off-camp IDPs, they were experiencing several problems related to education, health, registration, and livelihood. However, many of the humanitarian organizations were reluctant to assist them because they did not fulfill the criterion of *deserving migrants*, i.e. they were not living in officially designated camps, and a significant number of them did not have national identity cards.

### **Introduction**

Due to the unprecedented increase in the forced displacement of people internally and internationally, forced migration has emerged as one of the main global risks confronted today (United Nations High Commissioner for



Refugees, 2016; Yousaf, 2017). The internally displaced persons (IDPs) who cannot cross international boundaries could be more vulnerable as there is no international law or convention to define their status and protect their rights. In Pakistan, millions of people are living as IDPs and a significant number of them live off-camps (Internally Displaced Persons Vulnerability Assessment and Profiling Project, 2014). However, the existing literature does not provide enough information about the living experiences of off-camp IDPs and how their issues are addressed by humanitarian organizations. Focusing on the lived-experiences of conflict-induced IDPs from North Waziristan (NW)<sup>1</sup> living off-camp in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this study unveils the circumstances that led them to live off-camp, socio-economic problems they face, and how humanitarian interventions address their issues.

According to the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (2001) IDPs are defined as “Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border” (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2004, p. 3).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted that by the end of 2018, 70.8 million people were forcibly displaced across the world as a result of conflicts, hazards, violence or violations of human rights. During 2018, 13.6 million people were estimated to be newly displaced and were forced to leave their place of living to pursue protection somewhere else; out of this, 10.8 million people were displaced in their home countries and approximately 2.8 million included refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2019). Moreover, the Internally Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) reported that unprecedented massive displacement of people within their home countries occurred mainly due to armed conflicts and violence. Only in 2015, there were 27.8 million new displacements occurred in 127 countries which is equivalent roughly to the populations of London, New York, Paris, and Cairo together (IDMC, 2016).

Due to the alarming statistics of forced human displacement, the World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report (2019) reported the involuntary migration as one of the major global risks confronted by the world today. The large-scale involuntary migration can occur due to several social factors, like armed conflict or any other forms of conflict, natural and human-made disasters, environmental issues, and economic reasons. When people are displaced, they become increasingly vulnerable in terms of security, community support, the capability to earn livelihood and access to food, water,

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<sup>1</sup> North Waziristan Agency became a district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after the merger of Federally Administrated Tribal Areas with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in 2018.

and shelter. This may directly threaten their ability to meet their basic needs, especially when families are split apart or when family members are killed during the conflict or they are missing. Like other vulnerable populations, IDPs are entitled to assistance and protection. It is of paramount importance to take account of all their needs at every stage of the displacement, particularly in the area of protection (Couldrey & Herson, 2008).

### **Involuntary Migrants: Refugees and IDPs**

The terms IDPs and refugees both refer to involuntary migrants who are forced to leave their homes and communities; however, they are not the same and have different contexts. A ‘refugee’ is a special status approved or granted by international law, whereas IDPs have no such status in international law. According to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), refugees are those people who are forced to live outside their home country as they are victims of persecution in their own country or have serious threats to their lives. Whereas IDPs are those people who are displaced and live within their own country and have not crossed an international border. IDPs are protected by domestic law as well as international human rights law in an armed conflict situation (Mooney, 2005). The UNHCR (2016) reported that Pakistan hosts the second-highest number of refugees in the world, approximately 1.56 million from Afghanistan. In 2009 Pakistan was hosting the highest number of refugees, nearly 1.9 million from all over Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2010).

### ***Human Rights of IDPs and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement***

In 1998, the UN promulgated the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement to assist the governments and stakeholders to frame the human rights-based approach to address the issues of IDPs. The Guiding Principles clearly state that “Internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the ground that they are internally displaced” (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1998, p. 5).

The Guiding Principles require the states to protect and help internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction without any discrimination. Principle 22 proclaims that:

Internally displaced persons, whether or not they are living in camps, shall not be discriminated against as a result of their displacement in the enjoyment of the following rights:

- i. The right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- ii. The right to seek freely opportunities for employment and to participate in economic activities;

- iii. The right to associate freely and participate equally in community affairs;
- iv. The right to vote and to participate in governmental and public affairs, including the right to have access to the means necessary to exercise this right (Ibid., p. 12).

Drawing upon the lived experiences of off-camp IDPs in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa this study also examines the interventions of humanitarian organizations in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

In order to theoretically contextualize this study, Amartya Sen's (1999) capabilities approach could be utilized as a framework that focuses on enhancing the choices of people and defines freedom as an expansion of their capabilities. Freedom is a prerequisite for human well-being, but freedom is linked to the capabilities of individuals, providing them opportunities and choices to make decisions about their lives. Human development cannot be achieved only through economic development or economic resources; rather real human development ensures human freedom. Analyzing the issue of internal displacement by applying the capability approach framework unveils that the very process of internal displacement — a form of forced migration — restricts the ability of people to make choices as they are forced to leave their homelands. As discussed earlier, the available statistics indicate that an overwhelming majority of displaced persons do not live in camps. The capability framework also guides to analyze people's experiences whether they live off-camp due to the lack of choices or freedom in the officially declared camps. Moreover, the framework helps to examine how the humanitarian interventions address the vulnerabilities of IDPs and enhance opportunities and choices for the displaced people to spend their lives with dignity.

## **Internal Displacement in Pakistan**

Pakistan has been facing the issue of internal displacement for quite some time. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), almost a decade ago, a massive internal displacement occurred during August and September 2010 after the worst flooding that affected nearly 20 million people; more than 7 million people had to leave their homes. Although most of the IDPs returned to their living areas after the flood receded, the people were mainly living in open areas as approximately 1.9 million houses were destroyed and damaged all over the country (HRCP, 2011).

Over the last several years, Pakistan has been facing the brunt of internal displacement due to various factors in different areas. In Malakand division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and ex-Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA)<sup>2</sup>, massive internal displacement occurred in spring 2009 mainly

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<sup>2</sup> FATA was merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on May 31, 2018 under 25<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment ([http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1528788450\\_669.pdf](http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1528788450_669.pdf))

due to the operation of armed forces against terrorists, leading to an outflow of about 2.7 million people in a very short period of time. These events led to one of the biggest displacements in Pakistan at that time (Din, 2010). In addition, the violation of human rights by the militants, warfare between the tribal heads and sectarian fights, further added to the problem of internal displacement in Pakistan (HelpAge, 2010). Such violent conflicts since 2007 have been adversely affecting parts of Balochistan, KP, and ex-FATA and caused the massive internal displacement of civilians. In Pakistan, approximately 3 million people have been displaced since 2007 (Wazir, Khan, Abbasi & Zahra, 2014).

Owing to the massive number of IDPs from NW as a result of military action against terrorists in June 2014, the Pakistani government formally requested the UN and other humanitarian agencies to extend their support to the IDPs. The government of Pakistan established camps in many areas of KP province with the help of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) and national and international humanitarian agencies. The response of the government primarily focused on cash grant assistance to the people who were verified and registered by the government agencies (OCHA, 2014).

According to OCHA (2014), the government registered 90,836 IDPs families from NW in July 2014, approximately 993,166 persons (average of 10.9 persons per household). In this calculation, there were approximately 73% of women and children. However, the government of Pakistan reported that just 52,000 families received a cash grant from the government, approximately 22,000 per month.

### ***IDPs Living Off-camp***

According to estimates, an overwhelming majority of IDPs from ex-FATA lived off-camp. The Internally Displaced Persons Vulnerability Assessment and Profiling Project (2014) reported that 80% of IDPs in ex-FATA were living off-camp because of unorganized camping system, unavailability of basic facilities, a large number of people living in one tent, and no proper washrooms for females in the camps.

Pakistan Disaster Management Authority reported that 11,346 families were living in camps while 42,051 families were living off-camp. The majority of people were living off-camp because of long queues at camps, lack of transport facilities to the camps, and lack of privacy, especially for females (Reliefweb, 2012). According to the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), most of the IDPs were living off-camp in Kohat, Bannu, Karak, Tank, D. I. Khan, and Hangu. In each area, shelter and food remain the most urgent needs of the displaced families. Also, IDPs live off-camp because in host communities they have better opportunities to work, or start their own business, and have better access to education than isolated camps; these are important factors contributing to the self-sufficiency of the IDPs (Davies, 2012).

