



STUDY ON EFFECTS OF WAR AND REPRESSION OF MUSICIANS, PERFORMERS AND THE PUBLIC OF SWAT, PAKISTAN



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PCF Peshawar, Pakistan

University Town, Peshawar



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About Pakhtunkhwa Cultural Foundation (PCF)

The Pakhtunkhwa Cultural Foundation (PCF) was established in July 2009, registered under Society Act XXI of 1860 as a not for profit organization on May 21, 2012 in order to respond to the endangered and rapid erosion of cultures in the Pakhtunkhwa region of North West Pakistan. PCF believes in free cultural expression; it envisions a pluralist and progressive society based on humanistic, social and cultural values, a society which is at peace with itself and others.

The region is rich in cultural diversity. PCF's fundamental concern is to preserve and promote local cultures, enabling the region to contribute positively to human civilization. PCF strives hard to develop an environment where all communities expressing different cultures learn to respect and value each other's way of life. Pluralism is the hallmark of the organization. It is the first organization in the region to cater for regional cultural preservation and promotion. PCF undertakes diverse initiatives and programs in various areas in order to realize its objectives.

Currently PCF is documenting the endangered culture of Kalash, Chitral and the traditional crafts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FATA and northern areas of Pakistan. PCF intends to research and document various aspects of cultures, both tangible and non-tangible, in the area.

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Abbreviations

ANP	Awami National Party (a Pakistani political party)
CD	Compact disc
DVD	Digital versatile disc
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (of Pakistan)
FM	Frequency modulation
JI	Jamaat-e- Islami (a religious political party of Pakistan)
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pashtun dominated province of Pakistan)
MMA	Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (United Council of Action – an alliance of religious parties in the 2002 general elections)
NWFP	North West Frontier Province (former name of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)
PCF	Pakhtunkhwa Cultural Foundation (Peshawar, Pakistan)
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e- Insaf (a Pakistani political party)
TNSM	Tahrik Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (movement for the enforcement of Islamic Law)
TTP	Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (a militant organization in Pakistan)
TV	Television
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republics
US	United States of America

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Study on Effects of War and Repression of Musicians, Performers and the Public of Swat, Pakistan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Swat Valley, a beautiful natural region in the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountain range, has witnessed many cultural, religious and political changes in its long history, some peaceful, but many others not. The golden age of music, for artists, performers and musicians, was the period of the Swat State, particularly under the enlightened ruler Miangul Jahanzeb (1949-1969). The musicians' community of Banr evolved during this period.

Swat's cultural life, especially compared to other Pakhtun areas, was phenomenally lively. Public concerts, musical gatherings, performances, theater production, art exhibitions, festivals, poetry recitals and



literary settings in the valley earned a name throughout the Pashtun belt and beyond. The region has contributed many musicians and singers to the music of Pakhtuns (another name for Pashtun). With the end of the Swat State, patronage of the music community came to an end once and for all.

The 1969 merger of the Swat State into Pakistan, prolonged militancy and active war in Swat together with other historical factors have drastically affected local socio-culture. Cultural values have been targeted with the intention of spreading chaos, and thus violence, in society.

Pakistan's strategic policies turned Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA (the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan) into a hub of extremism. In close proximity to Afghanistan, with support for the Mujahideen and recruitment for the war against the USSR from 1979, the culture of fundamentalism and extremism spread. Countless madrassas emerged, Jihadi literature was disseminated, intolerant and violent materials were introduced into the education curriculum and indoctrination was carried out further through print and electronic media. Cultural symbols and events were targeted, musicians, actors and other cultural professionals were killed or threatened and forced to leave their profession. The Taliban, an offshoot of the Mujahideen, continued the repression when militancy was rising in the Pakhtun belt of Pakistan. During General Zia's rule, Islamization and strong censorship prohibited anything that went against state policy. All cultural manifestations were systematically targeted.

The Wahabi school of thought gained influence in the society due to political developments and state patronage, and particularly in the wake of the war in Afghanistan. Ideologues of the Wahabi school consider artistic expression against Islam. Groups such as Tablighi preachers sprang up during the period and rendered great damage declaring songs, films and anything artistic to be obscene. Cases of cancelled concerts were

reported for the first time in the history of Swat during this period.

In 1994 Tehreeki Nifazi Shariat (TNSM), a movement for the implementation of Islamic law in Swat began, and dealt great damage to socio-cultural life. The government of MMA from 2002 to 2007 was lethal for cultural life in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in general and particularly in Swat. Music was discouraged and banned in public transport. It is during their tenure that the Tehreiki Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Swat chapter evolved.

In the aftermath of 9/11 the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was overthrown. Although the Islamic Emirate of Taliban was ousted there, Pakhtun artists in Pakistan did not see a new beginning. A renewed wave of terrorism began on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line¹. By 2007 the TTP had taken over the SWAT valley.

During the active militancy period (2007-2009) when the social and cultural fabric was broken down completely, the music industry bore the worst brunt. The Taliban severely punished people related to the music industry. CD/DVD shops were bombed; there was a complete ban on listening to music.

To this day public concerts have almost ceased. Prolonged unstable conditions have resulted in the dwindling of professional musicians' families – once a major feature of cultural life in the region. The number of these professional families fell drastically, from 80 in the 1980's to 25 today. Due to fear of terrorists, shop owners no longer allow the trade in CDs; from some 200 CD shops now only a dozen remain.

The culture of cinema in Swat was hit severely and the Pashto film industry suffered an irreparable loss. During the Zia regime, cinemas were frequently targeted and bombed; cinema audiences and the cinema as a social space, shrank. Dozens or more cinemas have been demolished and turned into plazas in

Peshawar. Of the two cinema houses in Mingawara, Swat, only one has re-opened. Before the crisis, CDs of plays were frequently released. Now it is very rare that a play is produced at all. The acting industry, once thriving due to the popularity of musicals and plays on CD and DVD, has suffered and actresses have left the profession.

The current militants in the region are also against singers, actors, writers, poets, musicians, performers and all things representing culture. The sharp decline in socio-cultural life has created a vacuum that is being filled by religious missionaries. Following these years of conflict, initiatives have taken place as part of the rehabilitation process. However, art and music, despite being important components of society, have been ignored.

The lack of action of the Pakistani government to support the development of cultural industries, together with the lack of a strategy on the part of the incumbent provincial government to redress the situation, has washed away any other hope for the revival of music and cultural life in Swat.

Despite all this, music and artistic expression is natural to human culture. They have been thrown to the back at the moment but cannot be pushed altogether to oblivion. The younger generation of musicians, the love for the Rabab and the people's realization of their losses present a hope for regeneration.

