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# Clash of Identities: Ontological (In)Securities of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Repercussions

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## Abstract

*The notion of security denotes freedom from threats. Ontological security implies emancipation from threats to core values that identify a person or a state. This article demonstrates the Pak-Afghan relationship as a case in point. It offers a relatively new perspective for understanding the continued contentious relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It argues that the Pashtun state identity of Afghanistan mismatches with the Islamic identity of Pakistan. This causes cognitive anxiety over self-identity in both states, which confronts their respective ontological (in)security challenges. Consequently, both countries engage in dangerous routines of self-identity affirmation to manage their ontological (in)securities. The routines often have harmful consequences for the civilian population, especially in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan.<sup>1</sup>*

**Keywords:** Ontological Security, State Identity, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pashtuns, Pashtun Identity.

## Introduction

The literature provides various explanations to account for the continued strained relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan and the resultant human suffering. Such explanations include the former's perception of threat from India, its notion of 'strategic depth,' Afghanistan's ethnic 'claims' on the Pashtun area of Pakistan, and the issue of the Durand Line, among others.<sup>2</sup> However, these explanations do not suffice; they account for the physical security aspects of both states but do not explain countries' own rhetoric about their self-identity.

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Like physical security, states seek ontological security, which springs from continued self-identity affirmation by other actors. The literature on ontological security has contributed useful insights into the behavior of states in international politics. Much of the ontological security literature in international relations focuses on relatively stable and powerful states. There is limited literature on the ontological (in)security challenges of relatively unstable, weak states, such as Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's continued ontological security challenge is important to analyze for three reasons. First, the challenge plays an important role in keeping Afghanistan and the region unstable. Second, when combined with the country's economic woes, it motivates its ambiguous behavior toward the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, which in turn confronts the ontological security of the latter. Third, Afghanistan's management of this challenge and Pakistan's response to it cause devastating consequences for human security in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan.<sup>3</sup>

This article is structured as follows: parts one, two, and three are the introduction, methodology, and theoretical framework, respectively. Part four describes Pakistan's self-identity in relation to Afghanistan. Part five focuses on Afghanistan's identity crisis and its ontological (in)security management. Part six is about Pakistan's ontological (in)security challenge vis-à-vis Afghanistan and its management. Part seven highlights the consequences of both countries' ontological (in)security management on the Pashtun area of Pakistan. Finally, the eighth part concludes the discussion.

## **Methodology**

This article is a qualitative interpretative study that applies the notion of ontological security to information and insights from the following empirical sources: declassified British colonial archives, live Facebook discussions in Pashto language by the Afghan and Pakistani social media activists (20 videos analyzed), and the case of Mahmood Akhunzada, a Pakistani Pashtun expatriate living in Saudi Arabia.<sup>4</sup> Most Afghan social media activists, mainly ethnic Pashtun, are based in Western countries, and Pakistani activists are based both in Pakistan and abroad. Moreover, the autobiography of Abdur Rahman Khan, the Emir of Afghanistan (1880–1901), and the biography of Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, the foreign secretary of British India (1884–1894) are also consulted. All sources are available in the public domain. For deeper insight, Mahmood Akhunzada was interviewed twice and discussions by, both Afghans and Pakistanis, about him on social media were also followed.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Security means freedom from threats. Ontological security signifies freedom from threats to the core values that identify a person or a state. The concept was first formulated by R.D. Laing to underscore every person's need for the security of self-identity.<sup>5</sup> The concept entered social science through the famous work of Anthony Giddens.<sup>6</sup> In the post-9/11 context, it is being used to explain that a state's behavior toward local and global dynamics could be motivated by its anxiety about its self-identity.<sup>7</sup> These studies explain that like humans, states are also rational and social actors that seek continued self-identity affirmation from other actors. Self-identity is central to ontological security, as it denotes the security of the subjective self as opposed to the physical body. When faced with anxiety over self-identity, states turn to self-identity-affirming routines or, according to Giddens, 'cocoons' of relationships with other actors that diminish doubts about self-identity.<sup>8</sup>

Martin J. Bayly has discussed how Afghanistan rendered the British self-identity insecure and created an ontological (in)security challenge for the British in the context of the Nineteenth Century Anglo-Afghan relations, when the British failed to establish foreign policy routines with Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup> The British perception of identity threat was rooted in their perception of Afghanistan as a 'violent geography,' – an idea that the Russians shared based on their own difficult experiences in Central Asia.<sup>10</sup> The British dealt with the challenge to their ontological security by establishing routines with their arch-rival, Russia, in relation to Afghanistan.<sup>11</sup> Following the partition of British India in 1947, Pakistan replaced British India as the successor state in the areas that now form Pakistan. This article argues that the country now faces ontological insecurity in its relationship with Afghanistan. It explains that the latter's self-identity has a conflicting relationship with Pakistan's self-identity. The relationship springs from Afghanistan's own identity challenge that causes ontological (in)security to the Afghan state. Afghanistan's management of this challenge causes ontological (in)security in Pakistan. Both countries' management of their ontological (in)securities creates devastating consequences for human life in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan.

This discussion responds to the following four questions: first, what is the ontological (in)security challenge of Afghanistan? Second, how does Afghanistan manage this challenge? Third, how does Afghanistan's ontological (in)security management cause an ontological (in)security challenge to Pakistan, and how does the latter deal with it? Fourth, what are

the consequences of both countries' ontological (in)security management on people's lives in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan?

## **Pakistan's Self-Identity and Afghanistan**

The All-India Muslim League (AIML), the party that led the political struggle for the creation of Pakistan, argued that Muslim cultural identity and economic interests would suffer in a Hindu-dominated India.<sup>12</sup> Pakistan came into being in the name of Islam and, therefore, its self-identity is Islamic. The self-identity of a state has both internal and external dimensions. Internally, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has a multi-ethnic population that shares Islam as their common religion. The idea of Islam as a state identity implies that Islam as an overarching national identity has the capacity to neutralize the ethnic differences in society into a common Pakistani identity and, thereby curb the potential for secessionist tendencies on an ethnic basis.