Further, according to a report of UNHCR (2014), Rapid Protection Cluster Assessment (RPCA), among off-camp IDPs, the majority (76%) of NW IDPs were living in rented accommodation, 12% were living in the spontaneous settlement, mostly in schools, 7% were living with relatives and only 5% were living in the host community. The IDPs living in the host community were sharing the rooms with up to 40 individuals in just one room accommodation (UNHCR, 2014).

As indicated by the above-mentioned estimates, the majority of IDPs preferred to live off-camp, however, the assistance provided by humanitarian organizations tend to focus on on-camp IDPs seriously undermining their right to go to the place where they feel safe and depriving their rights as displaced persons.

## Research Methodology

For this study, a qualitative research approach has been used for an in-depth analysis of the issues of off-camp IDPs and to explore their lived experiences. The first author conducted the fieldwork for this research study in the Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province during October-December, 2017. This area was selected because most of the internally displaced persons from NW were living in Bannu as off-camp IDPs. Using snowball sampling technique 17 respondents were selected who were displaced from NW and were living off-camp in different areas of Bannu along with their families. As it was difficult to interview women because of cultural norms, all the respondents were male — mostly the head of the family. In order to examine the issues and experiences of off-camp IDPs, the method of the in-depth interview was used because it gave detailed information about their lived experiences. In total, 17 in-depth interviews were conducted from off-camp internally displaced persons who were living in host communities of Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Each interview lasted between 30-45 minutes. To conduct the interviews, an interview guide was developed as a tool for data collection. Before the start of the interview, the purpose of the research was explained to the participants and their informed consent was obtained to participate in the study. Thematic analysis technique was used to identify different patterns or themes in the data obtained through in-depth interviews. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are displayed in the table below.

**Table 8.1:** Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in Years)		
21-30	03	18%
31-40	10	60%
41-50	03	18%
51-60	01	06%

<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	14	82%
Unmarried	03	18%
<b>Monthly Income (In Rs)</b>		
Up to 30,000	08	47%
30001-40,000	04	23%
40001-50,000	03	18%
Above 50,000	02	12%
<b>Family Type</b>		
Nuclear	00	00%
Joint	17	100%
<b>Living Status</b>		
Rent	13	76%
Relatives	02	12%
Friend	01	06%
Own	01	06%
<b>Education Level</b>		
Illiterate	04	23%
Primary	02	12%
Middle	02	12%
Matric	00	00%
FA/FSc.	01	06%
BA/BSc.	03	18%
BS/ Masters	05	29%
<b>Total</b>	17	100%

## **Fleeing Armed Conflict: Challenges Faced by IDPs during Migration**

In June 2014, the government of Pakistan decided to start operation—Zarb-e-Azb—against terrorists in North Waziristan (NW). The local administration ordered the people of NW to leave their homes within just three days. Leaving homes in an emergency to flee violent conflicts was a huge challenge for the residents of NW. Although people living in NW had an idea that the government was planning to launch an operation against the terrorists, they had never thought that they would be displaced within no time. Many people did not have any idea where to go and how to manage the traveling for the family and what to take with them. Amid this crucial situation, one of the study participants share that:

The administration ordered us to evacuate the area after the start of the operation. Approximately three million people were required to move from NW within three days only. The migration was very difficult for us because there is just a single route from NW to Bannu. The government should have informed us before the operation. In such an emergency, to protect our lives, we could not take anything

from our homes and left our animals, i.e. cows, goats, and donkeys.

The process of involuntary migration was a very painful experience for the people displaced from NW. Due to lack of facilities to leave the violent area within no time, the displaced persons, including men, women, children, and aged, had to walk for miles along with very few items that they could carry with them. Those families who were lucky to find transport for migration were also stuck in a traffic jam for several hours. Due to the very harsh and hot weather season and being unable to bear the hardships of the journey, some of the displaced persons died during the process of migration. While recalling the difficult time of migration, an aged participant stated:

The local transport was not enough for almost three million displaced people to take them to safe places. This was actually the responsibility of the government to provide suitable transport to us or they should have delayed the operation till we had vacated our houses and left the area. We are poor people and we could not hire private transport because they were demanding triple rent for transport. Under normal situation, the rent for transport is 6,000 rupees to Bannu city, but the transporters were demanding 16,000-18,000 rupees. That is why we covered a 27-kilometer distance by walking 16 hours.

As mentioned before, the people of NW were displaced from their area within no time to plan or think about the evacuation. Their problems were further exacerbated due to the lack of interventions by the government to facilitate the process of evacuation. While leaving homes, the people carried with them a very limited supply of food items and drinking water as they did not have much time to buy the food and they assumed that they would be able to find transport and will reach Bannu in few hours. However, the limited supply of food that they had was not enough for the whole family members for approximately 16 hours period. During such a crisis, whatever food was available to the family was mostly given to children and females. During the journey, most of the males remained thirsty and hungry because there was no drinking water and food available on their way to Bannu. To barely survive, some people had to drink dirty water from a small river and other standing water bodies that caused diarrhea and food poisoning and further added to their problems. A participant shared his experience as:

That was the month of June, the weather was very hot and we left our homes with no transport facility. We could not carry with us enough food and drinking water because of an emergency. The water and food we had were not enough for the whole family. We particularly faced severe problems to manage food for our children, as there was no food and drinking water available throughout the journey. While walking continuously for several hours most males

and some female members of our family did not eat anything. We barely made it to the *Khajera*i check post where some relief organizations provided us biscuits and juice.

In this involuntary migration, people faced many health-related problems because most of the hospitals and maternity centers were closed due to the armed conflict. Those who were unable to walk because of health issues, their family members had to carry them on beds lifting on their shoulders. Due to a long journey, rush/traffic jam and the unavailability of medical services, some of the patients died during the migration. A 35-year-old respondent shared his family's experience as:

During the migration, we faced many issues, but the most significant was dealing with pregnant women. During this emergency situation, the pregnant women were forced to leave the area even when they could not bear the hardship of long tiring travel. My brother's wife was pregnant at that time and she lost her baby due to problems we had during the process of migration without any health facilities. In most of our villages, we have trained KHALA [traditional birth attendant without any formal qualification] for child delivery cases but during the emergency, everybody wanted to leave the area so we could not get in touch with her.

After the migration, most of the IDPs were living off-camp in Bannu, Karak, D. I. Khan, and some other districts, but the majority of them preferred living in Bannu being the nearest city to NW where people could migrate even without transport. Furthermore, Bannu and NW have many similarities in terms of culture, values, norms, and language. At the time of migration, the IDPs believed that the operation would be completed soon; therefore, they came to Bannu to easily go back to NW. The respondents shared that their choice of living in a particular host community was mainly shaped by the affordable rent and easy availability of houses in the living areas. As mentioned before, the majority of IDPs from NW came to Bannu, the sudden large influx of migrants created a shortage of rented houses in Bannu that led to an increase in the rent — adding further to the problems of IDPs.

### **Reasons for Living Off-camp**

As mentioned earlier, most of the IDPs in Bannu were living off-camp. The data of this study indicate that the main reasons for living as off-camp IDPs included: lack of basic facilities and sanitation/sewerage system in the camp, issues associated with *purdah* (veil) and security of females (e.g., no separate washrooms), cultural values and norms, especially Pashtunwali<sup>3</sup>. Many of the

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<sup>3</sup> Pashtunwali is a non-written ethical code and traditional lifestyle which the indigenous Pashtun people follow.



off-camp IDPs initially went to the official camp but due to these issues, they moved to other areas and decided to live off-camp.

As highlighted before, the people were displaced during the very hot month of June. In the early days of displacement, there was no electricity in the camp and during nighttime people had to use candles for light. Another issue faced by them was the limited availability of water for drinking, bathing, and washing, etc. Most of the people left the camp soon due to the above major issues and migrated to different places in Bannu where they could have access to basic services.

For many IDP families living in the camp were the biggest threat to the security of their female family members. A participant shared his father's words "We are Pashtuns; we can survive without a meal, water, and air, but cannot live in the camp where our females feel insecure". He was of the view that Pashtuns tend to be very strict in terms of their culture, norms, and values, and they can even die for living by their values. Another participant who initially went to an IDP camp and then decided to live off-camp explained:

We preferred to live off-camp due to our family's *purdah*. In the camp, there was no proper *purdah* system and there was no separate washroom for females that is why our females felt insecure and shy using the washroom during the daytime. Our female family members decided to use the washroom at night due to the long mixed line of males, females, and children during the daytime. They also felt insecure and wanted to leave the camp because NGOs and media channels for interviews and pictures frequently approached them.

