Pashtuns, their Culture, Language and Literature

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Abstract

Pashto is the name of a language as well as a distinct way of life. The existence of Pashtun nation is because of Pashto. Pashtun is a nation and a standard of character too. This way of life, character and nationality are thought to be the basic ingredients of distinct civilization, which is called Pashtunwali is the culture of Pashtuns, in which all the laws regarding the affairs of social life exist. Whoever is capable of living a life according to these laws, is qualified to be called a Pashtun. Pashto, Pashtun and Pashtunwali are the coins of the same kind quite close and inter dependant.

The history of Pashto language and the Pashtun race is said to be some 5000 years old. Different historians and researchers have presented different views about the origin of the Pashtun nation. If the formation of a nation is based on its language, and Pashto which is an Aryan language, therefore the Pashtun nation can be called an Aryan race. The Aryan traces are still found in Pashto language and the customs of Pashtunwali. But now it has become a mixed culture, in which there are traces relating to other religions as well. One of the view is that the Pashtuns are Israelites and the lost tribe of Assyria, which settled in the mountains of Ghor in Afghanistan and which later on were called the Pashtuns. The traces of Bani Israelites customs and tradition in Pashtun civilization are thought to be bases of this word. According to their opinion, Pashtuns are the contemporary of Aryans and Semitic nation. It is itself a distinct nation because it bears distinct appearance and characteristics.

Pashto is the language of this nation and the base of Pashtunwali is this language. The character of a Pashtun is developed through this Pashto as well. It is obvious from the history that their culture, language and literature gives the picture of one nation, Pashtun.

Many books, thesis and research articles have been written on Pashtuns and their culture. Many of these researches have won international recognition and these are certainly valuable works, though almost all the writers are outsiders, they certainly have tried to bring out the true picture of the people, but sometimes they misunderstand some situations and aspects of the culture. Sometimes they misinterpret the terms of Pashtunwali too. The Pashtuns owe a lot to them for their honest researches and wonderful works. It is these out side researchers who have introduced Pashtun to the outside world. The Pashtuns think that they have still not been understood or properly discovered, for which, I think, nobody may be blamed except the Pashtuns them selves.

Having a unique and distinct culture the Pashtuns have been living on this soil since thousands of years. They have a particular civilization, social norms, customs and traditions. Their language Pashto is the back bone of their society. It is the language Pashto
from which the nation Pashtun and their culture Pashtunwali have emerged. All their oral traditions are preserved in this language. Every custom has its own particular meaning, which is called Narkh in Pashto. So one can leave the land but cannot go against the Narkh and Pashtuns living with these Narkhs or traditions in particular style are having distinct traditions and having a proud past which is their history. They are proud of their history, because they ruled the subcontinent of India themselves for centuries and also have been helpful to the kings who ruled the subcontinent. They conquered the lands of India and were in the fore front of the armies of every conqueror. 

Pashtun has a weltanschaung which has a world outlook of their own. The Ghaznavites, Ghoris, Suris, Khljees, Lodhees established their kingdoms with the support of Pashtuns forces, so much so that the Mughals were supported by the Pashtuns in bethorning India from the hands of their own brethren Lodhees. They would always be in the fore front of any battle or war fought in the sub-continent. Though the Pashtuns are famous as warriors, but they have established great civilizations in the past. Their connection to the Buddhist and Zoroastrian civilization has been thought of by some of the historians. If little is known about them in the prehistoric age, but their recent history shows their contribution towards civilization of the Indian subcontinent. The magnificent forts, buildings and other historical monuments tell about their golden eras of their history. Their colonies in central India and states like Rohailkand talk of their past glory in India.

The Pashtuns not only fought wars for establishing kingdoms, but also the most famous Sufis and saints of India have Pashtun origin. They spread the light of spirituality in India, particularly by spreading the teachings of Islam in the sub-continent. Their graves are still the famous centers of spirituality. Pashtun scholars, writers, and poets have contributed a lot towards the culture of politeness in India. Many such Pashtuns migrated in different times to India and got settled there. There they laid the foundation of an Islamic civilization and taught the principles of Islam to the local community.