Externally, Pakistan's foreign policy is rooted in its Islamic identity.<sup>13</sup> The first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan, is reported to have said that one objective of the AIML was to consolidate ties between the Muslims of South Asia and other parts of the Muslim world, including Afghanistan.<sup>14</sup> Pakistan's foreign policy envisions a leading status and role of the state in the Muslim world.<sup>15</sup>

Despite Islam being a powerful identity in Afghanistan, the country does not conform to this vision of Pakistan.<sup>16</sup> In the Pashtun nationalist narratives in Afghanistan, Pakistan is an 'unnatural state,' a 'British project,' and the 'Punjab Regiment,' which 'uses' Islam to ward off its public attention from its 'occupation' of the Pashtun lands.<sup>17</sup> Afghanistan poses a challenge both to the self-identity and the territorial integrity of Pakistan when it asserts its self-proclaimed right to speak for the Pashtuns of Pakistan and refuses to recognize the border between the two countries i.e. the Durand Line as an international border.<sup>18</sup> Pakistan has encountered and successfully countered several attempts by Afghanistan to cultivate sympathies among Muslim governments in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) for its 'grievances' against Pakistan. For instance, Pakistan held a special Islamic summit meeting in 1974 to discuss the Middle East situation in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 and the oil embargo imposed by the Arab countries.<sup>19</sup> On that occasion, officials from Afghanistan spoke about its ethnic 'disputes' with Pakistan and pleaded for support from the Muslim countries. However, the Muslim leaders did not appreciate that the Afghan officials raised this issue on that occasion, and President Houari Boumédiène of

Algeria requested that bilateral issues not be raised in the summit, which was about a matter of common interest for the Muslim world – the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>20</sup>

Importantly, Pakistan identifies itself as an ‘Islamic’ state in relation to ‘Hindu’ India. This identification is deeply rooted in the 1947 pre-partition distrust of the Hindu majority that propelled the struggle for the creation of Pakistan and also in its post-partition realistic anxiety about the large military power and geographical size of India that led it to perceive the latter as an existential threat. Pakistan has to expand its India-centric existential threat perception to foreign relations with other countries, including Afghanistan.<sup>21</sup> For example, Pakistan’s Afghan policy is driven by its desire for a friendly government in Kabul that will not join India in opposition to Pakistan.

### **Afghanistan’s Identity Crisis and its Ontological (In)Security Management**

Afghanistan too is a multiethnic state, but the Afghan state’s self-conception is constructed around its dominant Pashtun ethnic identity for historical reasons. This identity is rooted in its origin as the Pashtun tribal confederation that came into being in 1747 under Ahmad Shah Abdali, a Pashtun military commander. He depended on the Pashtun areas, especially those now in Pakistan, for his expansionist policies in India, which is why his confederation treated the Pashtun preferentially compared to other ethnic groups in the area.<sup>22</sup> Afghanistan’s borders were not fixed until the 1893 Durand Line Agreement that divided the Pashtun area between Afghanistan and British India. At the time of the agreement, the Emir of Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman Khan, suggested to Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, the then British foreign secretary, that the independent Pashtun tribes be included in Afghanistan maintaining that they ‘are people of my nationality and my religion,’ and their exclusion from the Afghan border ‘will injure my prestige in the eyes of my subjects.’<sup>23</sup> This suggestion was not entertained by the British. The Emir then insisted that at least the Birmal Tehsil (subdivision) of Waziristan should be included in Afghanistan because his Pashtun ‘honor’ was involved in retaining the district, which some of his nomad Pashtun subjects visited annually due to their seasonal migration.<sup>24</sup> The British accepted the Emir’s argument and included Birmal in Afghanistan. Emir Abdur Rahman Khan, the founder of modern Afghanistan, consolidated the state internally with the help of the Pashtun tribes in Afghanistan when he established Pashtun settlements in the north of the country and also used Pashtun tribal *lashkar* (militia) to forcibly convert Kafiristan to Islam and subdue the Shia Hazaras.<sup>25</sup> The Pashtun

identity of Afghanistan is deeply rooted in the country's public consciousness, especially in its Pashtun areas, where a segment of people expects the state to 'snatch' the Pashtun areas beyond the Durand Line that are now in Pakistan and incorporate them into Afghanistan.<sup>26</sup>

As discussed earlier, ontological security requires that a state's sense of self-identity is continuously reaffirmed by other actors, including its own population.<sup>27</sup> In this context, the Afghan state finds it difficult to have its identity continuously reaffirmed by the dominant Pashtun public opinion if it recognizes the Pashtun areas now in Pakistan as an integral part of Pakistan. Since the days of Emir Dost Mohammad Khan (1826–39; 1843–63), there has been popular pressure on the Afghan state to recapture the 'lost' Pashtun areas.<sup>28</sup> The incorporation of the Pashtun areas first into the Ranjit Singh empire and then into the British empire, followed by Pakistan, poses a threat to the Pashtun self-identity of the Afghan state because the incorporation is not endorsed by the country's Pashtun population.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, Afghanistan has not officially accepted the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan as an international border.<sup>30</sup> In July 1949, the Afghan parliament, for the first of many times, officially repudiated the Durand Line as incorporated in the treaties signed between the British and Afghan officials, the treaties that Pakistan inherited from the British. Moreover, Afghan officials occasionally make irritant territorial or ethnic claims on Pakistan.<sup>31</sup>

When faced with threats to self-identity, states turn to routinizing their encounters with other actors within familiar and self-affirming frames to protect their ontological security.<sup>32</sup> One way to deal with identity crises is that states create 'autobiographical narratives' that reaffirm their self-conception.<sup>33</sup> The Afghan state draws on the narratives of Pashtun nationalist intellectuals and poets to sustain public support for its Pashtun identity, such as the historiographic narratives of those inspired by the Afghan scholar and politician, Mahmud Tarzi, and *Seraj-al-Akhbar*—the newspaper he established.<sup>34</sup> Throughout the Twentieth Century and beyond, much Pashtun nationalist poetry and literature has been authored in Afghanistan that rejects the 'division' of Pashtun land under the Durand Line Agreement of 1893 and aspires to attain *Loya* Afghanistan, i.e. the greater Afghanistan, that incorporates the Pashtun area of Pakistan into the current geography of Afghanistan.<sup>35</sup> The Afghan state encourages these narratives, for example, through Radio Kabul broadcasts.