¹ The Durand Line is the 2,250-kilometre long line between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was established in 1893 between Mortimer Durand, a British diplomat and civil servant of British India, and Abdur Rahman Khan, the Afghan Amir, to fix the limit of their respective spheres of influence

METHODOLOGY

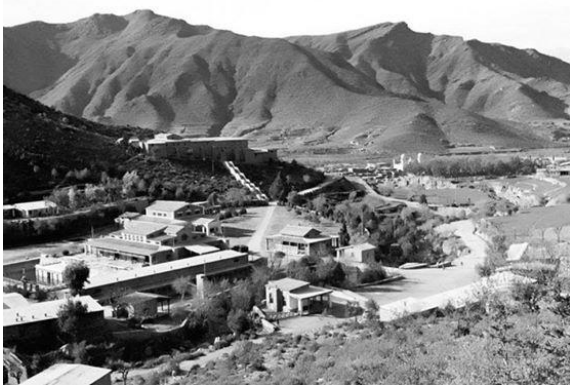
Pakhtunkhwa Cultural Foundation (PCF) has aimed to document the socio-cultural impacts of the conflict. Atrocities and repression have been widely reported but a comprehensive study about the plight of musicians, artists and cultural life has yet to take place. The aim of this report is to present the factual situation in order to initiate a healthy debate and to identify avenues for the rehabilitation of the music, dance and dramatic industries.

Social and political history has been reviewed for the purpose of understanding cultural life in Swat. Researchers have used both primary and secondary sources for the study, including online materials, books, magazines, newspapers and historical documents from the period of the Swat State.

To obtain first-hand information on the damage to cultural life in Swat, face-to-face interviews with male and female musicians, performers, singers, actors, students, music listeners, people related to the industry, elders and cultural experts were conducted. PCF also organized three focus group discussions in three places: Shamozi, Banr Mingawara and Saidu Sharif. Each group comprised 7 to 18 people. Data was collected to examine the number of musical families and artists, past and present. The study covers the post-conflict period with regard to the socio-cultural life of the valley.



PART ONE : HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND



A view of Saidu Sharif, capital of Swat State²

SWAT VALLEY

The famous Swat Valley, a district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the north of Pakistan, often compared in beauty to Switzerland, was the cradle of a great civilization. The valley is now an administrative district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, 168km from the provincial capital, Peshawar, with a population of 1257602 according to 1998 census³. The Valley of Swat has witnessed many upheavals in the distant and more recent past.

The area has held a certain prominence throughout its known history. In the first half of the sixteenth century Yousafzai Afghans occupied the valley. Yusafzais failed to establish a state or a government as they mostly lived in the old tribal fashion. With changing circumstances in the second half of the nineteenth century, attempts were made to establish some sort of authority. Swat remained a princely state from 1926 to 1947 under the British government of India. After the British departure Swat State was semi-autonomous within the newly founded state of Pakistan till its complete merger in 1969.

In 1915 a *Jargah*⁴ installed Abdul Jabbar Shah as ruler. Differences soon erupted and Abdul Jabbar Shah was forced to relinquish the throne which was then offered to Miangul Abdul Wadud in an important local *Jargah*: the ceremonial turban was wound round his head as the new *Bacha* (King) of Swat.

The defense, currency and communication of Swat State were acceded to the new country of Pakistan after the partition of India on 15 August 1947. On 12 December 1949, Mian Gul Abdulwadud abdicated in favor of his son, Miangul Jahanzeb, who became Wali of the autonomous Princely State of Swat State and ruled until its merger with Pakistan in 1969.

During the Swat State period, unprecedented success was made in the areas of education, health, communication, development, basic services, protection and peace. However progress was yet to be achieved in gender equality and in evolving into a democratic society. Compared to the surrounding states and Pakhtun regions the State of Swat laid a substantial foundation for a modern society.

‘The State became a model of peace, tranquility and progress in a Pakhtun tribal society. The changes were brought about by developing a model that was a mixture of traditional values, Islamic laws and modern norms and developments’⁵.

The State of Swat was founded and based on traditions, customs and the consensus of the *Jargah*. Dispensation of justice was easy and effective and the nature of the State was easy to comprehend. ‘The laws were simple and according to the peoples’ understanding’⁶

² Photo credit: Mung Swatyan. FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/mungswatyan/photos/pb.1445901875640973.-2207520000.1456729304./1495106247387202/?type=3&theater>

³ <http://kp.gov.pk/page/swatdistrictdemographics>

⁴ The traditional consultative institution and forum wherein issues of common interest and communal affairs are discussed and decided

⁵ Crisis and Reconciliation in Swat, by Sultan-i-Rome, A Journal of Pakistan studies Vol. 3, No 1 (2011), p. 54

⁶ Personal interview with Usman Olusyar

THE MERGER OF SWAT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The merger of the Swat State with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in 1969 was abrupt and poorly planned. Its consequences were not properly assessed; confusion and chaos prevailed in every walk of life; inverse development took place. Miangul Jahanzeb had been a controlling ruler, but a forward-looking one with a deep respect for cultures. Swat became a land of lawlessness and uncertainty due to the lack of legal and constitutional reform and of a proper and effective distribution of power. Free facilities for health and education were withdrawn. The merger created a different set of values and exposed society to a very different environment where culture and institutions suffered. As change was sudden, the strict controls previously in place did not remain and the social context was badly shaken.

The new governmental set-up was unable to carry out its duties. Legal and constitutional issues adversely affected the local population - and later, as we shall see, resulted in the momentum of the movement for 'Tanzim Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi' (TNSM) in Swat, and the demand for enforcement of *Shariat*.⁷

Three big annual public cultural festivals ceased, depriving the people of Swat of entertainment, music and performance. The previous patronage and protection enjoyed by singers, performers and musicians came to an end. As the system collapsed, so did the support musicians had from the society. People's love for music certainly continued but later events drastically affected it.

THE ZIA REGIME, 1978 – 1988

Pakistan had been founded on the demand for a Muslim state. Its centralized policies and the ideological framework contrasted with the diversity of cultures and nationalities found in the new state's territory. Attempting to redress the identity crisis resulted in a focus on Islamic law, and cultural expressions found

little place. After overthrowing the elected government of Zulfaqar Ali Bhutto on July 5, 1977 General Zia-Ul-Haq started a widespread drive for the Islamization of the country and enforced broad-ranging legislation as part of his Islamization campaign.

The narrative of Islamization started eroding the cultural life of Pakhtun society. The school curriculum was designed on the basis of Islamic values and morality. Free expression and creative thinking were discouraged. Music was considered immoral. "The State TV channel removed music videos"⁸. Instead, Islamic shows held sway. Artistic expressions in all forms were discouraged by various means such as new taxation, 'forcefully imposed on the film industry'⁹.

Pakistan under Zia allied with USA fighting the USSR in Afghanistan. The war against the USSR was declared Jihad and during Zia's regime Islamization was used to garner more support for Jihad. Secular values were swept aside and controversial Islamic laws were promulgated. The Pakhtun belt, in close proximity to Afghanistan, was made the center for Jihad and recruitment.