Pashtuns are broadminded and cooperative people. They have always worked for the welfare of humanity. A Pashtun has such a broad spirit and capacity that he lifts the weight of others on his shoulders. That’s why a proverb says about this quality of the Pashtun, “Pashtun never picks up a light weight.” That’s why if a weight of another is put on his shoulder, he will shoulder it happily by saying in the words of a Pashto proverb, “If a little more weight is added to the back of a camel, it doesn’t matter.” A true Pashtun will always wish good for others. A Pashtun has passion for sacrifice, and this passion of Pashtun is found in Pashto tales, proverbs and folklore. One of the Pashto tappa (a famous folk genre) declares

ka me zaga sharhai pa sar da
janana taa ba pa bakhmalo ke satama

Translations: My dear friend! Though I myself am wearing a rough blanket, but I will keep you in a shawl of velvet. Hafiz Rahmat Khan Rohaila writes in his book Khulasatul

1 د بهلول او د شر شاه خبری اورم ۔۔۔ چه به هند کبی پنداشته ور پادشاهان
شهر وویده پریئ تي حسی بادشاهم که ۔۔۔ چه به دونی بوری درست خلک وو حبران
(خوشحال خان خیک)
Ansaab that the Pashtuns have the tradition of spreading carpets for others and would like to sit on a mat of pelmet. Apart from Roh the land of the Pashtuns, only the example of the Afridies might be sufficient who wearing the shoes of grass and wearing rough clothes themselves but guard the Hindus laden with gold and silver.

It is astonishing that today the world is not aware of these people, their politeness, and Pashtuns, who ruled India for centuries, were made laughing stock by the Mughals through various manners. This was because of the political rivalry between Pashtuns and the Mughals. The Mughal court historians were ordered to write impolite and uncivilized things about Pashtuns. After the Mughals this campaign was carried on by the British, and communication of the Pashtuns with India was made almost broken as they were divided and disunited. The age long trade and commercial relations of the Pashtuns with Daccan and northern India and Central Asia were brought to an end at the time of the British rule. Lohani, Ghilji and Sarhaban tribes had trade relations with Samarqand, Kokand, Kheva, Khutan, Bukhara, Badakhshan, Marve, Tashqand and other commerce centers of Central Asia on the one hand and on the other they had commercial relations with Shikarpur, Multan, Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Golkanda, Bejapur and Bengal, but they were deprived of these results relating to their economic destruction. They were politically blockaded and were defamed outside their land. Iqbal has pointed this out in one of his couplets saying “those youth who would establish kingdoms, were confound to their own mountains, but this confinement was not their own fault, it was the result of those political conditions which were created by the advancement of the British from South and Russia from the North”.

D.N. Wilber writes about Pashtuns and their land, “the land of tribal tradition and love of liberty, a turbulent but stirring history and a glorious ancient past”.

Before the British, the Sikhs treacherously occupied an area of the Pashtuns for a little period, but their rule was limited only to the city of Peshawar. Though the Pashtun at that time were fighting among themselves, but it has been the tradition that whenever they are attacked from the out side, they make a truce for the time being and collectively fight the invader. This kind of temporary truce or cease-fire is called Teega in Pashto. Many battles were fought with the Sikhs. After the Sikhs came the British and occupied only those parts of Pashtunkhwa in the beginning, which were under the control of the Sikhs. Then a new series of battles started with the British Indian Empire. Before the British, the Pashtuns had been fighting with the Mughals. The impact of this continuous fighting was the economic weakness for the Pashtuns on one hand and on the other hand they were cut off from the rest of the world. The Great Game was being played between Russia and the British on the land of the Pashtuns. First, Second and Third Afghan wars affected the people in multi dimensions. These wars though fought by the British as part of their Great Game, but it paved the way for so many social, political, cultural, and economic changes, and also to some extent geographical changes as well. As a result of these wars, the land of Pashtunkhwa was divided, in other words a nation was divided. The Durand Line was drawn between the Pashtuns in 1893, but long before that the political authorities of the British government had started political tactics to change the Pashtuns culturally by introducing Urdu as medium of instruction in the schools of Pashtunkhwa instead of Pashto which is the mother tongue of the people. In fact the British government wanted to amalgamate the area under their control with their Indian Empire, because of its strategical significance, but the British government faced a severe resistance in doing so particularly in the tribal
area. A new series of battles called ghaza or laams were started with the British in different pockets of the tribal belt. This was an emergency situation for the whole Pashtuns, so instead of progressing politically, socially and culturally, the Pashtuns were caught in consecutive wars, and the Pashtuns severely resisted the advancement of the British troops. To a greater extent they were successful, but not schooled in political diplomacy they ultimately were so weakened that were led to make treaties with the British because they would prefer the British instead of the Russians. On the other side the Afghan government had become so weak that it had to compromise with the two Great Powers of the time and the main players of the Great Game.