In Bannu, Baka Khel camp was established near hilly areas where local people were already facing a scarcity of water issues. Most people in the area would buy clean water for drinking purposes. Therefore, the shortage of water facilities in the camp was also a contributing factor for off-camp living. The IDPs living in the camp were getting limited water and they had to get it from the very far site because of the large area of the camp.

### **Living Off-camp and Associated Human Insecurities**

The IDPs living in host communities faced many problems. Many of them even did not have access to the basic facilities in Bannu. The influx of huge numbers of IDPs, around 1 million (UNHCR, 2014), from NW to Bannu made it difficult to provide services to the IDPs as the city already had a poor infrastructure in terms of health, education and business. Moreover, due to high rent in the main city areas, many of the IDPs had to rent houses in less developed areas with very limited access to schools and hospitals.

The data collected for this research from IDPs in Bannu indicates that the IDPs had mixed experiences of living in host communities. In some areas, the host community treated the IDPs like guests and they helped or facilitated the IDPs by providing them meals, bedding, drinking water, etc. In some host communities, even the local people provided some cash and monthly ration to help the poor IDPs and offered them free accommodation. One of the participants told:

The people of the host community were very good and treated us like guests or their own families. For the first 2-3 months, they even did not ask us for the rent of accommodation and helped our families in whatever ways they could. For the first two weeks of our settlement here, we did not cook lunch/dinner because they provided us food. Different members of the community provided different things according to their capacity to our families like blankets, pedestal fan, and kitchen accessories, etc. They also allowed our children to take drinking water and ice from their homes.

However, not all IDPs had similar experiences. Some IDPs living in host communities were facing difficulties as they were considered a threat to the peaceful environment of the host community. Due to such unwelcoming attitudes of the host communities, some IDPs had to move to other host communities. While sharing his experiences, one of the participants explained:

Not all the fingers in a hand are equal, which means that there are good and bad people in every community. We initially migrated to a community where they treated us like ignorant, illiterate, and militants. Our female family members were also feeling scared and harassed in the community because of the negative attitudes of the neighbors. Some of them even blocked water supply to our homes and sometimes they would play loud music in front of our doorstep at midnight. While buying something from shops in the host community, the shopkeepers would charge more amount from us. Due to these things, we left that community and shifted here. The people of this community are very good and we do not have those problems here.

Education is considered a key to peace and prosperity. After their displacement, education of the children of IDP families was affected as they did not continue their education because some of them could not get admission in schools of host communities, or they had to stand in lines to get food items from humanitarian organizations. As people from NW left their communities in an emergency, they could not get a school leaving certificate without which schools in Bannu refused the admission of the children of IDP families that too in the middle of the academic year. Also, for many IDPs, it was not possible to

afford high fees of private academic institutions. Regarding the situation of government schools, they were already overcrowded and had no single chair left in classrooms and many students were sitting on the floor, hence they could not give admission to more children of the IDPs. The participants informed that the forced migration had severely affected the education of more than 34,000 children. One participant shared:

Our children did not have access to educational institutions in the host community which wasted their one whole academic year. The local government schools were filled with local children and children of IDPs and there was no more space left in the schools. We are poor people we cannot afford to send our children to private schools.

Similarly, another participant who had some resources to even afford education in a private school stated:

We initially approached government schools but they had no space for more admissions then we tried to admit our children in private schools. They refused admission by giving a reason that they could not give admission in mid of the term, some of them required us to first provide the school leaving certificate from the previous school. The President of the Waziristan Student Society at the University of Peshawar brought a foundation named Bacha Khan Education Trust in Bannu. The foundation opened different educational centers in Bannu and started providing free education along with books and stationery to the children of IDP families from NW.

Another significant issue that the IDPs of NW faced in Bannu was access to health facilities and in some cases; participants perceived that they were being discriminated against by the management/staff of public sector medical facilities. As mentioned before, Bannu city already lacked proper health facilities; incoming of a large number of IDPs meant extra pressure on the basic health care facilities available in the city. Many IDPs who had to go to hospitals to get treatment for themselves or their families even did not get the bed for their patients and due to long lines of patients, they had to wait 2-3 hours for the doctor's appointment. Due to issues of accessibility and limited available health services, many of the IDPs lost their loved ones who were unable to receive timely medical intervention. A 34-year-old participant shared his experience:

After coming here, we have been experiencing problems in receiving basic health care facilities as the government hospitals are providing very limited services. My 12-year-old son caught the dengue virus, for two days doctors even could not diagnose the disease because there were no test facilities. In the hospital, no single bed was available for my son as it was full of IDP patients. Due to the non-

availability of beds, patients were lying on the floor. After spending two days in the hospital, doctors were able to diagnose that my son was suffering from dengue, and then we shifted him to Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) Peshawar. He remained admitted in Peshawar for 5 days and recovered from the disease.

Although many governmental and non-governmental organizations have been assisting the IDPs of NW mainly focusing on IDP camps, UNHCR had designed interventions to assist off-camp IDPs as well. UNHCR provided food items and essential household items such as mattresses, blankets, plastic sheets, containers for water, cooking utensils, and hygiene kits to every IDP family. However, as there was only one ration distribution center in a city, IDPs had to wait in lines for hours to receive ration. Furthermore, these small ration centers were not designed to accommodate a huge number of people at a time. Therefore, most of the participants were of the view that there should be more ration distribution centers so that they should not stand in lines for hours. Even some IDPs spent the whole night under the sky in line to receive ration early in the morning.

Another significant issue is that most of the IDPs did not have Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC); therefore, they were not allowed to receive any ration. In this situation, some organizations helped the IDPs in making CNICs in order to receive ration. As shared by the participants, most of the organizations tend to believe that the IDPs living in host communities can manage their family expenses and therefore they should not be registered for assistance programs.

Livelihood-related issues were also the main problem faced by the IDPs. Before their displacement, the majority of people in NW were engaged in agriculture or had small businesses in the area. As a result of the ongoing instability, they had to leave behind their shops, markets, and homes full of valuable items with a hope to come back very soon. However, during the armed conflicts, most of the shops, markets, petrol pumps, and houses were destroyed. As most of the IDPs were not sufficiently literate and also did not have any skills, finding employment after settling in Bannu served as quite a challenge for them. They were mostly hired as labor force. Only a few literate IDPs were able to secure jobs in formal organizations e.g. NGOs, private schools, factories.

As the maximum population of NW IDPs was living in Bannu city, which is a small city of KP, the burden of thousands of IDPs affected the local labor/job market. Due to the surplus of labor, the daily wages of local laborers declined significantly i.e., if the laborer charged normally Rs. 1,000/- per day, the IDPs started charging 500/- per day and even some charged 300/- per day. A 39-year-old participant elaborated the situation as:

The main challenge to earn a livelihood is that I am an uneducated person. If I was educated, I would do some job

in any private school or organization. I also do not have any skills that could help me in getting a proper labor job here in Bannu. In North Waziristan, our main business was agriculture and mostly we were supplying walnuts to other cities i.e. Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and D. I. Khan through which we were generating our family income.

Similarly, another participant stated:

The main issue for the maximum number of IDPs is to earn a livelihood for their survival in Bannu city. Bannu is a small city, and due to a large number of IDPs, the work opportunities are very limited. If we want to work for 800/- daily wage another needy person would agree on half of the wage. People who hire labor get the benefit of this situation because we have no other option.

Due to long violent conflicts, the houses in NW were destroyed, damaged, or partially damaged. The government announced compensation for the complete damaged house as Rs. 400,000 while for a partially damaged house the compensation was Rs. 200,000, but unfortunately the compensation was not provided to the affected IDPs. Some of the IDPs returned to their native places and are living in damaged houses or tents. When the IDPs left their native area, the militants looted their homes and shops. Now many IDPs do not have enough money to start a new business. The long violent conflicts and the war against militant groups in NW have also severely damaged the infrastructure of the area, including educational institutions, hospitals, markets or economic institutions, agricultural lands, due to which access to basic facilities and livelihood opportunities has become a major challenge. Security agencies have established some educational institutions in the area and UNDP has also supported temporary tent schools.