This new phase introduced the culture of the madrassa and Jihadi literature in Swat, with an education curriculum that glorified Jihad and promoted extremism. The pulpit started to play a prominent role, from religious figurehead to game changer.

⁷ Merger of Swat State with Pakistan. See link: <http://www.khpalswat.com/site/history/page.aspx?id=5>

⁸ <http://whitengreen.com/general-zia-ul-haq-enforcing-or-implementing-islamization--n-1144-video>

⁹ Ibid

SPREADING OF MADRASSA CULTURE



Rising Madrassa culture

In the pre-Swat State era and afterwards, traditional religious education was imparted in rudimentary form to a negligible portion of the population. Religious figures had little influence in state affairs. Abdul Wadud, Miangul Jahanzeb's father, had banished or overruled any influential religious figures and potential rivals. He did not, however, ignore the religious aspects of the society. A Dar-ul-Ulm¹⁰ was established in 1943. In 1954 a branch of it was opened in Charbagh. Not a single new religious institution was added till the merger of Swat State with Pakistan in 1969. When Miangul Jahanzeb assumed power in 1949 as the Wali of Swat he pursued the policy of imparting modern education. He established lower and higher schools in every corner of Swat State, and a college was named after him, Jahanzeb College. The Wali was a secular person who promoted secular values, patronized dancing, protected the heritage of previous civilizations and discouraged beards. Religious extremist views could not find a place in Swat.

The situation started changing after the 1969 merger: by 2005 there were 225 religious seminaries, spread all over the valley, with thousands of students. This network of madrassas created a different culture. The madrassa syllabus includes no contemporary education. Thousands of students complete madrassa education every year. The only job

for them is to become an Imam¹¹ in a mosque or a teacher in a madrassa. Madrassa graduates' mindsets have little to appreciate or even tolerate art and secular values in society.

THE TNSM UPRISING, 1994 AND ONWARDS

'The US dollars and petro-dollars coming from US and the Arab countries to support the Afghan war against the USSR worked well. Jihadi organizations were founded and Mujahidin trained. Madaris¹² were everywhere, especially in the Pakhtun areas of Pakistan. The new Jihadi mindset and culture was created to counter the Soviet Union in Afghanistan but it continued to work after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces as well'.¹³

The ideological struggle continued. By 1996, the Taliban, an offshoot of the Mujahideen, captured Kabul and killed the legitimate president of Afghanistan, Dr. Najibullah, declaring the country the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The events in Afghanistan had a strong impact on the Pakhtun belt of Pakistan.

The 1994 the Tahrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM) uprising in Swat¹⁴ was facilitated by internal elements such as a poor governance system, the constitutionally ambiguous status of Swat and the lack of an efficient justice system, all of which had remained unsolved after the merger of Swat with Pakistan. The feudal character in parts of Swat and external events certainly also lent momentum to the TNSM movement demanding the enforcement of Islamic Laws in the judicial system of Swat.

TNSM laid siege to the only airport in Swat; skirmishes with police and security forces resulted in killings of security forces and were a severe blow to the narrative of peace, progress and cultural life in the valley.

Although the TNSM's founder was imprisoned in 2001 and the group was banned by

¹⁰ An Arabic term which literally means "house of knowledge". An institution where Islamic education is imparted

¹¹ A Muslim worshiper who leads the recitation of prayer

¹² Madaris is plural of madrassa

¹³ 'Crisis and Reconciliation in Swat' By Sultan-i-Rome, : A Journal of Pakistan studies Vol. 3, No 1 (2011), p. 60

¹⁴ TNSM started in Dir, headed by Sufi Muhammad, an adjacent district, in 1989, later extended to Swat.

President Pervez Musharraf in 2002, by 2005 they had re-emerged as a strong force in Swat, signing a peace agreement with the Pakistani government in 2008 and establishing Sharia courts in 2009 under another agreement with the government.

MMA RULE AND ITS IMPACT, 2002-2007

After coming into power in the then North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Muttaheda Majles-e-Amal (MMA) (2002-2007), an alliance of six ultra-conservative religious parties, campaigned against foreign imperialism and promised economic development and better social services. Although their public support had collapsed by 2008, in cultural terms the five years of MMA rule literally halted cultural expressions and proved suicidal for music, which was banned in public.

‘MMA clerics set on fire the cinema houses, exhibition centers and smashed billboards that displayed females' images’¹⁵. The only concert auditorium in the province, Nishtar Hall, Peshawar was closed down to all cultural and entertainment activities. The informal music institutions of Banr, Swat and the Dabgarai bazaar in Peshawar became victims of police harassment on a daily basis.

During this period the Taliban’s activities in Swat did not cease. In fact during the rule of MMA the Taliban consolidated their hold.

The Taliban gave a tremendous blow to the peaceful socio-cultural fabric of the society. They targeted government installations, law enforcement personnel, politicians, opinion makers, influential people in society and those who disobeyed their orders. They set up their own justice system and established their writ in the valley. They were staunch opponents of education, music, TV, computers and all things that stand for a modern society, systematically targeting them.

The Taliban were dislodged from the valley in a comprehensive military operation in 2009.

But the period has washed away with it the old way of life. Continuous target killings in Swat have made fear a perpetual element in the lives of Swati people.



Video cassettes are being burnt during MMA government. Photo courtesy: Center for Peace and Cultural Studies

¹⁵ See link: <http://www.wlumf.org/node/1905>

PART TWO: CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND UPHEAVAL

Culture and education play an important role in setting a society's direction. As we have seen, the state framework of Pakistan has little place for the promotion of indigenous cultures and its expressions. No place in the education curriculum has as yet been allotted for the understanding, appreciation and promotion of cultures of the various communities and nations living in Pakistan. Positive recognition of the territory's diversity has faded with time.

Appreciation of art and the study of aesthetics have never found a place in Pakistan's education policy. Music, considered the mother of all arts, has never been introduced in the education syllabus at any level of schooling, lower or higher, an opportunity that was unfortunately missed during the Swat State period. In higher educational institutions and universities fine arts departments have been established but music is yet to be introduced. The state's apathetic, and at times, hostile position towards music, alongside a host of other factors, has meant that general appreciation of the arts is now at its lowest ebb, particularly in the Pakhtun belt due to the insurgencies and spread of fundamentalist ideology there.

In the ensuing chapters we look at how all this has come to pass, the effects of the changes following the downfall of the Swat State period and the depth of the 'culture shock' that has affected the people of the Swat Valley.

MUSIC AND PERFORMANCE IN THE STATE OF SWAT

Miangul Jahanzeb, known as Wali Saib after assuming power of Swat State in 1949, paid particular attention to modernizing education, health and communication, reforming the social, arts and cultural spheres.

