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The Structure of Violence Among the Swat Pukhtun

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Violence, structured through institutions of feud and warfare, is perhaps the most important formative element in Middle Eastern segmentary lineage societies. As organizations of "disequilibrium in equilibrium" these societies become coherent in relations of lineage opposition. In other words, "The tribe is not organised except for offence and defence; except in war and in matters ultimately connected with war, the licence of individual freewill is absolutely uncontrolled."

The ideal form of the patrilineal segmentary lineage system unites groups and individuals through descent from a common male ancestor. Those who share an ancestor are obliged by the tie of blood to defend one another against outsiders or more distant relatives. In theory, coalitions in opposition can unite thousands, or even millions, of putative lineal relatives in warfare, as the British, French and, more recently, Soviet colonialists have discovered. The same mechanism operates as well at the very lowest level of genealogy, grouping brothers against patrilateral parallel cousins. In its ideal form the system has a boundless capacity for fusion and fission, "since even the nuclear family is a miniature of the larger social system."

But the ideal pattern in which every segment at every level is structurally equivalent is mitigated in reality by differentiation in the vital matters of revenge and warfare. Among the Bedouin of Cyrenaica, for example, the nuclear family is not responsible for blood vengeance. That duty falls upon the co-resident lineage segment which is related to the victim up to the fourth or fifth ascending generation. Likewise, the members of this
group share blood money and are held culpable for any homicide committed by a
member. iv More inclusive segments function only as landholding units and rarely, if
ever, unite in blood disputes, while lineage groups within the co-resident segment appear
to fission rather than fight. A similar distinction is seen in Iraq. v In fact, violence against
close agnatic relatives is generally disallowed in Middle Eastern societies, though the rule
is sometimes very laxly observed, as among the Berbers of the Rif where "vengeance
killings within agnatic lineage groups…occurred too often simply to be dismissed as
exceptions to the rule." vi

Among the Pukhtun people of Swat in Northern Pakistan violence is more highly
structured than in the cases reported elsewhere in the Middle East. The Pukhtun of Swat
are the descendants of nomads who conquered the region some 400 years ago, reducing
the local inhabitants to helots. The Pukhtun themselves became sedentary
agriculturalists, relying on their own labor and that of their dependents to produce
subsistence crops of rice, wheat, and later, maize. Land now is scarce, but this problem
appears to be fairly recent. Traditionally, the region was one of "ordered anarchy" with
numerous and ephemeral small-scale leaders in every village, each deriving his position
from personal ability and strength. Early in the twentieth century a central government
was superimposed; over this structure of shifting alliances, vii but in the last decade this
government has weakened considerably, allowing the old segmentary system to reassert
itself.viii

Within this setting relations between groups and between individuals are structured in
large measure by degrees of violence. Inside the nuclear family, men and women
confront one another in a continuous struggle for dominance. Women, as incoming
wives, seek to retain their lineage honor and to control their new home. For men, the task
is to subdue the wife or, failing that, to humiliate her. The husband has the trump card in
this battle, since he can take a second wife, thereby shaming the first and all her lineage.
The woman's response may be violent, as she is not allowed divorce. Overt fighting, as
well as covert use of magical spells against her rival, are the woman's weapons. Should she fail to drive out her co-wife, she may vindicate herself by poisoning her husband, and men with two wives who die of "cholera" are often rumored to have been murdered, although public accusations are rarely made.

On their side, men are permitted and encouraged to beat their wives regularly. Only if bones are broken is a woman allowed to flee to her family, and even then she must return to her husband after a year or so. Outright murder of wives, however, is very uncommon, since her lineage would avenge her death. The few cases of wife murder involved women without close male relatives. But there is a caveat to the rule of lineage vengeance for the death of a lineage woman; if the woman has been sexually promiscuous or acted in a manner which is scandalous, her own patriline will reject and even shoot her. (For more complete data on Pukhtun marriage see Lindholm & Lindholm 1979.)

Violence in the nuclear family is not limited to husband and wife. Fathers, sons, and brothers have relations of hostility, despite the formal respect and service the younger must always offer the elder. In a relationship typical of patrilineal society, brothers are rivals for the father's land and squabble among themselves and with the father for a share. These conflicts, though causing ill-feeling, do not often end in real fighting because a man's brothers and father are his most certain allies in any outside clash and it would be self-defeating to kill them. As an example, there is one case within recent memory of my informants where a man did kill his brother. The motive was greed for the brother's wealth and lust for the brother's wife, who was the killer's accomplice. The killer inherited both and was safe from revenge since he himself was the closest relative of the murdered man. But without allies he was unable to protect his gains, and a local strong man deprived him of his property and his new wife, and drove him from the village.

Killings of fathers and sons are more frequent than killings of brothers. Two fathers were reportedly killed by their sons in recent memory, and there was an attempt by a son
to kill his father during the time of fieldwork. The attempt failed, and the son is presently in jail on his father's complaint. In another case during the fieldwork, a large landlord shot and killed his son because the son had refused to give a share of his rice harvest to the father's mother, the victim's own grandmother. The wife of the dead man asked that the killer be prosecuted, but her brothers-in-law pressed her to drop the case, which she was obliged to do. These cases were all over land, but sexual jealousy and seduction of wives within the extended family also can cause murder, as Ahmed notes.