## **Interventions by the Government and Non-Governmental Organizations**

The government and some non-governmental organizations have taken interventions for the improvement of the situation in NW. The UNHCR and World Food Program (WFP) have started programs to support those who returned to NW and provide them food items, e.g. flour, oil, pulses, etc. and some basic non-food items e.g. shelter, tents, mattresses, blankets, kitchen accessories, etc. The United Nations Development Program is also working for the development of NW and is providing assistance to construct washrooms and digging the tube wells in every village. The government, with the support of other NGOs and international organizations, is working for long-term development and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure, including the construction of roads, markets, and establishment of educational institutions and hospitals. However, the pace of development work is slow because of a lack of funds. Moreover, as the government had announced a compensation

package for the damaged property, but it remains to be collected by returned IDPs.

To address the issues of IDPs for their resettlement both short-term and long-term interventions are needed. The immediate interventions are required to provide shelter, food, medicines, security, clean drinking water, sanitation, etc. to those who have returned or are willing to return their native area. The long-term interventions are challenging because the IDPs need to rebuild their homes and businesses, and reconstruction or new construction of infrastructure is needed to provide health, education, roads, and other services to the local people. This obviously requires an enormous amount of resources for which the government needs support from other organizations. The displaced people are not sure whether the government and non-governmental organizations would be able to compensate for their losses to rebuild their shattered houses. The commitment of the government is one of the major factors that influence the returning of the IDPs to their native areas. The internally displaced people from NW demanded compensation and reconstruction of their homes before returning to their native areas. One participant stated:

The government should provide compensation as soon as possible to the people whose houses were partially or fully damaged during the armed conflicts. Most of the returned IDPs are still living in tents in NW. The government announced that we will be provided compensation for fully damaged houses as 400,000 rupees and for partially damaged house 200,000 rupees, but still, the compensation has not been provided even to those who have already returned to NW.

## **Conclusion**

In Pakistan, millions of people are currently internally displaced mainly due to violent conflicts. Unlike refugees, IDPs usually remain outside the radar of human rights laws because there is no specific international or national law that exclusively deals with the issue of internal displacement. Focusing on the lived experiences of IDPs from NW who were living off-camp in Bannu, this study explored the reasons for their living in off-camp sites and the related problems and insecurities they faced in their everyday lives. The process of involuntary migration was extremely painful as the people of NW were forced to leave their area immediately to protect their lives. They had to leave everything behind and due to limited availability of transport and they had to walk for several hours in hot weather without food and water. The study unveiled that the IDPs were living off-camp because of lack of facilities in IDPs camp e.g. food, clean drinking water, family security (especially security of female family members). However, the decision to live off-camp was linked with the availability of resources to afford living outside the camp. The off-camp IDPs experienced several issues related to, health, education, food, water, livelihood, and sometimes-unwelcoming attitude of the host community. Many of the off-camp

IDPs were not provided assistance by the government and non-governmental organizations because they were not living on camp—where the focus of humanitarian interventions was—or they did not have national identity cards to prove that they belonged to NW. The government had announced compensation for the damaged property of the IDPs, still, they were not provided any compensation. The IDPs wanted to go back to their native area but law and order situation and destroyed infrastructure in the area were the main hurdles in their resettlement.

Analyzing the lived experiences of NW IDPs within the framework of capability approach (Sen, 1999) pinpoints that the IDPs need opportunities and choices rather than merely goods or edibles for their survival. The interventions should enhance the capabilities of IDPs to exercise choices in their everyday lives e.g., education, health, livelihood, free movement. Hence, the government and non-governmental organizations working to help/resettle the IDPs should also focus on expanding capabilities so that they can retake control of their lives with the dignity and respect they want. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement also urge the states to take actions to protect the rights and freedom of IDPs and address their needs.

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## Conflict, Displacement and the Implications for Warmaro/Ormari Language

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Khan Zeb and Abdullah Wazir

After the United States' (US) invasion of Afghanistan, the (erstwhile) Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) witnessed violent conflict between the Taliban and the local population, and between the Taliban and the Pakistan security forces. Waziristan was the first to fall prey to Taliban insurgency during that time. Consequently, Pakistan security forces conducted several armed operations against the Taliban in the region, in which Operation *Rah-e-Nijat*, in particular, resulted in large-scale destruction and displacement for the locals. The Operation forced the local population — including Burki Tribe — to leave their homes for safe places for nine long years. In addition to that, socio-economic and political implications of the conflict between the Taliban and security forces has put *Warmaro/Ormari* language in danger of extinction, which had survived for centuries as the mother tongue of Burki tribe in Kaniguram. The dispersion, caused by conflict-induced displacement, of its native speakers to regions where Pashto and Urdu were dominant languages, has brought Ormari at the verge of extinction. Based on historical loss of language due to migration, the study assesses the pattern of displacement in the wake of Taliban insurgency and its implications. Applying mixed method approach, the chapter investigates the impacts of conflict and displacement on Ormari, and suggests some workable solutions for the preservation of the language.

### Introduction

The world has witnessed conflicts of varying nature and involving diverse actors; some of the forms include inter-tribal, intra-state, inter-state, and non-state actors' conflicts. Whereas, the present century is dominated by asymmetric intra-state conflict involving states, non-state actors, and transnational groups (Yamin & Malik, 2014). In that, conflict, in any form, has the potential to cause severe damage to human society owing to the socio-cultural, economic, and political implications associated with it. Furthermore, these implications may be manifested in the form of (forced) displacement

where the members of the conflict-affected population end up becoming refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) (see Bradley, 2017).

Pakistan has, in the wake of terrorism, also witnessed violent conflict for almost two decades, causing human and economic losses. Because of this, more than 614,934 families were displaced from the tribal region, which remains the most affected part of the country (Ahmed & Zeb, 2016). The military launched multiple operations to curb the insurgency in the region, starting from 2003-04 and continued till 2017-18. The tribal district of South Waziristan, being home to top Taliban commanders such as Nek Muhammad, Baitullah Mehsud, Hakimullah, and Mullah Nazir, and has experienced the longest episode of the terrorism-related conflict and therefore, could not escape its repercussions including displacement (Burki, 2010).

This displacement brought socio-cultural and eco-political damages to the people of the region (Zeb & Ahmed, 2019). Besides, it has also adversely impacted the indigenous languages and culture. *Ormari*, the language of Burki tribe, is one of the affectees of the conflict; receiving a setback due to the displacement of its native speakers from the town of Kaniguram in South Waziristan (Khattak, 2011). The town, being the only place where the Ormari/Warmaro language is spoken, has preserved it against the dominant Pashto language of the region for centuries. But the displacement following the conflict dispersed the Kaniguram's population to the settled districts of Pakistan, such as Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, Peshawar, and Karachi (Osborne, 2014), where Pashto or Urdu serves as the dominant language in use. This not only has contaminated the Ormari language because of the adoption of words from other languages but has also posed greater challenges to its overall existence. A similar phenomenon has been witnessed in history when the members of the tribe migrated from Kaniguram to Peshawar, Jalandhar, and Lahore in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Following this migration, the connection between the people and the native language weakened, and they started speaking the dominant languages of the regions where they dwelled (Noor, 2007). The Burkis/Ormars of Lahore and Jalander speak Punjabi and/or Urdu whereas those living in Peshawar (Ormar Bala, Ormar Miana and Ormar Payan) speak Pashto. Similarly, Ormari in Logar, Afghanistan, could not sustain its existence against the dominant local languages, i.e. Pashto and Persian (Baraki, 1999).

The conflict in Waziristan has attracted the attention of many scholars, discussing it from various dimensions that include, but are not limited to, the Taliban led insurgency and their control over Waziristan (Ahmed, 2015; Burki, 2010; Taj, 2011; Wylly, 2003; Zaidi, 2009), Pakistan counter insurgency operations (Abbasi, Khatwani, & Hussain, 2018; Fair, 2009; Fiaz, 2012; Javed, 2017; Khalid & Roy, 2016; Khan, 2012; Yusuf, 2014) displacement in the wake of conflict and the subsequent rehabilitation approaches (Ahmad, Sohail & Malik, 2016; Bradley, 2017; Din, 2010; IDMC & NRC, 2009; Javaid, 2016; Yamin, Najimdeen & Ahmed, 2015), socio-economic and cultural implications of conflict and displacement (Afridi, Afridi & Jalal, 2016; Ali & Shaffie, 2017;

Chughtai, 2013; Haring, 2009; Khan et al., 2016; Naseer, 2015; Shakirullah, Nawab & Elahi, 2019; Ullah & Khalil, 2019; Wagoner, 2009). *Ormari* language has also grabbed much consideration of the scholarly community but primarily/more through a linguistic lens.