State Days and festivals were celebrated with music and performance. During his rule the Banr community of professional musicians emerged. Swat State started officially holding grand Eid festivals that reverberated with music and performance for several days. Both locals and people from outside the State

participated. Performances and music concerts became an essential part of Swat cultural life. Public and family functions and ceremonies would seldom happen without music and performance. Swat culture brought forth reputed musicians and singers.

THE MAKING OF THE BANR MUSICIAN COMMUNITY

When Miangul Jahanzeb became the ruler of Swat in 1949 he initiated the policy of modernization. Peace and progress had created opportunities for a better life. In pursuit of this rural musicians in Swat and from other Pakhtun areas moved to the town of Mingawara, close to the state capital.



Musicians of Banr

Musicians enjoyed more freedom here and had the opportunity to earn a livelihood. The Swat State employed many musicians permanently to perform at events, or to do other work to help them financially. Living in the same locality and with frequent interaction, a professional community of singers, performers and musicians known as the performers of Banr evolved.

Swat, with its scenic beauty, rich archaeological and historical sites, pleasant summer weather, a welcoming populace and peace, became a popular tourist resort. The result of these interactions eventually created great musicians such as the legendary female singers of the 1960's and 1970's, Qamaro Jan and Bacha Zarin Jan, whose legacy and inspiration lasted for decades.

THE STATE'S PROTECTION OF ARTISTS

The Yousafzai State of Swat took every measure to ensure the protection of its citizens, including artists. A substantial peace was enjoyed not only by the people but also in the natural environment. Strict laws and procedures were developed to protect wild birds and animals, trees and forests. In this peaceful environment the community of Banr developed and their art flourished. State patronage encouraged their expansion and progress into a more professional community.

'Dancing was patronized and regulated by Miangul Jahanzeb. Those attached to the profession were bound to observe a certain code of behavior'¹⁶. If they were to perform at weddings they had to perform only there and had to undertake in writing to avoid private performing sessions. 'If they were taken outside the State for a performance, undertakings were exacted from their hosts for their physical and financial security, and for their honor'¹⁷. They, too, could not violate the law in any way'^{18,19}. In the official documents of the State period, not a single accident or mishap to musicians was ever recorded. Public performances at weddings were the norm and were enjoyed equally by women and men: women would watch from the rooftops, participating in and enjoying concerts.

The ruler's personal interest in music and performance was key to the development of the arts. His marriage to a dancer was a turning point for musicians, as marriages with women performers were not welcomed. A number of influential and high ranking officials followed Miangul Jahanzeb's example. Thus the formerly low status of performers and musicians was raised in the public's eyes.

'Had Wali Saib not been a lover of art how would it be possible for him to marry a dancer

in a Pakhtun society?', commented Usman Ulasyar on the ruler's deep attachment to art.



Swat State 1926- photo: Prof Khwaja Usman Ali collection

PUBLIC CONCERTS AND PERFORMANCES DURING THE STATE PERIOD, 1964 TO 1968

In the later 1960's, performances took place frequently at social and communal events. On the three big events of the year, the *Warkoti Akhter/Eid-ul-fitar*²⁰, *Loy Akhter/Eid-ul-Azha*²¹ and the official State Day celebrations on 5th June, Swat reverberated with music, performance and many other entertaining activities. The first *Akhter* festivity continued for three days and the second *Akhter* festival continued for six days. Upon the people's request the festivals could carry on even longer.

'The *Akhter* festivals²² were celebrated by women in the *Ziarats*²³ of the respective locality, but men did not have separate celebrations. A (state) *mela* was arranged on the left bank of the Swat River, at the site of the present District Police Line, near the Ayub Bridge. People would come from all corners of Swat State and even from beyond to enjoy the festivals, where female dancers, who enjoyed state protection, would perform.'²⁴ State laws

¹⁶ Details see, 'Kitab No. 21: Kitab Faisalajat Tahsil Babuzi', p. 50, No66, 9 May 1967. Decree of the ruler, No 38, 10 October 1961, ibid

¹⁷ Details see 'Kitab No.5 Register Zamanat Daftar Hizur', p.61, No.28, 18 June 1960 and p. 196, No 286, 26 March 1963, ibid.

¹⁸ See ibid. p. 22, No. 320, 3 September 1963

¹⁹ Sultan-i-Rome, Swat State (1915-1969), from Genesis to Merger

²⁰ Celebrations of Muslims at the end of a month long fasting

²¹ Festival of sacrifice by Muslims in the memory of Abraham, the prophet, who was willing to sacrifice his son blessed with the sacrifice of a sheep

²² These were the cultural festivals only participated in by women.

²³ Shrines and their outskirts were the main places for various cultural festivities.

²⁴ Sultan-i-Rome, Swat State (1915-1969), from Genesis to Merger. P.253

acknowledged and regulated various types of events: performances, for example, were forbidden at male children's circumcision ceremonies and at betrothal celebrations. 'In circumcision celebrations, drums could be beaten inside a house but performing outside is forbidden; if found will have to pay Rs 200 as a penalty'²⁵.

For the musicians of Swat, well integrated in cultural life, this was the golden age.



Sittar- A traditional Pashto music instrument

THE EFFECT OF ISLAMIZATION ON MUSIC AND PERFORMANCE, 1969 - 2000

The merger of Swat State, Zia's drive for Islamization, the spread of madrassa culture and of Tablighi²⁶ missionaries all created an environment that has affected free debate and cultural life negatively and left little room for concerts and performances in public spaces.

Tablighi missionaries in particular did great damage, focusing on the popular dancing and music events at weddings and other events. Targeting public concerts, cultural events and performances, they convinced people in mosques and in the streets that performances were sinful: anyone involved would be condemned to hell in the life after death. The missionaries argue that the suffering of people today is due to immoral practices and that punishment is not only awarded in the hereafter but incurs the wrath of God and His curses in this life too. According to this interpretation of religion, people became terrified of so-called obscene and immoral acts. Gradually spaces for free and peaceful cultural expression disappeared. During the 1980's and 90's there were many reported cases of missionaries or their inspired zealots halting events. They aimed to create a social ban and indeed by the 1990's a section of society had become resistant to the art of performance. Deep inroads had been made in the psyche of the people and their decades-old social structures.

²⁵Official Ruler Decree No 16, dated 6/1/1960

²⁶ Tablighi Jamaat- Society of spreading faith- is a global Sunni Islamic revivalist movement. Its stated primary aim is spiritual reformation of Islam by reaching out to Muslims across social and economic spectra and working at the grassroots level to bring them in line with the group's understanding of Islam.