Violence within the family is thus of two types: that directed towards affines and that directed towards agnates. The former is part of a larger pattern of lineage enmity which is acted out in the hostile relationship of husband and wife and may lead to a feud if the wife is killed without sufficient cause. The latter derives from internal rivalry over property and women and may also escalate to murder, but does not involve revenge, since the killing has been committed by the closest possible agnate.

The next level of violence is between close patrilateral parallel cousins. This is the most deadly relationship in Swat. Of the seventeen killings of men by men which I recorded during fieldwork, seven were killings either of close patrilateral parallel cousins or of the servants of these cousins. In addition, there were numerous fights between cousins which ended short of killing. The tension between cousins is such that the kinship term of reference, tarbur, is synonymous with "enemy." The enmity between cousins derives from their claims to the land of their common grandfather. Their holdings are adjacent, and each will try to push the holdings of the other back by trickery or force. As an example, two cousins had neighboring plots. The cousin whose field was more distant from the village walked to his field on an ancient pathway which verged on the plot of his tarbur. There was a simmering dispute over the right to this narrow path which ended in gunfight and the death of one of the men's sons.

Disputes express or question dominance and power. It is an axiom among the Pukhtun that tarbur do not fear one another. A man whose cousin has become wealthy
and powerful will feel pressure to pick a fight with him to display his own strength. The most devastating feud ongoing during fieldwork was one which began with a boy's refusal to let his second cousin play soccer with him. This insult led to a fight which spread to the boys' fathers. At the close of the fieldwork three men were dead and the fields of both families had either been sold for weapons or else left fallow as the remaining men sought to eliminate their rivals.

Among elite Pukhtun who have a claim to local leadership, a feud must be carried through to its bitter conclusion, which usually entails the ruin of all the participants. Outsiders, who are jealous of a dominant family, will sometimes try to precipitate such a feud. In one village, unauthorized use of a room in the men's house by some young men for a rendezvous with a prostitute led to a beating by the owner of the room, who was the uncle (FFBS) of the young men. This was followed by a series of escalating retaliatory actions, culminating in the jailing of one of the young men. Soon thereafter, the uncle's valuable stand of apple tree saplings was cut down in the middle of the night. The village waited to see what the uncle, a notoriously bad-tempered man, would do, but after consultation with his brothers, he decided to do nothing. "Thank Allah, I have many enemies," he told me, "they would like to see me ruined in a fight with my tarbur. Perhaps these enemies cut down my trees." This case exemplifies a repeated motif in Swati politics; that is, the role of the manipulatory third party.

Although the elite must maintain a feud to the last man, less powerful lineages may allow themselves to be pressured to reach a settlement. In the case of the cousins feuding over the pathway, the village jirga (council of elders from elite families) prevailed on the father of the dead boy to accept a blood payment and forswear revenge against his tarbur. The opponents in this case were clients of local Pukhtun patrons who feared that they might be drawn into an escalating conflict. They therefore pressed their clients to accept a truce. A similar case concerned two landless cousins employed by rival Pukhtun as
tenant farmers on adjoining strips of land. A fight between the client families ended in the death of two men, but the patrons forced a reconciliation.

It is important for the jirga to reach a compromise in cases involving poor clients since the honor of the patron is at stake. Even in fights which have nothing to do with his interests, a patron is obliged to enter the fight on his client's behalf in order to keep his credibility as a leader. Fights between servants, like fights between children, can lead to destructive battles between Pukhtun families. Every effort, therefore, is made to arbitrate fights among clients.

Barth (1959a) and Ahmed (1976) provide extensive discussions of the role of so-called saints in mediating disputes in Swat. My data suggest that such figures, who are generally non-Pukhtun claiming a religious heritage, do not intervene in disputes within a village between cousins. If the disputants are poor or weak, then the village jirga will try to mediate; if the participants are Pukhtun, particularly if they are elite Pukhtun with pretensions to leadership, no mediation is attempted. It is considered inevitable that the fight will end in the death or exile of one family and the financial ruin of the other. Saints, it seems, mediate in disputes which go beyond the village limits.

Unlike the Berbers cited by Hart (1970), the Pukhtun do not consider violence between near patrilineal relatives to be abnormal. Furthermore, in contradistinction to the cases considered by Fernea (1970) and Peters (1960), Swat Pukhtun take revenge directly on the man who committed the murder and perhaps, after he has been killed, on his sons and father as well. The notion of group responsibility is not developed, and retaliation, even in cases which do not involve tarbur, is directed to specific individuals. Pukhtun will wait many years to take revenge on a particular person. For example, a man was killed in a fight in the early 1950s. His killer offered the victim's family blood money, which was accepted. But for a Pukhtun, blood money, or even the donation of a woman, is never adequate compensation for death. Blood demands blood. Thus, after nearly thirty years, the son of the murdered man killed his father's killer while the old man was
lying, helpless and immobile, in a hospital bed\textsuperscript{xiii}. This act, which led to the permanent exile of the killer, was much praised by the Pukhtun men.