However, the Afghan state's backing of the nationalist narratives is not enough to provide the 'cognitive cocoon' that secures continued

ontological security.<sup>36</sup> Ontological security requires continuous concrete actions, indicating that the Afghan state has not given up on the Pashtun areas in Pakistan. Here, the Afghan state encounters its 'cognitive anxiety' about the public affirmation of its Pashtun identity.<sup>37</sup> The Afghan state is too weak militarily to 'snatch' the Pashtun area,<sup>38</sup> its economy required normal diplomatic relations with the British until 1947 and later with Pakistan to obtain subsidies, trade concessions, and other material benefits that the latter was happy to offer in most cases. This compels the Afghan state to balance popular pressure, economic reliance, and strategic relations in order to address the cognitive anxiety.<sup>39</sup>

Afghanistan's approach to achieving this balance has led it to use the Pashtun areas under the British that are now in Pakistan as a strategic space since British colonial times till today. As discussed earlier, when threatened with ontological insecurity, states turn to self-affirming routinization of relations with other actors, and this also includes dangerous, violent routines that could provide ontological security.<sup>40</sup> Afghanistan takes to both peaceful and dangerous routines to secure its ontological security. This also implies that the Afghan state takes an ambiguous public position on the Pashtun area, oscillating between demands for 'full independence of the area' i.e., Pashtunistan and 'autonomous status of the area within Pakistan' and that 'it is for the people [of the area] themselves to determine their future.' Occasionally, Afghan officials also make explicit territorial claims on the area.<sup>41</sup> Simultaneously, Afghanistan has always promptly complained about any British and later Pakistani violation of the Durand Line, although it claims it does not consider it an international border.<sup>42</sup> At one point, even the British said that 'the Afghans have by no means made it clear exactly what they want' in the Pashtun area.<sup>43</sup> Pakistan also found it 'difficult to ascertain the motive of Afghanistan' in the area.<sup>44</sup> Once, Liaquat Ali Khan asked Shah Wali, the Afghan ambassador in Pakistan, if the Afghans wanted the Pashtun tribes in Pakistan. Shah Wali responded that the Afghans did not want the tribes because the Afghan state could not subsidize them.<sup>45</sup> Upon which, Khan said that 'Afghanistan's actions were producing a ridiculous situation in which the Afghans sitting in Kabyl [Kabul] were calling the tune, but expecting the Pakistan government to play.'<sup>46</sup>

The ambiguity of the Afghan stance is also manifested in Afghanistan's context-dependent ambitious actions and narratives in its interactions with the British and now Pakistan. Depending upon the context, Afghanistan has triggered disturbances in the area or offered 'assistance' to the British, and later to Pakistan, to 'quieten' the area. In 1893, during

negotiations over the creation of boundaries between British India and Afghanistan, the then Emir of Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman Khan, offered to use the Pashtun tribes in asymmetric warfare under the banner of Islam for the benefit of the British empire, if the British included the area in Afghanistan. He said: 'if they [the tribes then under the British] were included in my dominions, I should be able to make them fight against any enemy of England and myself, by the name of a religious war, under the flag of their co-religious leader [myself] ... In your [the British] cutting away from me these frontier tribes who are people of my nationality and my religion, you [the British] will injure my prestige in the eyes of my subjects, and will make me weak, and my weakness is injurious for your [the British] Government.'<sup>47</sup> The British, however, rejected this offer.

Later, in 1919, Afghanistan triggered *jihad* against British India in the Pashtun tribal areas under the British to press the British government, which was weary from World War I (WWI), to recognize Afghanistan's independence.<sup>48</sup> In 1939, the British Air Chief Marshal Sir Philip Bennet Joubert de la Ferté visited Kabul following Afghanistan's repeated requests to consider possibilities for developing the Afghan air force. The then prime minister of Afghanistan offered the visiting air chief a proposal to take the entire Afghan air force under his command, an offer that the British authorities interpreted as a 'joke.' However, later the British ambassador in Kabul confirmed that it was a serious offer, not a joke, because the country desperately needed British financial and technical assistance to create an air force.<sup>49</sup> As *quid pro quo*, Afghanistan offered the air chief both 'intelligence information' and 'moral support' to prevent rebellious tribal leaders, such as Haji Mirzali Khan Wazir also known as the *Faqir* of Ipi in the area, from 'making troubles' for the British, if the British would support the creation of the Afghan air force with money and technical assistance.<sup>50</sup> However, the British rejected this offer too.

By 1946, it was certain that the British would partition India and depart, but they also wanted to prevent the area from falling under the Soviet sphere of influence. At that time, Afghanistan formally asked the British to hand over British authority over the Pashtun areas as far as the River Indus to Afghan sovereignty before the British departure from India and also requested British assistance in an economic development plan, including a British loan of up to 20 million pounds to Afghanistan.<sup>51</sup> The British rejected the loan proposal.<sup>52</sup> The other demand to cede the Pashtun areas under British authority was also rejected.<sup>53</sup> Afghanistan then adjusted its stance on the Pashtun areas in line with the demand of the frontier congress party to include



three options—Pakistan, India, and autonomous Pashtunistan—in the forthcoming referendum in 1946.<sup>54</sup> The British rejected the demand, but Afghanistan used the idea of the demand to vote against Pakistan's membership of the United Nations (UN) in September 1947. The Afghan representative at the UN Hosayn Aziz said: 'we cannot recognize the North-West Frontier as part of Pakistan so long as the people of the North-West Frontier have not been given an opportunity free from any kind of influence, and I repeat, free from any kind of influence, to determine for themselves whether they wish to be independent or to become a part of Pakistan.'<sup>55</sup>

However, two months later, Afghanistan withdrew its negative vote. In the meantime, except for some parts of one district, Waziristan, the rest of the Pashtuns in the Pashtun tribal areas on the border with Afghanistan were living peacefully in Pakistan—against the Afghan expectations.<sup>56</sup> This increased the Afghan sense of ontological insecurity and prompted the then Afghan Prime Minister Shah Mahmud, on November 28, 1947, to contact the British to convey that 'Afghanistan had no desire to possess the territory. But the tribesmen were playing on the cry that the area should be an integral part of Pakistan, an idea which the Afghans hate.'<sup>57</sup>