THE TALIBAN'S EFFECT ON MUSIC, 2001 TO THE PRESENT



"From today music and performance are closed." by a musician of Barn due to Taliban threat during militancy in Swat. Photo courtesy: Shafeeq Gigyani

In 2001 Sufi Muhammad, founder and head of the TNSM, crossed over to Afghanistan with ten thousand poorly armed young men supporting the Taliban against US forces. On his return he was caught along with his son-in-law, Fazlullah, later known as 'Mullah Radio' due to his FM sermons. Sufi Muhammad was in prison from 2002 until 2008, but Fazlullah was released after seventeen months. He began his campaign and spread his message cloaked in religious sermons, on pirate FM radio²⁷, un-monitored by the MMA government authorities. In this way he was able to garner mass support and demand Sharia law in Swat. Against female education, he preached against women's participation in daily life. Fazlullah considered music, TV and computers 'major sources of sin'. In the beginning he was able to persuade the simple people of Swat to self-censor their music and destroy CDs, VCRs and TV sets. With the passage of time Mullah Radio speeches turned hateful and violent. His intentions were soon clear but by now Fazlullah and his men had been able to instill fear of dire consequences if the locals disobeyed his orders.

Later, Fazlullah broke away from the TNSM, joining the newly founded Tahriki Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in 2007. After the death of Hakimullah Mehsud, the TTP elected Fazlullah

²⁷ There is no record of Fazlullah's radio speeches as locals did not think of recording them.

as their new chief in November 2013²⁸. He is a sworn enemy of modern education. During his reign in Swat he destroyed hundreds of schools. It was he who ordered the attack on the teenage peace activist Malala Yousafzai of Swat. The massacre of Army Public School²⁹ students was orchestrated by him³⁰.

The period of militancy in Swat witnessed large-scale repression of musicians, artists, singers and performers. The Taliban declared music *haram*, banning it in both private and public transport and meting out harsh punishments for violations. 'We have been the first target of the Taliban and thus the worst affected' (by the militancy), says Usman Khyali³¹. 'Not a single CD shop was spared from being bombed or threatened'³². Business came to a standstill. 'All musical activities were banned by the Taliban. Private music sessions in the Hujras ceased to take place'³³.

Out of fear, tape recorders were removed from houses or kept in closets. 'Without music and tape recorders playing in the house it was like the feeling of mourning the death of a close family member', commented a member of the focus group discussions in Shamozi - a place at the hot zone of insurgency. Jihadi hymns and anthems replaced a melodious and enriching environment in Swat.

In 2009, the Pakistani army entered the valley to fight the Taliban, ordering 1.5 million residents to leave their homes. The deafening noise of war planes, explosions and shelling echoed in the valley for years. The centuries-

²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1054794>

²⁹ On 16 December 2014, seven gunmen affiliated with the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP) conducted a terrorist attack on the Army Public School in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar, killing 141 people, including 132 schoolchildren, ranging between eight and eighteen years of age.

³⁰ In the video message Fazlullah admits the attack on APS. In the video, from 3:46, he describes the attack.

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2e3rmi_fazlullah-in-video-message-admits-peshawar-school-killings-vows-more-children-will-be-slaughtered_news

³¹ Personal interview with Usman Khyali, CD shop owner, Mingawar, Swat, whose many shops had been bombed or burned by the Taliban

³² Personal interview with Usman Ulasyar, head of Suvastu Arts and Culture Association, Swat

³³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6Cu1ROWAY>, reporter Niaz Ahmad Khan

old life of Swat before the Taliban became a thing of the past.

Once a vibrant musical community and contributor to the realm of music of the region with a huge base, the Banr music community fell into shambles, with artists threatened, killed and finally displaced. Shabana, a singer and dancer, was killed, though she had already left the profession due to threats from the Taliban. 'The stage was set for killing a female singer by Tahreeki-Taliban (TTP), Pakistan Swat chapter'³⁴. 'When Shabana was killed we left Swat, long before other people were displaced'³⁵, said Kianat, a female vocalist from Swat.

Artists were not only psychologically shaken during this turbulent period, but also economically. Due to the volatile situation, the national and international flow of tourists - the economic backbone of the Swat valley - declined sharply and damaged Banr's traditional music industry. Large public performances faded away resulting in economic constraints for the community of musician families. Living in poverty has affected the quality of the art and is one of the main factors in the decline that took place in the following years.

RECORDING PERFORMANCE: CINEMA, CDS AND DVDS

In the initial phase of the Swat State, attention was given to territorial consolidation. Art and entertainment, including film, received less attention. Abdul Wadud, the State's founder, belonged to an older generation and had reservations about initiatives such as opening cinemas. He discouraged the establishment of cinemas arguing, 'How can we be sure that the films shown would benefit the people?'

'Miangul Jahanzeb, unlike his father Abdul Wadud, had a great passion for western norms, values and pastimes and allowed cinemas into the State'³⁶, as 'he was desirous to

make Swat into Paris'. Thus by 1965, there were two cinemas: Swat Cinema and Tariq Cinema' in Mingawara. Cinema played a big role in the following decades, enriching the music and acting industries of Swat that had been established in the dramas enacted in *melas*³⁷ and Swat State celebration events. The famous film actor Badar Munir belonged to Swat. In the very first Pashto movie, 'Yousaf Khan Sherbano', he played a leading role. He continued to rule the Pashto film industry for decades, inspiring generations into acting throughout the Pakhtun regions in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Being a Swati he was a particular inspiration for the younger generation of actors. With powerful story lines, high quality music and relevant cultural and social themes, Swat cinema flourished for almost two decades.

The decline of the Pashto film industry began with the military dictatorship of General Zia. 'Since the downturn of Pakistani cinema in the 1970s, mainstream movies lost creativity, the art of writing a good script and its assembly. In its 'golden days', the movie industry saw about 200 movies produced every year. Today, it is one-fifth of what it used to be'³⁸. By the 1990's the glorious days of the Pashto cinema culture were almost over. Even though the high point of film production had been declining, short plays, often in the form of musicals with enacted songs, were released as CDs or DVDs. These were often local works produced privately and became extremely popular,



The only cinema house in Mingawara, Swat under tight security

³⁴CCP Report 'Music and Militancy in North Western Pakistan (2001-2014)', Chap. 5, Killing and attempted murder

³⁵ Personal interview with Kianat, singer and performer, Banr, Swat

³⁶ Sultani Rome, Swat State (1915-1969), p. 252

³⁷ Cultural festivals

³⁸ See link: <http://www.asiadespatch.org/2013/06/28/what-decline-pakistan-cinema-industry-is-booming-up-again/>

providing entertainment and a source of livelihood for actors, musicians and others involved in the industry. Easy, cheap availability of recorded plays and performances added to the decline of traditional public concerts but due to these recordings, entertainment and music were now available to large audiences. The acting and music industries thrived and a new chapter had begun for professionals.