Waziristan, Khyber, Teerah, Mohmand, Swat, Bajawarh, Malakand, Boner, and Ambela are those battle fields in which wars with the British were fought on the lower side of Pashtunkhwa while Kandahar, Maiwand, Ghazni, Jalalabad, and Kabul were the places in which the resistance wars were going on for a long period in upper Pashtunkhwa. These wars caused a lot of miseries to the people. Once a powerful nation it was divided into two parts (Now a days further divided into four). Their language and culture suffered.

This unfortunate nation has always been caught in the wars of others and has been suffering till now. Though the present circumstances are somewhat different but fighting among them still continues.

This is the sad fate of the Pashtuns. Though much has been written on this situation by the people and researches have been carried out by so many Western researchers, and most of these writers have done justice to introduce the Pashtuns in their true perspective, but it is also a fact that most of the prejudiced and biased writers have damaged their image in the out-side world particularly the Hindi and Mughal writers.

The distortion of history and diplomacies of political-vested interests have depicted Pashtun as a warrior alone, and his national qualities, his aesthetic tastes, spirituality have been kept in the dark. D.N. Wilber writes;

“The background can make them very treacherous and dangerous enemies of those who try to bully or deceive them.” The same writer says in the same book about their land;

Sometime called the cross roads of Asia: the Pashtuns land now has been a mixing bowl and battle ground for a area variety of Central Asian, Middle Eastern, South Asian and even European invaders and settlers.

This is the land of the Pashtuns, who love their soil more than any other nation on the earth. Their language Pashto has a very rich history of literature, their culture a unique culture and they are proud of their culture so much that they would never acclimatize any-where they abode. They are very romantic people and express their feelings in their language.

Pashto is the name of a language and also a term for a particular culture. The existence of Pashtun nation is due to its language Pashto. Pashtun too, is the name of a people, a race and also a term for a standard of character. This particular life style, character and nationhood are thought to be the basic elements of a unique civilization which is called Pashtunwali. Pashtunwali is the culture and way of life of the Pashtuns, in which all the laws relating to social life are present in unwritten form. Though not a religion, but a very sacred code of conduct, Pashtuns love their Pashto so much that it has almost gained the status of a religion. It is so dear to the Pashtuns that sometimes and in some special circumstances they call it a 5th religion, because all the Pashtuns are followers of the four creeds of Islam.
One, who has the courage to live a life according to the laws of Pashtunwali or is able to live like Pashtuns, can be called a true Pashtun. Pashto is a sort of qualification for those who qualify that they deserve the title of Pashtun. Pashto, Pashtuns and Pashtunwali are inseparable and are interdependent.

The language Pashto is said to be 5000 thousands years old. Though researchers and linguists have presented different theories about the origin of the race and their language, but if the formation of nation is based on a language, then Pashtuns are an Aryan race, because Pashto is an Aryan language[1]. Pashto is an ancient language in the group of Indo-Iranian languages, though some of the Afghan scholars are critical about the term Indo-Iranian. To them, Pashto is so ancient that when the Aryan migrated to the west and to the east some 2500 years ago the Pashto and its speakers were left in its original abode, Afghanistan.

Though the Pashtuns are famous as a warrior and martial race in international community, their history is full of wars and battles, but the history of their language and literature has many interesting colors. To understand Pashtuns, the understanding of their language Pashto is necessary. Though the history of a language and its literature could be different from that of a nation, but with Pashto the mention of Pashtuns is inevitable, as is said Pashto is the language as well as the way of life of the people. So the history of Pashto language cannot be separated from the history of the people. Living for almost one hundred years with the British and having close relations with them, Pashtuns are still is a dilemma for the whole world as well for their own selves. So many people have said and written much about them and their country, but all have hardly scratched the upper level of the ground. Still they need to go in much depth about them. It is a fact that the history of the Pashtuns has never been brought to light. In this regard, only stories, tales and anecdotes are found. The deeds which have been performed by the Pashtun generals and Pashtun kings far away from their country, in which the accession to the throne of Delhi is too included, much details are present, but all these deeds are like a short and small event in this long story of the Pashtuns. Pashtuns are living in this narrow land between Indian sub-continent and Khurasan since centuries, where great civilizations have encountered each other. The invading forces have so many times assaulted their mountainous houses like the sea storms. Though the conquerors have passed through their land to established great kingdoms, but the Pashtuns, who are the guardians, have never had the opportunity to look at their own history. The country of the Pashtuns has no such history, which in the modern times can be called a continuous history. This type of history has neither been written by the Pashtuns themselves nor those, who have been passing through this area during so many centuries[2].