Few major studies have been conducted on grammar, dialect, and vocabulary of *Ormari*. The first among those studies is that of Babur (1922) who referred to the speakers of *Ormari* as “*Birki*” while describing the language that the tribe spoke in Kabul, Afghanistan. Both native and non-native scholars have worked on *Ormari*; Hawbaker (2014), Kieffer (1977), and Leech (1938) have conducted studies on dialect, grammar, and syntax of the *Ormari* spoken in Logar whereas Grierson (1921) and Muhammad (1886) have conducted similar research on *Ormari* spoken in Kaniguram. Morgenstierne (1929) has worked on the comparison of dialect, vocabulary, grammar, phonology, morphology, and anecdotes of *Ormari* of Logar and that of Kaniguram. Similarly, Hallberg (1992) has made a comparison of *Ormari* with Pashto. Additionally, Baraki (1999), who is a native speaker of *Ormari*, has conducted comprehensive research on the grammar, phonetic, and phonology of the language. He has also worked on developing alphabets of the language by using Pashto script and has added symbols for the sound that are specific to *Ormari* language. Furthermore, he has also worked on short stories and poetry in *Ormari*. In the backdrop of the conflict and the subsequent displacement, a rather recent strand of discourse on the *Ormari* language discuss the challenges it faces (Burki, 2012; Khattak, 2011; Yousafzai, 2018).

There is an unpublished data, mostly poetry, of the local poets. The *Ormari* language is not adequately analyzed and codified. The scientific descriptions, analysis and codification will enable the language to be learnt by non-native speakers well and will preserve it for coming generations.

## **Methodology**

This study is based on a mixed-method approach (combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques) to examine the challenges faced by the Warmaro language due to the conflict and displacement in greater depth. For the qualitative study, a semi-structured interview guide was developed, using which 12 the members of the community hailing from different (socio-economic) backgrounds and professions were interviewed. The purpose of the research was explained to participants and written consent to participate in this study was obtained from all the respondents before conducting the interviews. To avoid any harm to the participants in the highly sensitive environment of the tribal areas, the researchers allotted them participant numbers i.e., P1, P2 . . . P12 and are referred to as such.

The quantitative data was collected through a survey conducted from the members of the Burki tribe in which 65 individuals participated, responding to the questions concerning the status and speakers of Warmaro language. The

primary data was collected from September 2019 to January 2020. Other primary and secondary sources were also consulted to evaluate the historical background and present challenges originated for the language due to the displacement following the conflict in South Waziristan.

Baraki, Braki, Burki, Berki, Birki, Ormar, Urmari are the different words used in the literature for Barki tribe but the inhabitants of Kaniguram call themselves Braki/Baraki. (Babur, 1922; Baraki, 1999; Bellew, 1891). The tribe name is, most commonly, spelled as 'Burki' while the ones belonging to Logar, Afghanistan, spell it as 'Baraki'. Contrarily, Pashto speaking members of the tribe living in Peshawar call themselves Ormar or Urmari (Yousafzai, 2018), and have consequently named their villages as Urmari Bala, Urmari Miana, and Urmari Payan. However, the ones belonging to the same tribe who live in Lahore and other areas still/also call themselves Burki. Whereas, the language of the tribe is Warmari (the word used by native speakers of Kaniguram) for which Bargista and Ormari are also used in the literature (Baraki, 2014). To make sure that the local words can have legitimate space in the literature and to aware of the readers of the native terms; this study will refer to the language as Warmari or Ormari and the tribe as Baraki or Burki.

The following sections discuss the origin of the tribe, the conflicts and displacement in Waziristan, and their implications for *Ormari* language. It would trace conflict-induced displacement from historical perspectives and its impact on the language of the Burki community.

### **The *Baraki* of Waziristan**

South Waziristan, covering an area of around 6500 square kilometers, is the largest Tribal District of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and, being located in the southwestern region of the province, borders Afghanistan. It was made a tribal agency in 1895 by the British colonial masters after the demarcation of the Durand line (Zeb, 2011, p. 06). The main populous areas of the district are Wana (district headquarter), Kaniguram, and Makin. Several tribes, including Wazir, Mehsud, Dotani, Sulemankhel, Syeds, and Baraki/Burki, have inhabited it. With respect to their population residing in South Waziristan, the Mehsud and Ahmadzai Wazir are the two dominant tribes while the rest are relatively smaller (Mahsud, 2012, p. 44). Among these, Mehsud is divided into three main tribes (referred to as Dray Maseed); Bahlolzai, Alizai, and Shamankhel (Gaub, 1948; Tribal Analysis Center, 2012). Burki/Ormar has been counted among Shamankhel when it comes to sharing losses and benefits.

The Burki tribe inhabits a densely populated city in the heart of South Waziristan — Kaniguram, which is 7000 feet above the sea level (Ahmed, 2010). A small percentage of non-Burkis (mostly Mehsud) also live in the upper part of the city (upper Kaniguram). Kaniguram or Kanigram is locally known as *Shora* (in Pashto); the word *Shoor*, in Ormari language, means the scenic place full of natural beauty (Burki, 2012). The city is built on the south side of

the steep mountain in a split-level house, made of clay and stones, that stretch over the length of almost a mile (Weekes, 2011, p. 429). The houses are built in such a manner that the rooftop of one house is the floor of another. From a distance, these houses appear to be the steps of a ladder. With an increase in the population of Kaniguram in the recent past, the people have also started inhabiting the other mountains around the old city. It presents a view of the city as a dense galaxy that is surrounded by stars (Burki, 2012). Being situated between the two rivers- Badar (to the south) and Tangai/Mishta (to the north) – and surrounded by small fields and mountains at a distance, gives a lovely look to the city (Beattie, 2013, p. 15). Due to pleasant summers and snowy winters, Kaniguram maintains the potential to attract national and international tourists to Waziristan.

The Ormar tribe is credited with establishing the city of Kaniguram during the reign of the Afghan ruler Mahmood Ghaznavi. He is said to have gifted the land to the Burki tribe in return for its services in his seventeenth (final) assault on Somnath in India in 1026 (Noor, 2007), which also gave the tribe the name of ‘O(u)rmar’- the fire extinguisher (Ali, 2014). However, there remains disagreement among scholars on the origin of the Baraki tribe. For leech (1938) Burki came from Yemen and one can also find this argument in the oral history of the people of Kaniguram. This claim gains support considering the structure of Kaniguram that is similar to the structure of cities in Yemen. However, Herodotus, the father of history, has mentioned another origin. According to him, a Greek city, Barca in Libya whose residents were defeated, made slaves and settled in Bactria by the Persian king Darius. They named it Barca (Barka), and “it was to my time inhabited place in Bactria (Backtria-Afghanistan)” (Herodotus, 2013, p. 318). Dr. Bellew also presents the same argument, affirming the Greek origin of the Burki tribe residing in the village of Baraki in Baghlan district and the Barki Bark (Baraki Barak) and Barki Rajan in the Logar district of Afghanistan (Bellew, 1891, p. 52). Another argument is that Burki is a Pashtun tribe (Yousafzai, 2018). Nevertheless, these controversies are out of the scope of this study which has a particular focus on the implications of conflict-induced displacement from Kaniguram for the Warmaro language.

## **Terrorism in South Waziristan**

The region of South Waziristan has remained restive for long — dating back to the colonial times when the violent conflicts between the tribes and the British rulers were no anomaly. The British made several incursions, between 1860 and 1945, to end tribal resistance. In order to punish the tribesmen, the main centers such as Kaniguram and Makin were bombed and infrastructure and fields were destroyed (Condos, 2016; Matthews, 1947, p. 43). Despite the attempts of the British to control this tribal region, they could not attain complete submission of the tribes. With Pakistan coming into being, the Governor-General of the country, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (popularly known as

Quaid-i-Azam), called back army as a goodwill gesture and the tribesmen accepted the suzerainty and sovereignty of Pakistan (Gaubha, 1948). But the region of Waziristan was subjected to another episode of a violent conflict a few decades later.