The Afghan government requested the British government several times to press Pakistan for autonomous status for the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) within Pakistan and to name it 'Pathanistan' or 'Afghanieh'. The Afghan ambassador in London told the British that the Afghans 'are anxious for their kinsmen, the Pathan, on the Pakistan side of the frontier, to enjoy some kind of autonomy, sufficient to guarantee the preservation of their identity against the risk of absorption into the Punjab, and desire the name of the province to be changed to one indicative of its special character, e.g. Pathanistan or Afghanieh.'<sup>58</sup> The creation of Pakistan, where Punjab was considered to be prominent vis-à-vis demographic strength — more precisely, the western part of Pakistan—in the name of Islam apparently caused 'Punjabophobia'<sup>59</sup> in Afghanistan i.e., the fear that under the cover of Islam, the Pashtun areas would lose their Pashtun identity by their sociocultural absorption into the Punjab, which in turn would deprive Afghanistan of using the area as strategic space for tackling Afghanistan's ontological (in)security. A declassified US intelligence report also noted that by not recognizing the border with Pakistan, 'the Afghan Government hopes somehow to foster the independence or autonomy of ethnic kinsmen in Pakistan and, thereby win the favor of its own Pathan tribesmen.'<sup>60</sup>

## **Afghanistan and Pakistan's Ontological (In)Security**

When Afghanistan asserts its self-proclaimed 'right' to speak for the 'grievances' of the Pashtun in Pakistan, it generates anxiety in Pakistan's self-conception.<sup>61</sup> It reminds the latter that its Islamic identity is not strong enough to neutralize the ethnic identities of a large section of its population. The Afghan assertions also underline a risk to the territorial integrity of Pakistan, because the Pashtun nationalist identity embodied in these assertions does not reconcile with the Pashtun area as an integral part of Pakistan and calls for separation of the area from the federation of Pakistan. A 1962 secret document now declassified by the US government notes that under the influence of Afghanistan's Pashtun nationalist propaganda, the notion of Pashtun national identity in Pakistan could transform into a secessionist political force.<sup>62</sup> Pakistan indeed encountered a secessionist Pashtun movement in 1970, which it successfully curbed.<sup>63</sup>

At present, there is no significant Pashtun secessionist political force in Pakistan. However, the Afghan narratives of *Loya* Afghanistan have intensified due to the advent of social media.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, every government of Afghanistan, including both Taliban-led governments, maintains the same ambiguous stance on the legal status of the border with Pakistan. This indicates that the Pashtun in Afghanistan still long for the greater Afghanistan, and the Afghan state is unable or unwilling to neutralize this longing. Additionally, millions of Afghan refugees have been in Pakistan since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Many have obtained Pakistani citizenship by both legal and illegal means.<sup>65</sup> Some of these 'new citizens' could conceivably join the now subdued radical Pashtun nationalists of Pakistan to secure a domestic political voice that concurs with the notion of *Loya* Afghanistan. This is especially relevant when seen in the context of the grievances generated by the Pakistan army's counterterrorism operations in the Pashtun tribal areas of Pakistan, especially Waziristan during the War on Terror (WoT). All this indicates a threat to the ontological security of Pakistan and a potential risk to the physical security of Pakistan.

### ***How Does Pakistan Deal with its Identity Challenge?***

Pakistan turns to the routinization of its relations with Afghanistan to respond to its cognitive anxiety that emanates from Afghanistan. An agreement for the improvement of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan and for transit facilities for Afghan goods through Pakistan was signed in May 1958, and since then Pakistan has completed various socioeconomic development

projects in Afghanistan.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, Pakistan, like the British previously, confronts difficulties in establishing normal state-level routines with the country. Afghanistan's non-recognition of the Durand line border has raised tensions in their relations multiple times, such as the withdrawal of diplomatic representatives, flag burning, radio propaganda, allegations of espionage, and occasional clashes between the armed forces of both countries on the border. Like the British, who when they failed to establish routines with Afghanistan, reached out to the Russians for setting down new routines concerning Afghanistan, Pakistan too reaches out to other actors for routinization pertaining to Afghanistan.<sup>67</sup> This has both internal and external dimensions.

Externally, Pakistan integrates Afghanistan into its routines of cautiousness vis-à-vis India by looking at Afghanistan through the prism of its relations with India. In 1949, Sir Zafrullah Khan, Pakistan's first foreign minister, hinted at 'liaison' between India and Afghanistan in the latter's unfriendly attitude toward Pakistan.<sup>68</sup> As routines help to bring a threat environment under cognitive control and facilitate the cognitive capacity to choose how to respond to ontological anxiety,<sup>69</sup> by integrating Afghanistan into its animosity-driven routines with India, Pakistan addresses its ontological insecurity and the potential secessionist risks emanating from Afghanistan.

The British, before Pakistan, had a strong perception of Afghanistan as a 'violent geography' and an 'oriental state,' which hindered the British from establishing routine foreign policy relations with Afghanistan.<sup>70</sup> Pakistan, too, developed its perception of Afghanistan through the latter's attitude towards it immediately after its creation and this perception deeply influences its relations with the latter. In Pakistan's foreign policy, which is marked by Islamic identity, Afghanistan is a 'brotherly Muslim' country, and 'Hindu' India is an existential threat. Its self-proclaimed patronage of the Pakistani Pashtun and rejection of the Durand Line as the border are interpreted by Pakistan as part of the Indian efforts to encircle it from the eastern and western fronts. Thus, every attempt by the Afghans to speak for the 'grievances' of the Pakistani Pashtuns is rejected as India-backed propaganda to weaken and ultimately break Pakistan. In other words, Pakistan does not imagine Afghanistan as an 'enemy' state. It only sees 'pro-Hindu India elements' in the country that prevent the 'brotherly' Muslim country from establishing cordial relations with Pakistan. This perception of Afghanistan has led Pakistan to imagine Islamist forces in Afghanistan to be most suited to eliminate Indian influence in the country.

Prior to the Afghan *jihad*, in which Pakistan played a key role, most Afghan governments have had cordial relations with India. Pakistan was at odds with the pro-India Afghan governments and simultaneously endeavored to minimize Indian influence in Kabul. This motivated Pakistan to look at Afghan Islamist groups as allies against the Indians who supported the Pashtun nationalist governments of Afghanistan. Since the 1970s, Pakistan has supported Afghan Islamists, especially manifested in its support of the Afghan Mujahideen during their resistance to the invading Soviet army and later the Taliban. In fact, supporting Islamist forces in Afghanistan has emerged as the principal means by which the Pakistan state has sought to produce security for itself, both ontological and physical.