By 2005, short plays and other entertaining materials on CDs and DVDs had become a booming industry in Swat. Swati DVD dramas became popular not only in Swat but in the lower districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Karachi and with Pakhtun diasporas around the globe. The industry brought forth dozens of artists. Plays were produced back to back and attracted thousands of viewers. Cinema audiences had attracted a negligible ratio of females to males, but DVD plays reached families and thereby provided entertainment to women and their families as well.

The high demand for CDs and DVDs had resulted in the opening of hundreds of shops. A range of contents were available: video/audio music, dance with music videos, short plays produced locally and from other regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Hollywood, Bollywood and Pashto films, documentaries and education videos. The number of CD centers reached 200 and they attracted thousands of customers and visitors daily.

On March 27, 2006, a large number of workers from the TNSM (despite being banned by the Pakistani government from 2002 - 2009) set thousands of videocassettes, VCR and TV sets on fire. Later in 2007, militants regularly targeted CD centers, burning, blasting or threatening them, and forced them to close altogether. Musicians and actors were forced to stop working. Jihadi and Taliban video stalls and shops replaced the thriving CD/DVD market.

Nearly 200 CD/DVD shops were closed in Swat. 'Before the crisis, the industry was flourishing. A play would have hardly been completed when three or four more plays would have been in line to be produced. Now it

is with difficulty that a single play is completed in months.'³⁹

All cultural, musical, literary and entertainment activities stopped completely during the crisis period, the darkest period for the artists, performers and musicians of Swat. Once, the two cinema houses in Mingawara, Swat, were thronged with spectators from all over the Malakand Division, but now they remained silent.

After the Pakistani army's military operation in 2009 the Taliban were dislodged and the massive displacement of people who had been forced to flee their homes ended, as people returned to the valley. But artists, actors, musicians and other professionals, including CD/DVD businesses, still today face a host of challenges. Many CD shops did not reopen. Shop owners do not rent their premises out to CD/DVD sellers due to the fear created by the Taliban. The CD/DVD business closely interacts with dramatic production in Swat - as production of plays has been reduced there is little material left for CD. 'Due to government apathy and a host of other challenges the CD business is reduced by 95%', laments Usman Khyali⁴⁰. The acting profession has suffered terribly.



A CD shop in Mingawar, Swat

³⁹ Personal interview with a local actor and short play producer

⁴⁰ Personal interview with Usman Khyali, CD business owner, Mingawara, Swat

SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE IN SWAT AFTER THE TALIBAN

After dislodging⁴¹ the Taliban from Swat in 2009⁴² it was expected that life would gradually return to normality. Rehabilitation of infrastructure, and in some areas compensation, has been made for certain losses. But musicians, performers, and cultural life in general have been totally ignored in this rehabilitation process.

Peace is a prerequisite for the revival of culture but it is nowhere in sight. Security concerns remain for the people of Swat. Unabated target killings have claimed more than 100 lives in recent years⁴³. As we have seen, in 2012 Malala Yousafzai⁴⁴ was targeted. In January 2016 alone, five people were targeted and killed⁴⁵. Our study found deep-seated fear among residents. Musicians and artists, a vulnerable segment of the society, are particularly traumatized due to prolonged fear.

Heavy security presence and numerous security checkpoints on main roads and passages deprive the populace of free movement. The lack of free movement and social interaction are additional deterrents to the regeneration of cultural life.

Due to the security situation, large public gatherings are only allowed under special circumstances with permission from the local administration. As social interactions and gatherings are restricted, music events are few and far between. 'Only an influential person who enjoys the blessings of the administration or the general public can arrange music and performance events these days', Mr. Iqbal

Rawan Khan says about the current situation of music concerts held in Swat⁴⁶.

Performances at weddings and other celebrations now rarely take place. 'Before the crisis I used to attend five or six big events in a month. But these days I hardly get a chance to perform in a month and that, too often, takes place out of Swat', harmonium master Alyar from Banr reports. During our survey this observation was shared by 20 musicians and performers in interviews or group discussions.

The culture of listening to music in public has not been revived since it was banned by the Taliban.

IMPACT OF THE CRISIS ON ACTORS AND ACTRESSES



Actors of Swat during performance

Actors from DVD plays are experiencing hard times. 'These actors have been associated with the profession for a long time. Acting is their only field of expertise and income. The current situation has put the very survival of the actors at risk', Mr. Bacha, play editor, describes the miserable lives of the DVD actors⁴⁷. The situation proved particularly harmful for Swati actresses who were forced to leave the profession. Production of a DVD play involves a chain of people and related professionals: playwrights, producers, directors, editors, musicians, actors and actresses, camera men, sound engineers, designers, costume makers, transporters, billboard makers, caterers,

⁴¹The IDPs started returning on 13th July 2009. ISPR, 3-b https://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2009/7/13

⁴² Pakistan's army claimed victory against the militants in July 2009. Under heading: Swat Valley: <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/evaluating-pakistan%E2%80%99s-offensives-in-swat-and-fata>

⁴³ Figures by Village Defense Committees (VCDs) and Swat QaumiJargah (SQJ)

⁴⁴ A Nobel Laureate shot by the Taliban

⁴⁵ 'Target killing in Swat and the failure of security forces' an Urdu language article by Fazal-e- Rabi Rahi <http://niazamana.com/2016/02/swat-diary/>

⁴⁶ Personal interview with Malik Iqbal Rawan Khan, resident of Mingawara, one of the few who still patronage the performers and arrange events in his Hujra

⁴⁷ Personal interview with the play editor, Mr. Bacha, Mingawara, Swat

assistants and laborers have been affected. In the discussions and interactions during the writing of this report it has been found that most of these professionals are now living in miserable conditions.

MUSIC TODAY



Young talent- Vocalist Muskan Fayaz, Banr, Swat

In this backdrop, holding cultural, musical, performing and artistic events seems almost impossible. 'Before the crisis musical events regularly happened in the open, now they are only indoors and that too is very rare', opines Kianat⁴⁸, and this is echoed by all the performers of Swat. 'When people prefer to go home early and avoid night gatherings, how is it possible to hold music gatherings? The people and musicians are terrified. Gone are the days when we used to participate in live concerts in Swat till late at night⁴⁹', says Karan Khan, a popular singer from Swat who currently resides in Peshawar.

Public performance and public appreciation maintained artistic standards in the Banr community over the decades. Once the bond was broken the standard of music and performance fell. This social disconnect was a double-edged sword affecting the quality of art and the loss in approval and artistic appreciation. 'These days art has become a very cheap thing. There are musicians and performers only in name, whose sole purpose is to grab money and thus damage the art; they have brought a bad name to the community', says Javeed, master tabla player from Banr⁵⁰. The deteriorating environment, covering all

the aspects mentioned above, has compelled many musicians, singers, performers and instrumental players to leave the profession.

In the days of peace, many tourists coming to Swat visited Banr's musician families to enjoy singing and performance. 'In the days of peace visitors coming here were music and dance lovers. Visitors these days, though much fewer, are more interested in girls' beauty than the art', comments a senior female performer of Banr.