Ghani Khan says: “The Pashtuns have no written history but they have thousands of ruins where the carved stones tell their story to anyone who would care to listen”.[3]

And Pashto is the language of such kind of people and code of conduct as well. These people reside in the mountains which is called Roh, Rohistan, and knowledge about them is now has been termed as Rohology.

Rohology is the knowledge of Pashtuns and their culture. Roh is the ancient name of their land. It is a geographic unit, a territory between the two mighty rivers i.e. Amu Darya and Indus of Central and South Asia. This mass of land is mainly plateau or high mountains and politically divided into Afghanistan and two western provinces of Pakistan. This whole area has distinct geological, geographical, anthropological, archeological, historical, linguistic, social, cultural, and religious environment. Its flora and fauna and its climatic regions have
their unique and specific distinction and are the cradle of some of the most ancient human civilizations. Though the name of the area is popularly known as Pashtunkhwa, which means the side of the Pashtuns, but historically known by its ancient Sanskrit name as Rohitya-Giri, which was in latter period abbreviated to Roh, hence Rohology means the study and knowledge of Roh.

The term Rohology has been derived from the two well-known fields of study i.e. Sindholoy and Egyptology.

Regarding geographic location, the Pashtuns abode those mountains and high plateaus which had been mentioned some two hundred years ago by Hafiz Rahmat Khan Rohaila in his book Khulasatul Ansaab as follow,

“All the abodes of the Pashtuns are situated between Iran, Toran and Hind and Sindh. So their eastern limit is Kashmir and the western one is the Helmand River which flows near Herat. Between these two countries there is a distance of about two and a half months. Its northern limit is Qashqar (Chitral) and southern limit is the area of Bhakkar of Barohi Baluchistan. All the land situated in between these limits is called Roh”.

The inhabitants of this Roh when established their colonies in India, they gave it the name of Rohailkand. These Rohailas or Afghans or Pashtuns are the people who live in a most significant piece of land on the earth due to its strategic importance. Sir Olaf Caroe thought that though the land was created for the people of Roh but the people of the soil were not for the land, means that whenever they got the opportunity they migrated from it and got settled in some other place. He also thought that the land was such a rampart on the map of Asia, that the plateau of Iran is in its west and the heights of Trichmir and Chitral are in its north. There are those passes in this rampart through which the invaders of Central Asia passed to India making it the battle-field. History also tells us that the invaders conquered India with the help and support of brave people of the land of Roh and established there kingdoms of their own.

Before we look into the higher and positive values of Pashtun, let us talk about Pashto and Pashtunwali for a while, which are other names for Pashtun Culture. The climate and geographical conditions, which have played a role in shaping Pashtun culture lies upon 60° to 73° longitude and 26° to 36° latitude of the earth. As mentioned earlier this region is divided into different geographical configuration and areas. Pashtuns live on both sides of the Durand line. Different tribes live in the North West of Pakistan and Eastern region of Afghanistan. In addition many scattered tribes live in tribal pockets of North Eastern Pakistan as well. In far flung North West of Afghanistan and in some of its South Western regions we also find some Pashtun tribes. Also in the Indian state of Rampur and in Rohailkand we find sizable Pashtun population, (although for the most part they no longer speak Pashto).

Geographically the present Pashtun areas are surrounded by Karakuram rang in the North East. In north and North West is the Hindu Kush ranges. In the extreme west and south, there are mostly uninhibited and desolate deserts. In the east we find the lofty peaks of the Himalaya. The historic Oxus River flows in the north. River Indus is in the east. Hilmand and Harirod flow in the south. This the land of Pashtuns, Afghans, Rohailas, about 35 millions people according to the record of recent census. This is one nation. Their culture
is known as Pashto. Pashto is also their language, which is the back-bone of their culture. In fact it is this language, which in a way has kept the culture alive. In reference to their Pashto, the code of honor of these tribes is called Pashtunwali. One might refer to it as the unwritten constitution of this culture. This code includes all the traditions, customs and above all spiritual values. True that there is no arrangement for the education of this code so far, but it covers all aspects of daily life from dress to all the activities in states of war and peace.

Like the people, this land of Pashtuns is also multi-colored. The severe heat of valleys and plains, the Alpine cold of the hills, mountains and extreme weathers of desolate deserts, have contributed towards making the people extremists. All this has brought them closer to nature as well. Perhaps it was for them that the great Urdu poet Iqbal said:

The higher objectives of nature are protected in the activities of desert dwellers or men living in the mountains.