The global and regional turmoil, in the form of the British-USSR/Russia power struggle, the Russian intervention in Afghanistan, the so-called 'Afghan Jihadism', the civil war in Afghanistan of the late 20th century, and the Taliban insurgency, has directly or indirectly affected Waziristan (Naseer, 2015; Zeb, 2011). According to various scholars and commentators, during the Afghan Jihad, the tribal areas were the staging base to support the Afghan *Jihad* (Liwal, 2010).

The US invasion of Afghanistan, following the twin tower attacks of September 11, 2001, toppled the Taliban government, and consequently, the Taliban fled into the border areas of Pakistan. During this time, other militant groups such as Uzbek, Chechen, and Arabs also made their way into the tribal areas through the unregulated/porous Pak-Afghan border (Rana, 2009). *The tribal region*, Waziristan in particular, became a springboard against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. In addition to the foreign elements, the local Taliban, with the name of Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also emerged during this time with the ambition to enforce *shariah* law. The top leadership of TTP being from Waziristan sanctioned the government to take punitive actions against the militants in the region (Burki, 2010).

The region was pushed into an active conflict between the Taliban and Pakistan security forces (Zeb, 2011, p. 1). Several small and medium scale military actions were conducted against the militants under the umbrella of operation Al-Mizan (2002-06). The intensity and scale of military action accelerated with the growth and expansion of the Taliban. In December 2007, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a combination of some 40 Taliban groups, was established under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud to fight against the common threat i.e., Pakistan Army. Another operation was launched in the Mehsud dominated areas with the code name of Operation *Zalzala* (earthquake); displacing 200,000 people and destroying the local infrastructure. All these efforts proved to be insufficient to dismantle TTP in the region (Jones & Fair, 2010, pp. 57-61). Therefore, another military operation, the most devastating one in terms of its intensity and duration —Operation Rah-e-Nijat (path of salvation), was launched. But well before its launch, aerial bombing and shelling were initiated against the so-called Taliban in Mehsud areas of Waziristan including Kaniguram (Khalid & Roy, 2016, p. 248). The residents were informed to leave the area in October 2009 and move to a safe region before the start of the operation (P11, Personal Communication, January 20, 2020) The road connecting the Tank district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the Mehsud areas were blocked, and people had to travel to Tank or Dera Ismail Khan via North Waziristan.

Some people were reluctant to migrate, finding it hard to leave their homes and belongings. One of the research participants said, “we had no home in Tank, and it was a difficult decision to leave everything behind. When the operation started, everywhere was shelling and bombing, we left for Tank early morning and reached there the next day” (P7, Personal Communication, October 09, 2019). Many families were not ready to face the challenges of displacement, but the hardships associated with military operation forced them to run away from their homes and live in IDP camps. The operation displaced around 100,000 families and inflicted huge economic and social losses on people (Ahmed & Zeb, 2016, p. 238). I similar to other tribes, the conflict, and consequent military operation dislocated the Burki tribe of Kaniguram (for nine long years). The extent of the destruction can be realized by the fact that, on Burki’s land, more than 90 percent of the houses are still not worth to live in (Zeb & Ahmed, 2019, p. 13). Moreover, the slow rehabilitation process and the absence of amenities delayed repatriation of IDPs.

### **Migration and Displacement from Kaniguram**

Conflicts and natural disasters threaten the lives and livelihoods of individuals, groups, or communities; thereby compelling them to migrate (Bradley, 2017, p. 09; IDMC & NRC 2009). In the present time, there are approximately 70.8 million individuals all over the world who have been forcefully displaced, out of which 25.9 million are refugees, 41.3 million are internally displaced, and 3.5 million are asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2019). Displacement is associated with violent conflicts through varying means; people may leave the area owing to insecurities or displacement that may be enforced on the residents of the region by a conflict actor as a tactic to get control over territories. The conflict-induced displacement has huge repercussions for the indigenous communities that are beyond violence, human losses, and political, economic, social, and cultural effects on human society (Bradley, 2017). The language of indigenous people, in the debate of conflict and violence, is one of the neglected aspects of human society.

For any community, language, being the repository of culture and indigenous knowledge, is the custodian of heritage, history, and the way of interpreting the universe. Different languages have the potential to provide different insights and solutions to any problem (Nuwer, 2014). More than 7000 languages are spoken all over the world; Asia 2303, Africa 2146, North and South Americas 1060, Pacific 1312, and Europe 285 (Wojtowicz, 2014). The loss of the languages is so sharp that one language disappears every two weeks. It is estimated that towards the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 90 percent of the existing languages will vanish if efforts are not made to preserve them (Wamalwa & Oluoch, 2013).

Linguists and organizations are concerned with language diversity stress on the preservation of indigenous languages. With the demise of language, as stated by Crawford (1995), “linguistic diversity, intellectual diversity, cultural



diversity and cultural identity” cease to exist. If the endangered or critically endangered languages are not codified, then extermination of such languages would mean losing everything the speakers knew about the local ecosystem, geography, and inimitable knowledge collected over centuries (Newnum, 2018). According to a report published by UNESCO (2011), a total of 2473 languages are endangered around the globe, out of which 577 are critically endangered. Since 1950, the world has lost 230 languages.

Seventy-four different languages are spoken in Pakistan, the majority of which are spoken in the northern areas. The languages other than the major ones (such as Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Sindhi, and Balochi) are neither enumerated in the national census nor profiled by any government department (Torwali, 2019). Most of these small languages, including Ormari, are categorized as endangered languages (Driem, 2007). *Ormari* has received much set back in the course of the violent conflict. However, the impact of violence and conflict has not been assessed on Ormari or any other language of the people who were displaced from the tribal areas.

The dominant language in South Waziristan is Pashto that has various dialects with minor differences, i.e. Waziri, Mehsudi, Dotani, and Sulemakheli. But Ormari/Warmaro, the language of only the Burki tribe, is quite different from Pashto. The Burki are multilingual adopting the surrounding language(s) as the second language (Yousafzai, 2018). Because of much interaction with speakers of other languages, Warmaro has lost its purity – raising questions/concerns over its survival. The multiple waves of displacement from Kaniguram have exacerbated the problem.

In the early 1300s AD, a six-year-long drought in Waziristan forced the people of Kaniguram to migrate to Peshawar, Jalandhar, Kurram, Orakzai (Hangu), Banda Daud Shah (Karak), and other areas in search of livelihood opportunities, and many of them settled permanently in the areas they moved to (Noor, 2007). This may be termed as the first wave of migration from Kaniguram. It is argued that, because of displacement, they lost their mother tongue (Ormari) and adopted the dominant languages of the region they aboded in.

Based upon the fact that a minor language cannot survive against the surrounding dominant languages, it is easy to comprehend how the Ormari language lost its speakers in Baraki Barak and Rojan in Logar, Afghanistan, near Peshawar (Ormar Bala, Ormar Payan and Ormar Miana) and Lahore, Pakistan, and Jalandhar, India (Baraki, 1999). As the language embodies the socio-cultural history of its speakers, all aspects of culture and oral history lose their existence with its demise (Nau, 2014). Therefore, the preservation of language can be equated with the preservation of history and the political and socio-cultural life of the community.

Poverty, lack of opportunities, and search for employment once again caused the displacement of people from Waziristan. In the 1970s, individuals from the region moved not only to big cities of the country (such as Karachi) but also to the Middle Eastern countries in search of work (Khan, 2008). Later on, they also moved their families with them. This second wave of migration, though involved some dozen families, was rather slow and voluntary.

The third major wave of migration from Kaniguram started with the emergence of the Taliban and the subsequent military operation to curb the insurgency. To ensure/strengthen their control over Waziristan, the Taliban introduced their brand of Sharia and started persecuting the people who disobeyed their rules (Yousaf, 2019, p. 153). Besides physical punishment, the Taliban, that increased insecurities among the residents, also introduced fines and taxes. A segment of the population left their homes to avoid punishment or unnecessary intervention of the Taliban in their daily lives, while some others left the region upon receiving threats from the Taliban (P3, Personal Communication, December 10, 2019). Alongside the Taliban, the presence of military and their security measures further aggravated the situation of tribal areas. Either Taliban or the army suspected everyone. If someone were suspected of having good ties with Taliban, the military would harass him and *vice versa* (P10, Personal Communication, September 15, 2019).