To record the views of those who witnessed the Swat State period, PCF conducted interviews and group discussions with men and women about their perceptions of the culture of music and musicians of that time. Music and performance had been part of their culture and they held very positive opinions. They were nostalgic and longed for the days of the Swat State. Most of them remembered famous songs and singers. They are not encouraging, however, concerning contemporary music. 'These are not songs, they are just noise. Old time music was the real music. Poetry of the music carried meaning and was an entertainment too', according an elder from Shamoza, Swat, Mr. Rustam.

'Performances at weddings in those days was a sign of life. All the people of a village would take part. People from adjacent villages would also come over. At some weddings these performances would continue for days. Everybody was happy. These days everything is changed for nothing', said a woman from a Swat village.

With the introduction of tape recorders and radio sets as important features of a household, music flourished. A farmer furrowing in the field, a carpenter at work, an artisan at a handloom, a mason working on a wall, a woman at a fireplace, a student with a book would have memorized and absorbed the tunes and carried on with their work. Music could be heard everywhere in Swat. Elder interviewees unequivocally condemned the Taliban and their targeting of singers and musicians.

The PCF team studied the current size of the professional musicians' community of Banr.

⁴⁸ Personal interview with Kianat, Singer and performer of Banr

⁴⁹ Personal interview with Karan Khan in Peshawar

⁵⁰ Personal interview with Javeed Khan, Tabla player, Banr, Swat

Figures were compared to the number of professionals in the 1980's. The following figures show the downward slide.

The total number of musicians' households in Banr was 85 in the 1980's with at least 2 female performers/dancers from each house, 25 master musicians and 60 professional singers. All the female dancers were also good at singing.

Currently the number of these households has fallen to 40 with, on average, two female dancers from each house and only 7 families practicing the traditional professional art. There are now 5 harmonium players, two tabla players, and five female singers only. By 2016 over half of the professional families had left the profession, some having adopted other professions as a source of earning. Yet the role of traditional music families is key for the continuation of the Banr community. In the absence of formal institutions of music and art these families teach music and train youngsters. Now there is only one harmonium and tabla teacher left. Acoustic instruments have been replaced by recorded sequence music. This recorded music is played when female dancers perform for the audience and visitors to their houses. These performing sessions are now more sensual than artistic. This degeneration comes at the cost of losing the public's respect.



Popular vocalist Nazia Iqbal, hails from the musician community of Banr



Performers of Banr

PART THREE : FROM THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE



GOVERNMENT INTEREST IN THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

The government of Pakistan has announced it will grant the status of industry to the film sector⁵¹ to boost it but the treatment meted out to artists in Swat tells a different story. After the crisis in Swat the industry required special attention but instead it is being discouraged. 'It happens quite often when a shooting is in progress that police will raid and halt it, saying it is banned. Does this support the claim of industry status to the film sector?', Mr. Bacha, play editor complains.

With time the use of computer and internet access has increased. Internet and portable devices raise the issue of piracy. Although legislation protecting author's and producer's rights exist there is no implementation of the legislation and piracy is widespread. This has given a tremendous blow to the already struggling industry.

'If a play cost 0.3 million rupees and a distributor offers 30 000 to buy it, how will the industry flourish?', asks a local play producer, referring to the proliferation of pirated CDs/DVDs.

'Had the government been sincere in reviving the industry, opportunities would have been created for the actors and professionals of Swat, suffering due to the militancy, or they would have been placed with TV channels at least to ensure their livelihood', laments a local play director⁵².

Different governments in the past have always taken hostile position to the culture of the province, but musical concerts and cultural activities gained momentum during the government of ANP (2007-2012). It was for the first time in the history that a government paid particular attention to the promotion of culture. Despite of the continuous onslaught of the ANP workers and government officials they continued their efforts for the uplift of cultures of the region. After the amendment in the constitution culture became the subject of the province. They set up Cultural Directorate and Culture Ministry in the province. The government reopened Nishtar Hall, Peshawar- the only auditorium in the province- for all socio-cultural activities which was closed down by the MMA government. With the government patronage cultural activities started holding unabated in all parts of the province. Nishtar Hall became so busy that arranging an event required securing a placement at least a month in advance. The high officials participated in cultural events to

⁵¹ http://app.com.pk/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=146276&Itemid=9

⁵² Personal interview

boost up the morale of the artists and audience. The government set up a new radio station for the promotion of culture through quality songs and debates on culture. Exhibitions on tangible aspects of culture and seminars raised the economy of the artists. "It was because of Mian Iftikhar Hussain⁵³ efforts that our artifacts became known in the country and internationally. We were earning good deals during the ANP tenure. But now things have become very down", said a wood craftsman in Peshawar. In this way a new beginning of cultural activities started happening all around the province. The confidence of the artists and musicians restored. The suffocating environment as a result of decades' long war in the region started melting.

But this has now been brought to a standstill in the province

In the May 2013 general provincial election, the PTI (Pakistan Tahreeki Insaf, a political party) won majority of provincial assembly seats. They formed a new government with the help of coalition parties of which JI (a religious political party) is an important partner. The provincial incumbent government has shown little interest so far in the revival of culture in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. A comprehensive cultural policy draft was formulated by the ANP government in cooperation with all the stake holders of the province in the last days of their government. The PTI coalition government is reluctant to approve the draft. The main reason is JI opposition to the draft approval. It is pertinent to recall here that the JI party in the MMA government (2002-2007) took a hard line against music and culture.

Due to the lack of a comprehensive cultural policy the much awaiting cultural revivalism is far from the beginning. In Swat where the socio cultural structures were dismantled by the militancy requires urgent and special attention to re-establish artists and cultural activities.

⁵³ Ex-culture minister of the province

This Pashto tappa⁵⁴ aptly describes the situation;

رېباب منگيه وخت دي تير شو
د کلي خواته ملايان راغلي دينه

Translation:

The period of Rabab⁵⁵ and Mangay⁵⁶ is over;

As Mullas have come close to the village.

SHRINKING SPACES AND RELIGIOUS EXTREMISTS

All this provides more space for extremists who consider music against the tenets of Islam. Due to religious factors and fear, music culture, after the crisis, is not taking root again in Swat, especially in rural areas. During this survey our researcher has been advised many times in such areas, to put off playing music in the car as it is looked down upon by religious people, tablighis and Mullahs.

The diversity and number of social and cultural gathering spaces have shrunk and are still shrinking rapidly. This is evident from the dilapidated conditions of the single re-opened cinema house in Swat; one other (Palwasha Cinema) has been demolished and a marketplace has been erected on the site.