The British used their foreign policy routinization with a third country, their arch rival Russia, to deal with Afghanistan. In its relations, Pakistan also integrated Afghanistan with the Western World's Cold War concerns about Russia. Referring to the Afghan claims on Pakistan's Pashtun areas in 1949, Liaquat Ali Khan told the British that Pakistan could create more problems for Afghanistan than the latter could for the former and that 'it only means spending some money,' but he would not do so because 'it would only benefit Russia.'<sup>71</sup> Although Pakistan had no direct threats from the Soviet Union or any significant possibility of a domestic communist takeover, it still joined the Western camp to obtain Western military and economic assistance and strengthen its position vis-à-vis India. By extension, it anticipated to undermine Afghanistan's stance on the Durand Line by strengthening Islamabad's relations with the Western world. Both the US and the UK endorsed Pakistan's stance on the Durand Line, especially amidst the Cold War context, and extensively supported Pakistan in the Afghan *jihad* against the Russians.<sup>72</sup>

Internally, Pakistan, to a large extent, has integrated its Islamic identity with the Pashtun identity of its Pashtun citizens through their 'Pakistanization,' which refers to the integration of the Pashtuns into the state structure and the larger society in the country. Even as early as the early 1960s, the American scholar James W. Spain noted that the integration of the Pashtun in Pakistan was well underway.<sup>73</sup> The Pashtuns form the second largest ethnic group in the armed forces of Pakistan and are integrated into the civil bureaucracy, the country's mainstream political parties, and its economic hub, Karachi; they are settled in all regions of Pakistan.<sup>74</sup> All this has led to what can be termed the 'Pakistanization' of the Pashtuns, which is also marked by their lack of attention to Afghanistan's self-proclaimed identity claims about the Pashtun areas of Pakistan.<sup>75</sup>

Second, at the domestic level, Pakistan discourages any discussions about Afghan assertions on the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, including the legal status of the border between the two countries. During a seminar at the Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, both a former Pakistani diplomat and a former military official suggested to avoid discussions on the issue.<sup>76</sup> This author, who was present on the occasion, respectfully disagreed, but silence on the issue is officially preferred in Pakistan. Pakistani officials issue short statements on the border issue when absolutely necessary; otherwise, silence is assumed to serve Pakistan's interests well. Ostensibly, Pakistan is silent because public discussions would open up national and international discussions on an issue that Pakistan views as a closed chapter: the legal status of the Durand Line, which Pakistan considers an international border between the two countries.

Despite their non-recognition of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, in accordance with Pakistan's wishes, the latter still considers Afghan Islamist forces, including the Afghan Taliban, as a friendly stabilizing force that deserves its ongoing assistance. Despite the risks of the use of proxy groups, Pakistan sees the Islamist forces of Afghanistan as favorable to its long-term national security interests, which include minimizing Indian influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan's access to Central Asian Republics (CARs).<sup>77</sup> Pakistan, therefore, may not want public discussions over the Afghan assertions because it would expose the Taliban, who many in Afghanistan view as 'Pakistan's proxy militia,' to unwanted Afghan public criticism over 'giving up Afghanistan's traditional stance' on the Durand Line. This, in turn, may force the Taliban to take a more 'belligerent' posture on the border issue than they may not desire—a situation that both Pakistan and Taliban-led Afghanistan would prefer to avoid. In other words, both the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan endeavor to minimize the clash between the Pashtun identity of Afghanistan and the Islamic identity of Pakistan, thereby minimizing the ontological insecurity of both countries.

### **Consequences of Afghanistan and Pakistan's Ontological (In)Security Managements on the Pashtun Area of Pakistan**

The identity clash and the resulting ontological (in)security managements of both countries cause serious repercussions for the Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Pakistan continued the British colonial administrative practices under the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) in tribal districts along the border with Afghanistan for about 70 years, which kept the population of the area in legal isolation from the rest of the country and in socioeconomic deprivation.

Pakistan's tribal districts on the border with Afghanistan became the central ground of the WoT, and, consequently, the districts suffered massive violence, widespread rights abuses, and immense material damages, also referred to by some rights activists as a 'long trail of 4Ds' (i.e., death, destruction, disappearances, and displacements).<sup>78</sup>

Despite the fact that over four million Afghan refugees have lived across Pakistan for over four decades without any remarkable resentment from the host society, the advent of social media has made the longstanding identity clash between Pakistan and Afghanistan directly mirrored in the Pashtun civilian spaces of Pakistan. Afghan civilians have always been proactive in asserting their state's Pashtun identity against Pakistan, but for the latter's Pashtun civilian domain to proactively identify on its own initiative with its identity against Afghanistan is a relatively new phenomenon, especially given the fact that public discussions on Afghanistan's Pashtun identity claims are not encouraged in Pakistan. Both Pakistani Pashtuns and Afghans, mainly the Pashtun diasporas, who are somewhat detached from the everyday experience of physical interaction, clash on social media platforms almost every day, to discredit each other's state identity and narratives.<sup>79</sup> The narratives of both sides indicate that they share little in common regarding the future of the Pashtun area. Contrary to Afghan expectations, the Pakistani Pashtuns support Pakistan, its security institutions, and even its pro-Taliban Afghan policy. The Afghan activists regard 'Pakistanized' Pashtuns as the 'biggest hurdle' in their way to the disintegration of Pakistan. More importantly, the clashes create sharp polarization among the Pashtuns on both sides of the border between the two countries. The clashes somehow have the potential for violence in the Pashtun civilian domain, especially in Pakistan, due to the presence of a large Afghan refugee population in the country. Recently, people in a local community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) refused to allow the burial of a deceased Afghan refugee because he allegedly participated in the Afghans' anti-Pakistan social media discussions. The people demanded that he be buried in Afghanistan, and consequently, the dead body was transported to Afghanistan for burial.<sup>80</sup> In another incident, an Afghan refugee's restaurant business in KPK was attacked by a group of local Pakistani Pashtuns, who accused the refugee owner of desecrating the Pakistani flag.<sup>81</sup>

However, the case of Mahmood Akhunzada illustrates how the Pashtuns of Pakistan could bear the adverse consequences of the identity clash between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Akhunzada is from Dir in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, and currently works in Saudi Arabia. He is one of the first, if not the first, Pakistani Pashtun, who appeared on social media to

counter the daily anti-Pakistan social media campaigns run by the Afghan diaspora with the aim of enticing the Pashtuns of Pakistan to revolt against the state. His activism encouraged several other Pakistani Pashtuns to question the anti-Pakistan Afghan narratives on social media. Some social media discussions are informative, but many, if not most, turn into personal attacks, abusive language against each other and their respective states, and threats are even hurled against each other. Some Afghan discussants followed up on the threats when they physically attacked some of the Pakistani activists. Mahmood Akhunzada was one of them. He was invited by some Afghans in Saudi Arabia to discuss political issues concerning the Pashtuns in both countries. When he reached the appointed place, he was suddenly attacked by a group of 18 Afghans. In addition to physical violence, they also tore apart his clothes and videotaped the incident. The video was posted on social media and went viral.