The massive displacement from South Waziristan started before the launch of the full-scale military operation *Rah-e-Nijat* in 2009. In addition to the Mehsud, the Baraki tribe left the region and settled in various cities including Tank and Dera Ismail Khan (Burki, 2013). This wave of migration was neither slow nor voluntary and, therefore, had much greater repercussions. It was announced that the operation would end in a couple of months, but it got prolonged for more than 9 years (P11, Personal Communication, January 20, 2020).

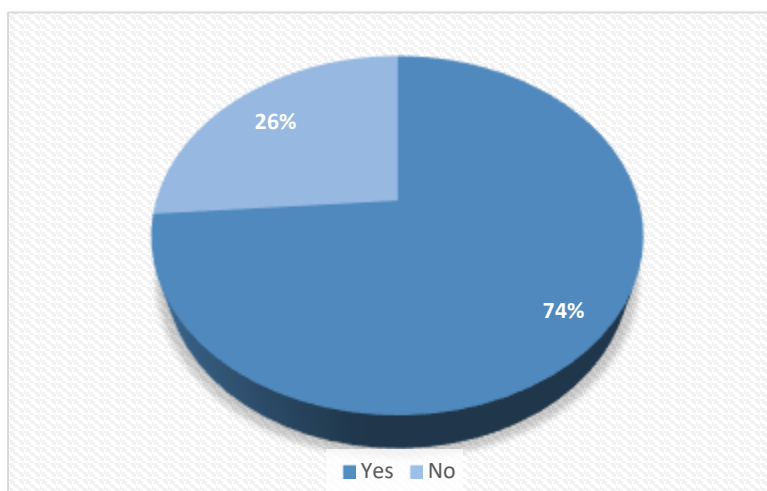
### **Implications for the Warmaro Language**

The different waves of migration of the tribe members from Kaniguram resulted in socio-cultural and linguistic changes. The Burki residing in of Lahore and Peshawar, in addition to losing their cultural values and practices, lost their mother tongue to a great extent. The Burki who developed long-termed interactions with Pashtuns from Tank have lost the purity of their language. Many families speak Pashto (with Baitani or Marwat accent) due to their contact with these Pashtun tribes (P5, Personal Communication, September 23, 2019).

It can be argued that the last wave of displacement has aggravated the threat of extinction of Warmaro language. the interaction with other communities has affected the purity of the Ormari language and new words are being introduced from Pashto and Urdu languages. The young educated generation of Barki frequently uses Urdu and English words while some of them do not even know the alternative words in their mother tongue for the borrowed ones. A list of

some common words of other languages incorporated or used by participants is listed in Table 9.1. Besides borrowing words from other languages, a decline is observed in the number of speakers of the Warmaro language. The research reveals that before the displacement, more than 74 percent of the survey respondents spoke Ormari in their home while the remaining spoke Pashto. However, the percentage of the Ormari speaking families has declined to 70.5 at the time the data was gathered. The language loss is increased by almost 3.5 percent, showing an alarming threat to Ormari language. The Figure 9.1 below shows the percentage of Ormari speaking and *non-Ormari* speaking families of Kaniguram before the displacement.

**Figure 9.1:** *Ormari* Speakers before Displacement (Respondents)



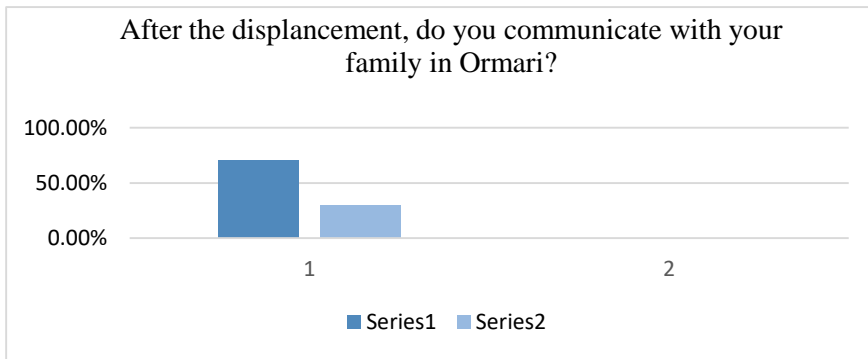
The figure shows that even before displacement, a considerable number of participants i.e. 26 percent did not speak Ormari at home. A small fraction of these comprises of those individuals who left Kaniguram in search of livelihood while the majority of these are the ones whose mothers come from tribes other than Baraki. Since the tribes surrounding the Burki are Pashto speakers, the inter-tribal marriages have posed challenges to the survival and purity of Ormari language. The children in these cases prefer to communicate in Pashto. One of the research respondents expressed the same in these words, “my parents can speak Ormari fluently, but I hesitate to speak *Ormari*. My grandmother and an aunt are from the Mehsud tribe and the whole family has changed the language and speaks *Maseedo* (Mehsud accent of Pashto).” (P8, personal communication, October 09, 2019). Therefore, it is important to educate the people about the importance of language and ask them to convince the incoming family members to learn Ormari in order to promote and preserve the endangered language.

The displacement from Kaniguram added to the problem by further adversely affecting the language. One of the interview respondents told about his daughter’s relative unfamiliarity with *Ormari*:

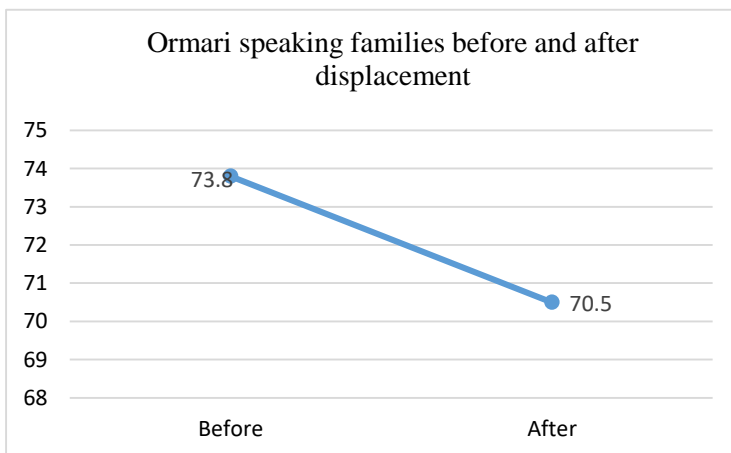
My daughter speaks Urdu and cannot speak Ormari. When I force her to speak in Ormari, she tries and sometime says that she does not know what word of Ormari should be used for that word in Urdu. It is because in her school, mohalla and with her brothers, she speaks in Urdu. Therefore, she finds it hard to speak in Ormari. (P3, Personal Communication, December 10, 2020)

The participants believe that displacement has affected their language and thus, a sharp decline can be observed in Warmaro speaking families. Figure 9.2 shows the ratio of Ormari speakers as 70.5 percent and non-Ormari speakers as 29.5 percent. As the study did not investigate which language replaced Ormari, further research is needed to uncover this aspect.

**Figure 9.2:** *Ormari* Speakers after Displacement



**Figure 9.3:** *Ormari* Speakers before and after Displacement



The decline shows that the minor language i.e. Ormari significantly remained unsuccessful when it came to its survival against the surrounding powerful languages. If the Burki tribe stays for long in the areas where *Ormari* is not the

first language, there are chances that other languages may completely replace *Ormari* and the next generations remain deprived of the language that was solely ‘theirs’. The migrations from Kaniguram have resulted in a threat to the Ormari language as well as the associated knowledge. The overall situation necessitates the rehabilitation of the people into their hometown where they have been preserving their language for centuries.

### **Rehabilitation and Warmaro/Ormari Language**

Prolong displacement and inadequate security in Waziristan have convinced most of the tribesmen to settle permanently in the areas where better economic opportunities, social services, and a secure environment are available for their families. If people remain dispersed, while residing in camped areas, and rehabilitation of people is not ensured in Kaniguram, the tribe will most probably lose its native language. It is observed that More than 50 percent of people could not return to Kaniguram even after the military operation. One of the respondents, comparing the present situation with pre-operation, says,

During the last summer (2019), 25-30 percent of the people went to Kaniguram and returned from Kaniguram as the weather turned cold. Today 2-3 percent of people live permanently while the remaining have moved back to their winter homes in Tank and other areas. Due to the harsh winter weather and the absence of basic needs, we could not stay there. Before the displacement, an estimated number of 60-70 percent of people used to reside permanently in Kaniguram while the remaining used to move to Tank and Dera Ismail Khan in winter.