South and North of the Pashtun areas are also referred to as upper and lower or Lar and Bar in Pashto. Lar means the Pashtunkhwa in Pakistan and Bar is the Pashtunkhwa of Afghanistan. Bajaurh and Khyber, Tochi, Kurram, Gomal and Bolan are the famous Passes, which connect the Pashtun living on both sides of the Durand line. In history, this region is referred to as Roh, Rohistan, Yaghistan, Afghana and Pashtunkhwa.

About the significance of this region and the people in Asia, Iqbal has also stated:

Asia is a structure of clay and water. The Afghan nation is like the heart of this structure. The disruption of Afghan is the disruption of Asia, while liberty of Afghans means liberation for Asia.  

It is in this kind of background that Pashtun Culture has emerged. This culture is poor but self-respecting and it is known for its toughness and religiosity. All this makes for a conservative social system. Pashtuns are a frugal people but on special occasions they tend to show extreme generosity. They attach great importance to national pride and family honor. Their insistence upon equality and their intense democratic spirit often leads to fights and competition. This way of life and psychology has led some people call Pashtun Society as “Ordered Anarchy.”

Ghani Khan in his particular style comment humorously about this nature of the Pashtun:

"Being direct and rather thick between the ears every Pathan imagines he is Alexander the Great and wants the world to admit it. The result is a constant struggle between cousin and cousin, brother and brother and quite often between father and son. This has proved his sole undoing through the ages. They have not succeeded in being a great nation because there is a Jinnah in every home, who would rather burn his own house than see his brother rule it. ”

All norms, values, traditions and practices fall under one comprehensive system, which is referred to as Pashtunwali. The family, the clan and the tribe reflect this comprehensive system. The term Pashtunwali is derived from the term Pashtun and Pashtun from Pashto, which might be said to be comprised of the following:

- Pey for Pat, which means honor, fellowship or comradeship
• Sheen for Shegarha, which means doing good to others or the needy.

• Tey for Toora, which literally sword and stands for bravery.

• Waw for Wafa, which means fidelity to one’s commitments.

• Noon for Nang, which means honor.

From this point of view, the essence or meaning of the term Pashtun consists in chivalry, courage, fidelity, and honor, and these are the qualities, which shape the character of Pashtun society.

In addition Hospitality (Melmastia), Council of Elders (Jirga), Modesty (Sharam, Haya), Revenge (Badal), Taunt (Peghor), Seeking Forgiveness in a feud (Nanawati), Honor of the family (NANG, NAMOOS), Zeal, Courage, Manliness (Ghairat) etc, are the terms, which define the Pashtun culture. As noted earlier comradeship, doing well to others, bravery, fidelity and honor are fundamental values of Pashtun Culture. Their explanation and history are historical events related with them, cannot be addressed in this brief paper because such an effort requires explanation of a whole philosophy of life.

The general point however, is that these values have given a special character to the Pashtuns. These values are reflected in their customs traditions and worship. The related qualities are also manifest in their arts and literature. Pashtuns after accepting Islam have committed themselves to literature alone among the Fine Arts. Among the professions, they have adopted only agriculture and soldiery “Like the Greek he is a great poet and a great warrior. Like the Greeks almost all his wars are over women” Other professions are generally ignored by Pashtuns but professionals, knowing Pashtuns mentality have created arts in which Pashtun character is reflected. As said earlier, Pashtun Culture is man oriented. In power they see greater beauty than beauty itself. Delicate and soft jobs are left to women. However, in special circumstances women might have to take up the tough agriculture related jobs as well. Pashtuns are realist in their ordinary life and prefer strength and durability. Their art lacks paintings, because perhaps it is viewed as unIslamic. However, the sculptures of Gandhara Civilization reflect that durability which has remained a part of Pashtun culture since Pre-Islamic times.

“Probably he was a good sculptor and a poor Buddhist”. We don’t find many monuments of architecture in Pashtun lands. The reason perhaps, is that Pashtuns have never favored building of expensive homes. Life for them is basically temporary, particularly because of their values of enmity and revenge or Tarboorwali. A Pashtun is often forced by these things to abandon his house or it may be destroyed by the tribal jirga as a punishment. Expensive houses are built by those who are either very strong or very compromising. But among Pashtuns compromise is hardly tolerated.