In the Pashtun cultural context, tearing someone's clothes, especially trousers, is an extreme display of public dishonor. The cultural code of honor and shame requires that Akhunzada must now 'pay in kind' the attackers or someone from their group, which in this case would be as easy as to just blame, even falsely, any Pakistan-based Afghan refugees saying something against Pakistan and use it as a 'justification' to expose the 'innocent' refugee(s) to similar violence. The easiest way for Akhunzada to avenge himself in this manner is to direct his family in Dir, Pakistan, to do to one or more Afghan refugees exactly what the Saudi Arabia-based Afghans did to him. This possibility was discussed among people close to him. However, the cyberspace discussants from the Pakistani side, including this author, and leaders of the Pakistani Pashtun diaspora community in Saudi Arabia urged him to abide by Saudi law and seek help from the Pakistani embassy in Saudi Arabia to achieve justice. Instead of taking vengeful action, he contacted the Pakistan embassy, which reported the incident to the Saudi authorities. Consequently, the attackers were arrested but released in a few weeks. Akhunzada now feels abandoned and alleges that the case was not seriously followed up by the embassy with the Saudi authorities; possibly because of Pakistan's strategy to keep calm vis-à-vis Afghan incitement. Moreover, the embassy is no longer heeding his request for justice via legal action by the Saudi or Pakistani authorities. To complicate matters, some of the attackers who are seemingly Afghan refugees, hold Pakistani passports, but allegedly obtained these by bribing Pakistani officials. With the attackers out, he and his family are under pressure to avenge him in line with Pashtun cultural expectations by insulting and imposing violence on some Afghan refugees in Pakistan, videotaping them, and making the videos go viral. The pressure especially increases when

the Afghan social media activists from time to time threaten other Pakistani Pashtun activists with the same consequences if they do not stop defending the country in cyberspace, and also mock him for being 'unable to defend his honor.' He and his family are resisting social pressure and are abiding by the law both in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. However, given the intensity of online clashes, it cannot be taken for granted that the online polarization will not translate into violent acts in the Pashtun civilian space in Pakistan if the state prefers not to provide justice to Pashtuns like Akhunzada in line with its ontological (in)security management practice of maintaining silence on Pashtun identity matters concerning Afghanistan.

## **Conclusion**

The ontological security insight offered in this article is meant to complement, and not replace, various other explanations to account for the relations between the two countries. This is because Pakistan and Afghanistan's gladiatorial relations since 1947 cannot be fully comprehended if the goal of analysis is to ensure only territorial integrity and physical security. Seeing state relations through ontological security reveals different perspectives, and seemingly inexplicable or not easily explicable aspects of their relations appear to make sense. The notion of ontological security elaborates how states are apprehensive to secure continuous self-identity and transform any doubts about self-identity into self-identity affirming normal routines even if the routines negate common sense or invite armed conflicts. The ontological security perspective explains why the Taliban, despite being beholden to Pakistan for their power in Afghanistan, refuse to recognize the border between both countries. It also explains why Pakistan still supports the Taliban despite their non-recognition of the border. When Pashtun nationalists are in power in Kabul, the identity clash between the two countries dramatically increases. This generates cognitive anxiety in Pakistan which seriously compromises its ontological security. When the Taliban are in power, they tend to maintain the identity clash but downplay it to a great extent. This reduces the cognitive anxiety of Pakistan and restores to a great extent its ontological security.

This article also predicts that in line with its ontological (in)security management approach to Afghanistan, it is likely that Pakistan would continue pursuing its national interests by downplaying the incidents that might relate to the human security of some of its subjects. Such an approach will dangerously expose the Pashtun civilian space to more violence. Paradoxically, the potential for normalizing Pak-Afghan relations may also lie



in open discussions in Pakistan's Pashtun public domain on Afghanistan's supposedly altruistic claims about the Pakistani Pashtuns. The discussions may strengthen those in Afghanistan who want to normalize relations with Pakistan by recognizing the Durand Line, which in turn would reduce public pressure on the Afghan state to recognize the border, thus reducing the identity clash between the two countries and, thereby opening up new opportunities for closer economic, sociocultural, and defense ties between the two neighbors.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Civilian population in both countries suffer the violent consequences of the conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan's engagement with it, but this article focuses only on the Pashtun civilian domain in Pakistan.
- <sup>2</sup> Abdul Samad Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1988); M. Hassan Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006); S. Paul Kapur and Sumit Ganguly, "The Jihad Paradox: Pakistan and Islamist Militancy in South Asia," *International Security* 37, no. 1 (2012): 111-141, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23280406>; Aparna Pande, *Explaining Pakistan's Foreign Policy, Escaping India* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011); Saleem M. M. Qureshi, "Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Pacific Affairs* 39, no. 1/2 (1966): 99-114; Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The U.S. and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008); Barnett R. Rubin and Abubakar Siddique, *Resolving the Pakistan-Afghanistan Stalemate*, report (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006), <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/SROct06.pdf>; Bijan Omrani, "The Durand Line: Analysis of the Legal Status of the Disputed Afghanistan-Pakistan Frontier," *University of Miami International and Comparative Law Review* 26, no. 1 (2018): 76-126, <https://repository.law.miami.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1318&context=umiclcr>.
- <sup>3</sup> This area consists of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), now called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and the Pashtun area of Baluchistan. Since 2018, FATA has been merged into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province under a constitutional amendment.
- <sup>4</sup> The study also draws from author's telephonic discussions with Mahmood Akhunzada and observations of his social media activism in support of Pakistan.
- <sup>5</sup> R. D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1960).
- <sup>6</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
- <sup>7</sup> Jakub Eberle and Vladimir Handl, "Ontological Security, Civilian Power, and German Foreign Policy toward Russia," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16, no. 1 (2020): 41-58, <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/ory012>; Noa Epstein, "Explaining the War on Terrorism from an Ontological-Security Perspective," *MIT International Review* 1, no. 1 (2007): 13-19, <https://web.mit.edu/mitir/2007/spring/perspective.pdf>; Nina C. Krickel-Choi, "Rethinking Ontological Security Theory, Conceptual Investigation into 'Self' and Anxiety" (PhD diss., University of Stockholm, 2021); and Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 341-370, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346>.
- <sup>8</sup> Dmitry Chernobrov, "Ontological Security and Public (Mis) Recognition of International Crises: Uncertainty, Political Imagining, and the Self," *Political Psychology* 37, no. 5 (2016):