This situation is used by Tablighi missionaries who, apart from numerous other gatherings, have arranged a large annual three-day event for the last four years in Swat. The event is attended by the Tablighi leaders who deliver sermons to the participants. Recorded or live naa'ts⁵⁷ are played on loud speakers. This year the attendance reached a million.

⁵⁴ Tappa is the oldest and most popular genre of the Pashto folk poetry. The tappa is a composition of two unequal meters, in which the first line is shorter than the succeeding one, yet it reflects all human feelings and aspirations elegantly.

⁵⁵ Pashtun musical instrument

⁵⁶ A pitcher made as drum

⁵⁷ Singular Naat. Poetry which is written or recited in the praise of the Prophet

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Even though the community of Banr has gone through many upheavals they are still the key to revive and keep alive the culture of music and performance in Swat. 'Banr has created many singers. It has created Nazia Iqbal. Her melodious voice is outstanding and matchless in the whole history of Pashto singers'⁵⁸ She is a leading vocalist amongst the female singers of Pashto music today. Another female singer Ghazala Javeed⁵⁹ who earned wide popularity hailed from the same community of Banr. New talents such as Muskan Fayaz, Saima and Kainat from the same community are gradually becoming known in the realm of Pashto music with their melodious performance. Karan Khan, a popular singer of Pashto music, is from Swat. He has inspired a number of emerging talents.

The great hope lies in the people's realization of the loss they have suffered during the past decades. They have been through the turbulent period. The society wants peace. The poetry composed during the crisis period and afterwards is ample proof of the social realization striving for peace and the love of their cultural expressions. The resilience of Pashtun society made it survive over thousands of years against all odds. To regain lost cultural spaces is a question for the present and coming generations of Swat.

The love of music can never wither. It is natural and it lives on. For the moment, the formal and institutional aspects of music have taken a back seat for, as we have seen, great and even irreparable damage has been done. But informal musical gatherings still continue. These informal gatherings have led the journey of music in Swat in the past. Rabab lovers gather here and there; are they not the harbingers of a new beginning?



Karan Khan – Popular singer from Swat



Stone carving of Swat carvers

⁵⁸ Usman Ulasyar- cultural expert and activist- from a personal interview

⁵⁹ She was shot dead along with her father on June 22, 2012 in Peshawar

A POEM

(Translated)

Don't kill the melody!⁶⁰

Why do you kill the song?

In this unfortunate country

It is very much oppressed

Song is free from every sin

Song is pure and innocent.

Don't murder the song!

It is blessed and holy

It creates Life and Beauty

It is the balm for pain-stricken hearts.

It gives solace and serenity.

Don't murder the song!

It will be a sin,

That has no expiation.

It will be a blunder,

That has no compensation.

Don't earn the curses of artists,

They will come after you.

You will be hounded,

By the curses of musical instruments.

How can you murder the song?

Do you really believe?

Pine trees will not whistle in the wind?

That if you ordered them,

Nightingales will stop singing?

Can you stop from jingling,

The bells, hanging around the necks of cows?

Can you stop the running brooks and rivers?

And make them quit their singing?

How can you murder the song?

How will you kill,

The sweetness in the song of the cuckoo ?

Nature has created it.

How will you kill Nature?

Song is a gift from Nature.

You should give it love.

No one can murder it.

Say it openly and loudly!



⁶⁰ Poetry AmjadShahzad, 'sandara Ma Wajnae', p. 48 Original text Pashto, written during the crisis period

GLOSSARY

Akhter/Eid. (*Akhter* Pashto word, *Eid* Urdu), Muslim religious festival

Attan. Traditional Pashtun dance

Bacha. A King; an emperor, a monarch

Baba. Elderly influencing spiritual/religious person

Dabgarai bazaar. Place in Peshawar where music is learnt in a traditional and informal way

Dar-ul-Ulum. College of Islamic Education

Faqir. Religious mendicant without status

Haram. Forbidden in the religious sense

Haji Sahib. One who has performed a religious visit to kaba (Holy shrine, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia).
The religious ceremony visit is called the Haj.

Hujra. In traditional Pakhtun society, the hujras were not personal property but communal property. They are houses for men and also for guests, a place for communal opinions and actions. With the passage of time a hujra has now turned into a personal possession; a hujra does not serve communal roles and functions these days.

Jargah. A council, forum, consultative assembly; council of the tribal chiefs

Jihad. Holy war

Jihadi. Holy warrior

Loy Akhter/Eid-ul-Azha. (*Loy Akhter* Pashto, *Eid-ul-Azha*, Arabic Urdu) Muslim religious festival of sacrificing animals

Madaris. (pl. of *madrassa*), Islamic religious schools

Madrassa. An Islamic religious school

Mangy. Pitcher used as a drum

Mian/Miangul. Descendants of saints and spiritual leaders who acquired wide fame and reputation are regarded as Mians. The title of *Miangul* to a family is given by courtesy, in a sense inferior to *Mian* as they are not ranked as descendants.

Mula/Mullah. One who performs religious ceremonies as a profession, like leading prayers in a mosque, teaching the Holy Quran etc.

Petro-dollars. The money sent by Arab countries and US to help fight the Russians in Afghanistan

Rabab. Pashto musical instrument

Shariat. Islamic Law, the divine code of life

Tabligh. Tablighijamaat. Society for spreading faith. Hence *Tabligh* means spreading of the Islamic faith.

Tablighi. A person spreading the faith

Tappa. Two-line short verse of Pashto folk poetry. Tappa is the most fluent, natural, attractive, comprehensive and effective form reflecting the norms and traditions of Pakhtun society.

Wali. A prince, a chief, a master. A ruler. Inferior to *Bacha* which means a king, an emperor

Warkoti Akhter/Eid-ul-Fitar. (Warkoti Akhter Pashto, Eid-ul-Fitar Arabic Urdu) Muslim religious festival after a month long fasting

Ziarat. A shrine

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INTERVIEWS AND RECORDINGS

Usman Ulasyar, Chairman, Suvastu Arts and Culture Association, Swat. Interviewed and recorded on the music environment in Swat, past and present, December 2014

Malak Iqbal Rawan Khan, elder of Swat whose hujra is still frequented by the musicians of Swat and Peshawar, interviewed and recorded December 2014

Karan Khan: Star singer from Swat, interviewed and recorded in Peshawar, January 2015

Elder of Swat, an eyewitness of State time, interviewed, December 2014

Elder of Swat, An eyewitness of State time, interviewed, December 2014

Musicians of Banr, Swat: A number of musicians interviewed, December 2014

Usman Khyali: CD business owner, Mingawara, Swat, interviewed by Muhammad Rome, December 2014

Mr. Bacha: Play editor, Mingawara, Swat, interviewed, January 2015

Interviews with the artists in Peshawar, December 2016

VIDEOS RECORDING AND EDITING

Shahzad Yousazai and Laal Bacha shot the videos.

Shahzad Youzafzai composed and edited the videos