Pashtuns like decoration of their abodes and appreciate it, but they prefer durability to decoration. The walls of their houses are high, their doors are strong and security arrangements are reflected in their architecture in a significant manner.

They are very serious about their dress. Men and women both like heavy dresses. They prefer a dress which not only give them identity but also is modest. Turban and Shawl have certain spiritual significance and are considered as symbols of honor. Not everyone deserves them. That is why Khushhal Khan Khattak has said:
Those who tie a turban are in thousands.
Those who understand its responsibility are only a few.

About Shawl a Pashto Tappa says;

Da kudtana parhoonay spak vee
ka za ye droond pasarwum seelai ye wrheena

The shawl of a widow is always light in weight; though I put it on heavily (tightly),
still it is carried away by wind.

Pashtun Culture has its own arts and crafts related to things of daily use. These things
not only have an artistic value but reflect Pashtun ways of behavior. In particular the things
used in Hujras or Guest Houses have this cultural quality.

Where Hujra is a cultural institution for Pashtuns, the Mosque is the place of worship
and religious ceremony. Similarly Kor or home and Godar or water spring are particularized
for women. All cultural activities in these places are in purview of women. Pashtun culture
has a long history. Its ideas have been transmitted through generations mostly by word
of mouth. In the Pashtun lands, it is not only the villages, towns and cities which are
important. Every path, every tree, every rock and hill and every water spring has historic
significance in this land. With all these is associated some historical or cultural event and
all these events have been described in a romantic way in Pashto folklore.

Life is not all that easy in the land of Pashtuns. Abiding by the customs and traditions,
living with the values of Pashtunwali, attending to the needs of Hujra and Mosque and a
constant anxiety to protect one’s honor require an extremely dynamic life. Still the real
Pashtun loves this life and his motherland. A Pashtun is impressed by material gains. For
him an honorable life according to the values of Pashtunwali is much more important. As
the great Khushhal Khan Khattak said after his travel to India.

Ka pa hind ke chamba gul dai
Tar da gul da watan khar kha
Che pake khwaga yaran dee
Pekhawar tar har diyar kha

No matter if India has jasmine flowers in it
The thorns of mother land are dearer and better than these flowers.
That the sweet friends live in this town,
My city Peshawar is dearer and better, than all other cities.

The great Khushhal also informs us about the aesthetic standards of the Pashtuns as
follow:
After having seen the beauty of Pashtun girls, I insist that no other beauty is comparable to them,
Those who praise the beautiful girls of Khatak, they are mistaken

Similarly the great Durrani king Ahmad Shah Abdali has given expression to this love for the lands and hills of the region by saying:

As I recall the proud peaks of the hills of Pashtunkhwa, The significance of the throne of Delhi comes to nothing in comparison

Another more recent poet Ghani Khan celebrates the simplicity of Pashtun abodes and towns as follow:

I have seen the beautiful British Ships Underneath which flow the waves of rivers
I have seen the palaces of London Where free and beautiful girls reside
I have seen the beauty of Italian cities Where red vineyards, red vine and red flowers abound
The American cities are also known to me Whose sky scrapers reach out to the clouds
I have also seen Taj mahal, blossoming like a flower And palaces of Delhi constructed by great Mughals
As I look at my mud house All the cities of the world vanish into oblivion
However, the narrow and small streets of my village Are superior in comparison to all the beautiful cities of the world
However, all this is changing rapidly today. During the last half a century, the process of cultural change as well as deterioration has been at work. This has resulted in weakening of cultural institutions. Hujra, Mosque and the home are undergoing change. One factor that contributes towards this instability is the lack of proper education of Pashtun Culture. Very few systematic efforts have been made to understand Pashtun traditions and its philosophical foundations. The old order is being replaced by disorder. Perhaps this all is because of external cultural onslaught. Of course we can face this cultural onslaught and change its direction. But what else a serious and sincere Afghan can say except this Pashto tappa:

Da tooro jang way ma ba wakrhai
Da naseeb jang dai warkhata walarha yama

If it was a matter of fighting with swords, I would have fought it out. However, in this fateful war of fate, which has come upon me, I am standing all lost and dazed.

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[1] د پښتوژبي او ادب موقف د مركي آسيا د خلکو په تمدندو کښې، د علامه بوعند حیبی، د مقالي لرلی برخه، مخ 49، اعبدیر مطیع الله روهیال، قندهار، جلد اول، کال 1382 (The Status of Pashto among Central Asian Civilizations), Hewad Culturi Tolana, 1382


[7] Ibid, p.9

[8] Ibid, p.5