- 581-596, <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12334>; and Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*.
- <sup>9</sup> Martin J. Bayly, "Imperial Ontological (In) Security: 'Buffer States', International Relations and the Case of Anglo-Afghan Relations, 1808-1878," *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 4 (2015): 816-840, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066114557569>.
- <sup>10</sup> Derek Gregory and Allan Pred, eds., *Violent Geographies: Fear, Terror, and Political Violence* (London: Routledge, 2007).
- <sup>11</sup> Bayly, "Imperial Ontological (In) Security: 'Buffer States', International Relations and the Case of Anglo-Afghan Relations, 1808-1878."
- <sup>12</sup> Mohammed Ahsen Chaudhri, "Pakistan and the Muslim World," *Pakistan Horizon* 10, no. 3 (1957): 156-166, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41392316>.
- <sup>13</sup> Pande, *Explaining Pakistan's Foreign Policy, Escaping India*.
- <sup>14</sup> Chaudhri, "Pakistan and the Muslim World."
- <sup>15</sup> S. S. Pirzada, "Pakistan and the OIC," *Pakistan Horizon* 40, no. 2 (1987): 14-38, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41394243>.
- <sup>16</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*.
- <sup>17</sup> Ismail Yoon, *facebook*, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009539152163>; Abdul Ghafoor Liwal, *facebook*, <https://www.facebook.com/abdulghafoor.liwal>, and "I Love Afghanistan," *facebook*, <https://www.facebook.com/afghan.watan2>. Pashtun activists and several Pashtun poets and scholars of Afghanistan frequently refer to Pakistan in derogatory terms in their live Facebook discussions, and public speeches. These include Ismail Yoon and Abdul Ghafoor Liwal, among others. Their thoughts may be seen at their social media pages.
- <sup>18</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*; Ahmad Shaye Qassem and H. M. Durand, "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue," in "Afghanistan," special issue, *Policy Perspectives* (2008): 87-102, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42909535>; and Qureshi, "Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan."
- <sup>19</sup> Mehrunnisa Ali, "The Second Islamic Summit Conference, 1974," *Pakistan Horizon* 27, no. 1 (1974): 29-49, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41393199>.
- <sup>20</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*, 117-118.
- <sup>21</sup> Pande, *Explaining Pakistan's Foreign Policy, Escaping India*.
- <sup>22</sup> Anwar-ul-Haq Ahady, "The Decline of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan," *Asian Survey* 35, no. 7 (1995): 621-634, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645419>.
- <sup>23</sup> Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, ed. *The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan*, vol. 2 (London: Elibron Classics, 2005), 157-158.
- <sup>24</sup> Percy Sykes, *The Right Honorable Mortimer Durand: A Biography* (London: Cassel and Company, 1926), 216; 221.
- <sup>25</sup> Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, ed. *The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan*, vol. 1 (London: Scholar Select, 1900), 267-84; 87-92.
- <sup>26</sup> Qassem and Durand, "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue."
- <sup>27</sup> Ayse Zarakol, "Ontological (In) Security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan," *International Relations* 24, no. 1 (2010): 3-23, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117809359040>.
- <sup>28</sup> Tamim Ansary, *Games without Rules: The Often-Interrupted History of Afghanistan* (New York: Public Affairs, 2014).
- <sup>29</sup> Qassem and Durand, "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue."
- <sup>30</sup> Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*; and Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*.
- <sup>31</sup> Qassem and Durand, "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue." Also, even Amrullah Saleh, an ethnic Tajik, former intelligence chief and former interior minister of Afghanistan, makes such claims in his public statements, which are available on social media.
- <sup>32</sup> Epstein, "Explaining the War on Terrorism from an Ontological-Security Perspective."
- <sup>33</sup> Eberle and Handl, "Ontological Security, Civilian Power, and German Foreign Policy toward Russia."