The pattern has changed drastically, partly due to devastating armed conflict, which has destroyed everything, and partly due to a lack of social and economic facilities. Since the houses in the area were closely connected and interdependent, the fall of a wall or roof of a house has damaged the adjacent or a couple of adjacent houses. Though the people are rebuilding their houses, the limited livelihood facilities in Waziristan have contributed to the slowing down of the repatriation process. The absence of electricity supply, modern means of communication (mobile/telephone), and lack of educational institutions and health facilities are additional discouraging factors for rehabilitators.

Kaniguram, the hometown of the Baraki/Burki tribe, used to be a hub of all kinds of economic and social activities in the region. It was a market (*Mandai*) and the business hub (before the development of Wana and Makin bazaars) that attracted the nearby tribesmen for trade, some of whom preferred to settle there permanently as non-Burki called *Katkimor* (Beattie, 2013; Weekes, 2011). The city housed a significant number of skilled workers who were famous for making handmade jewelry, small weapons, daggers (locally known as Fawladi Kali), handmade shoes, and furniture which had a high demand in the adjacent areas. According to a participant, “There were no such skills in the adjacent areas and people came from there for buying handmade ornaments, draggers,

and for fixing the issues of guns and rifles.” (P4), Personal Communication, September 13, 2019).

After displacement, the skilled people either adopted other businesses or established their own businesses in other cities of the country to support their families. Owing to this, it is hard to find even a single shop of these professionals in the post-conflict Kaniguram. The security environment and slow rehabilitation are mentioned as the reasons for not re-establishing the businesses in Kaniguram. One of the interview respondents, who previously had three jewelry shops in different parts of Waziristan and has shifted his business to the district of Tank, expressed his concerns:

If the security situation gets better and the government is serious in tackling the rehabilitation problems, we will re-establish our business in Kaniguram. The frequent attacks, target killings, and resurgence of militants may demand another operation. In such an environment, no sane person will establish his business where life and business both are at risk.

Questions have frequently been raised on the rehabilitation efforts and security situation in Waziristan. Though the government has reconstructed markets to facilitate the business community, the (re)construction of markets without a bettered peace and security situation is insufficient. An improved and business-friendly security environment is required to re-establish the businesses in the region, which will subsequently affect the decision of people to return to their ancestral land.

The rehabilitation process is challenging as the compensatory amount of PKR 400,000 (in case of complete damage) promised for rebuilding the houses is not only less than required but has also not been disbursed among the affectees. A respondent has also highlighted this:

The government promised compensation for the damaged houses, electricity, drinking water, rebuilding of schools and health centers at the time of return, but we still have no electricity, phone, or mobile facilities except few public call offices (PCOs). We have repeatedly asked for the release of the compensation amount, but the concerned authorities have not listened to our request yet. (P1, Personal Communication, September 12, 2019)

The social services in the region are poor, and people are reluctant to choose Kaniguram as a permanent abode. The schools damaged during the conflict have not been rebuilt. The only college to which the whole area looks forward is under construction since 2004 whereas the security forces have occupied the part of it that has been constructed. The government high school Sam has been converted into Army Public School while the students and teachers of the school remain displaced. No health services are available to the residents of

Waziristan except BHUs (basic health units). The only hospital in the area is also under construction. It is, therefore, evident that education and health services, along with communication and electricity provision, will accelerate the process of return of the Burki community to Kaniguram.

Some other challenges in the rebuilding of houses are the lack of space and removal of the wreckage of the damaged houses which costs much. The size of families has been increased during their protracted displacement and therefore, requires more land to build bigger houses. But since most of the land is jointly owned under *Nikhat* and is not distributed among individuals, it also affects the rehabilitation process. To address this concern of the displaced, the tribe should distribute the land among individuals or Khel (subtribe) to facilitate the rehabilitation of such families.

The *Ormari* speaking community lived close together in Waziristan before the coming of Wazir and Mehsud to their area. Kaniguram was a famous economic hub, a center of political and social activities, a nucleus of modern and religious education, and the birthplace of *Roshaniyat* Movement of Bayazid Pir Roshan (Shah, 2011; Weekes, 2011). Today, it presents a picture of a poor and obliterated city. Warmaro speakers are decreasing in number and further delay in the rehabilitation process will have bitter consequences for the language. The rehabilitation, rebuilding of the infrastructure and the provision of economic and social opportunities at Kaniguram can facilitate the preservation of the Ormari language. The delay in the rehabilitation process is expected to speed up the rate of decline – ultimately converting this endangered language into an extinct one. It would not be the loss of only the language but also all the associated knowledge, cultural values, understanding of the local environment, history, and practices of the community.

Following is a list of few words borrowed from other languages such as Urdu and Pashto by Ormari speaking participants and which they often use in their conversations.

**Table 9.1:** Words from Ormari Language borrowed from other Languages

Adopted/ Borrowed words	Warmaro/Ormari words	English
<i>Masjid</i>	Misdiq	Mosque
<i>Karma</i>	Kota/ rahl	Room
<i>Pizaai</i>	Clar	Mat
<i>Raibuj</i>	Parawak	Broom
<i>Maizai</i>	Marsoai	Ant
<i>Wospa</i>	Yaansp/ Maindaini	Horse
<i>Patokai</i>	Sholikai	Husk
<i>Tepak</i>	Miltigh	Gun
<i>Kokanrye</i>	Buzwa	Spider
<i>Kharch</i>	Pravak	Sell

<i>Darwaza</i>	Bar	Door
<i>Anda</i>	Woonk	Egg
<i>Barf</i>	Ghorh	Snow
<i>Zheerah</i>	Waresht	Beard
<i>Band</i>	Doun	Close
<i>Kholao or khalas</i>	Meoz	Open
<i>Mouzak</i>	Gilak	Mouse
<i>Mouta</i>	Stuon	Pillar
<i>Garum</i>	Tuok	Hot

## Recommendations

For the progress of an endangered language, Tariq Rehman (2004) believes that its speakers are to be wealthy, educated, familiar with new technologies, and gain legitimate power in relation to the dominant community. Language embodies culture, traditions, way of living, and history of its speakers. The nomenclature of a language changes by interaction with speakers of dominant languages. As *Ormari* speakers interact with dominant languages, particularly with Pashto speakers, its existence is in constant danger. It will lose its existence if the Burki as well as the government do not pay proper attention to the matter. Though work is in progress to preserve and promote the language, it is moving forward with unsatisfactory speed and energy. To save the *Ormari* language from extinction requires vigorous collaboration between the tribe, the government, and the organizations dedicated to the preservation of languages.

It can also be contended that the primary responsibility to preserve the language lies on the shoulder of the Burki community itself. The educated and intellectuals among the tribe have to work/research on the development of authentic *Ormari* literature that can be made available to everyone interested in language studies. The tribe has the responsibility to communicate among themselves in their mother tongue whether at home or outside. An *Ormari* language forum should be established to publish books in *Ormari* language and offer free classes for the ones interested in learning.

Similar to the measures taken for the preservation of the Torwali language in Swat, the government should introduce the *Ormari* language in the syllabus of the local schools and adopt it as a subject in Kaniguram. Moreover, the rehabilitation and return process needs to be made faster through enhancing security on the ground, facilitating the traders, and providing compensation for the damages inflicted on people's properties during the military operations. The availability of modern means of communication, livelihood facilities, and basic requirements such as electricity, mobile/telephone, internet, education, and health facilities should be ensured in order to encourage the people to return to their homeland.

In addition to the above, the computer-based programs in Warmaro language can serve as another means to pique the interest of the younger generations and



will, in turn, help in preserving the language. Furthermore, the local signboards should display messages in *Ormari* language along with their Urdu or Pashto translation. Another powerful initiative can be taken by establishing a separate department at national universities such as the University of Peshawar or National University of Modern Language Islamabad with dedicated teachers and researchers to preserve and promote Ormari along with such other Pakistani languages, which face the danger of extinction.

The religious or Jumma sermons and jirga speeches hold significant importance in Kaniguram; their deliverance in Warmaro will compel the members of the community to adhere to their language. And therefore, they can also serve as important tools for the preservation of the language. The above suggestions, if translated into a sincere physical struggle, may help not only to save but also to promote one of the most valuable and historical languages of Waziristan. It will also provide a framework to preserve and promote other indigenous languages in the country, which are struggling for their existence.

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