- <sup>34</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*, 30.
- <sup>35</sup> Amin Tarzi and Robert D. Lamb, *Measuring Perceptions About the Pashtun People*, report (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2011), [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\\_files/files/publication/110316\\_Lamb\\_PashtunPerceptions\\_web.pdf](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/110316_Lamb_PashtunPerceptions_web.pdf).
- <sup>36</sup> Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, 35-69.
- <sup>37</sup> Chernobrov, "Ontological Security and Public (Mis) Recognition of International Crises: Uncertainty, Political Imagining, and the Self."
- <sup>38</sup> Ashraf Ghani, interview, YouTube video, September 21, 2019, televised by Shamshad TV, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_4uR6dBCus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_4uR6dBCus).
- <sup>39</sup> Qassem and Durand, "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue."
- <sup>40</sup> Chernobrov, "Ontological Security and Public (Mis) Recognition of International Crises: Uncertainty, Political Imagining, and the Self"; Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma"; and Epstein, "Explaining the War on Terrorism from an Ontological-Security Perspective."
- <sup>41</sup> Such as the claims made by Gen. Raziq, the assassinated Police Chief of Qandahar, in his interviews with media and social media. Afghanistan's minister, Mohibullah Samim, also made the territorial claim on Pakistani Pashtun area in his press conference on June 21, 2021.
- <sup>42</sup> "Coll 5/7 'Afghanistan: Violation of Frontier by Raf Machines; Special Instructions to Pilots; General International Practice'," British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers & Qatar Digital Library (13.11.1930-20.031947).
- <sup>43</sup> National Archives, "Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x."
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 16.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Khan, ed. *The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan*, vol. 2.
- <sup>48</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*; and Ali Ahmad Jalali, *A Military History of Afghanistan: From the Great Game to the Global War on Terror* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2017).
- <sup>49</sup> "Coll 5/69, 'Afghanistan: Visit of the A.O.C-in-Chief, India to Kabul in 1939,'" Qatar Digital Library & British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers British Library India Office.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>51</sup> Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans: With an Epilogue on Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), 435-36, <https://bawar.net/data0/books/59f7597214034/pdf/The-Pathans.pdf>; and National Archives, "Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x," 71.
- <sup>52</sup> National Archives, "Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x."
- <sup>53</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans: With an Epilogue on Russia*, 435-436.
- <sup>54</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, "Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Khudai Khidmatgars, Congress and the Partition of India," *Pakistan Vision* 8, no. 2 (2007): 86-115, <http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/studies/PDF-FILES/Shah-4%20new.pdf>.
- <sup>55</sup> UN-Archives, "Admission of Pakistan and Yemen to Membership in the United Nations: Report of the First Committee (Document a/3, Documenta/399)" (UN Digital Archives).
- <sup>56</sup> National Archives, "Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x," 77.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., 3.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., 9.
- <sup>59</sup> Pashtun discourse, poetry, and Pashto literature in Afghanistan underscore this theme, which is mainly inspired by the historical factors, particularly the armed conflict with the Sikh ruler of Punjab, Ranjit Singh.
- <sup>60</sup> Bureau of Intelligence and Research, US Department of State, GoUS, *Afghanistan-Pakistan: The Political Significance of the Durand Line*, declassified report (Government of the United States, 1978).
- <sup>61</sup> Ghaus, *The Fall of Afghanistan: An Insider's Account*; and Kakar, *A Political and Diplomatic History of Afghanistan, 1863-1901*.

- <sup>62</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation between Professor G. Tucci, the Director of the Italian Archaeological Expedition to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan & H. Doland Gelber, Second Secretary X to the US Embassy in Kabul, Subject: Afghanistan and Pashtunistan,” Declassified Authority NW23967, September 1, 2004, 1962.
- <sup>63</sup> Juma Khan Sufi, *Fareb-E-Natamam [Endless Deception]* (Islamabad: Sufi Publications, 2018).
- <sup>64</sup> Farhat Taj, “Stable Regime, Historiography and Truth Commissions: A Case Study of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement of Pakistan,” *Review of Human Rights* 7, no. 1 (2021): 67-88, <https://doi.org/10.35994/rhr.v7i1.192>.
- <sup>65</sup> Muhammad Najam ud din Farani, “Perspectives on Afghan Refugee Identity in Pakistan,” *Journal of Political Studies* 27, no. 1 (2020): 159-181, [http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/pols/pdf-files/10-v27\\_2\\_20.pdf](http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/pols/pdf-files/10-v27_2_20.pdf).
- <sup>66</sup> Syed Abrar Hussain, *Afghanistan: Mullah Umar se Ashraf Ghani Takk [From Mullah Umar to Ashraf Ghani]* (Islamabad: IPS Press, 2021), 109-118.
- <sup>67</sup> Bayly, “Imperial Ontological (In) Security: ‘Buffer States’, International Relations and the Case of Anglo-Afghan Relations, 1808–1878.”
- <sup>68</sup> National Archives, “Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x,” 15.
- <sup>69</sup> Jennifer Mitzen, “Anchoring Europe’s Civilizing Identity: Habits, Capabilities and Ontological Security,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13, no. 2 (2006): 270-285, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501760500451709>.
- <sup>70</sup> Bayly, “Imperial Ontological (In) Security: ‘Buffer States’, International Relations and the Case of Anglo-Afghan Relations, 1808–1878.”
- <sup>71</sup> National Archives, “Reference-Fo 800/434. The Public Office Record, 16x,” 16.
- <sup>72</sup> Bureau of Intelligence and Research, US Department of State, GoUS, *Afghanistan-Pakistan: The Political Significance of the Durand Line*; and Qureshi, “Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan.”
- <sup>73</sup> James W. Spain, *The Way of the Pathans* (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1962).
- <sup>74</sup> C. Christine Fair and Shuja Nawaz, “The Changing Pakistan Army Officer Corps,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34, no. 1 (2011): 63-94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2011.541765>.
- <sup>75</sup> Taj, “Stable Regime, Historiography and Truth Commissions: A Case Study of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement of Pakistan.”
- <sup>76</sup> Farhat Taj, “Afghan Historiography: A Hybrid Threat to Pakistan,” *IPS TV*, January 6, 2022, YouTube video, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH\\_XbtJCN5o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH_XbtJCN5o).
- <sup>77</sup> Muhammad Nasrullah Mirza and Naveed Mushtaq, “Utilizing Militia Forces in Modern Warfare: Role and Challenges,” *Policy Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (2021): 69-84, <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.18.1.0069>; and Kapur and Ganguly, “The Jihad Paradox: Pakistan and Islamist Militancy in South Asia.”
- <sup>78</sup> International Amnesty, “Pakistan: ‘The Hands of Cruelty’: Abuses by Armed Forces and Taliban in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas” (London: Amnesty International, 2012); Neta C. Crawford, “Human Cost of the Post-9/11 Wars: Lethality and the Need for Transparency” (paper, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Brown University, Providence, 2018), <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Human%20Costs%2C%20Nov%208%202018%20CoW.pdf>; National Counter Terrorism Authority, *NACTA Report 2017*, (Government of Pakistan, 2017), <https://nacta.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Annual-Report-2017.pdf>; and ICG, “Pakistan’s IDP Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities” (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2009).
- <sup>79</sup> Taj, “Stable Regime, Historiography and Truth Commissions: A Case Study of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement of Pakistan.”
- <sup>80</sup> A video of the incident is available on social media, and the incident is also discussed in the online narratives of Pashtuns of both countries.
- <sup>81</sup> A video of the incident is available on social media. “Flag Burning in Chakdara by Afghan Owner of a Local Restaurant,” Facebook, August 10, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/100069576426267/videos/597831647581955>; and “Afghana’s Concept of History,” Facebook post, June 18, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/farhat.taj.184/videos/116473787312347>.