It is evident from the above history that vengeance need not involve daring. Rather, it is accomplished by stealth or betrayal. Courage is not in the act of killing so much as it is in the willingness to take the ruinous consequences for the sake of cleansing one's honor.

Rivalry between cousins and the focusing of revenge on individuals and nuclear families instead of on larger groups limits the escalation of blood feuds in Swat. Other forms of violence, however, involve more inclusive groups both inside and outside the village.

All Swati villages are divided into neighborhoods (\textit{palao}). A very small village may have only one \textit{palao}, but most have three. Two of the \textit{palao} are generally larger and more powerful than the third. Each neighborhood in turn is subdivided into \textit{tul}, or wards, also usually three in number. These \textit{tul} are dominated by and named after a particular leader who, with his close relatives and clients, heads a faction which must be represented in village \textit{jirgas}. The \textit{tuls} in a neighborhood, though in opposition, can join together in action against another \textit{palao}. Of course, all is not peaceful within the \textit{tul} either, as \textit{tarbur} compete with one another for leadership and prestige. Thus the political organization of the village is perhaps best conceived as small circles of patrilineal kin, residing near one another, and acting together in opposition to other circles of the same scale.

Complementing and complicating the formal segmentary system is a dualistic party structure (\textit{dullah}) which cross-cuts the \textit{tuls} and \textit{palao}. It strongly resembles the \textit{liff} alliances of the Berbers\textsuperscript{xiv}. Gellner (1969:67) doubts the existence of the \textit{liff} at the village level, and claims the system functions, if it functions at all, between villages. Hart (1970:42-45) also sees the \textit{liff} working primarily to balance the uneven distribution of power within tribal units by means of external alliances. He\textsuperscript{xv} notes that "temporary' \textit{liff}...operating within a clan, a subclan, or a local community, could and did shift and
change." The Pukhtun, like the Berbers, speak of the dual parties as if they were concrete entities; indeed, each individual sees the tribal world divided into those who are for and those who are against his party. In Swat, the parties are named after their local leader's clan, so that the parties have different names throughout the valley. Each village *dullah* connects with a web of alliances throughout the region so that a powerful leader will be able to name members of his party in 50 villages or more.

These parties are not formally structured. They are simply a statement, couched in universal and abstract terms, of the fluid oppositions and alliances of individuals. A man sees his party as a tool in his own personal struggle against his enemies, particularly his *tarbur*. Barth (1959a:2) states that enmity between cousins takes precedence over segmentary merging in Swat; "the opposition between small, closely related segments persists in the wider context, and these segments unite with similar small segments in a pattern of two party opposition, not in a merging series of descent segments." In this Barth has reified individual strategy into a structural principle of the unity of patrilineal segments. In actual fact, party alliances are set aside in cases of blood revenge. No man would support the murderer of his *tarbur* under any circumstances, even if the killer were a long-time party ally. The limited range of revenge rights obscures, but does not obliterate, the unity of blood groups in Swat. While a man may not actively seek vengeance for a wrong done to a cousin, he certainly would not stand in the way of revenge being taken because the *tarbur* is not only one's enemy but also, in the proper circumstances, a reliable support. A man without *tarbur* stands naked to the assaults of genealogically more distant enemies, and while strong *tarbur* provoke jealousy they also evoke pride and confidence.

Barth's (1959b) overvaluation of the opposition between cousins results in a static picture of Pukhtun social structure; oppositions balance out in a no-win game as the manipulations and defections of players tend toward stalemate. This long-term leveling process is institutionalized in the dyadic *dullah* system. But in pursuing his analysis,
Barth ignores the triadic patterning of *palao* and *tul* and the dialectical development of differential power relations institutionalized within these forms. In the long run, Barth's picture of stalemate is accurate, but in the short run good players gain positions of dominance and prestige. Obviously, some families become strong simply by out-reproducing others; some men are particularly brave, intelligent, or Machiavellian; and some clans are lucky or skilled at manipulation. Uneven development belies the picture of balance offered by Barth's concentration on the party system.

The mechanisms of party formation provide a processual view of Swati political process. Certainly a man opposes his *tarbur*, but he often has several *tarbur*. He has a choice of enemies and allies and joins or wars with his cousins according to his own advantage. The shifting dyad covers a triadic form consisting of ego, his momentary allies and his momentary enemies. This same pattern is found at every level of Swati society. For example, although each village is divided into two parties, the party lines do not simply bisect the village. Rather, one *palao* will mostly follow the party of its most able *tul* leader, a second *palao* will mostly support the rival party, while a third *palao*, weaker in numbers, will oscillate between the two sides, playing off the opponents and hoping they will exhaust themselves in the combat. The same pattern is repeated with the *palaos* themselves as the three *tuls* vie for dominance. At a regional level, the motif again recurs. Regions are usually made up of three "brother" clans; two strong and one weak, which are cross-cut by *dullah* alliances. At all these levels the potential power of the weak but manipulative third party is evident, and the role of the troublemaker, discussed earlier, is a structural concomitant of the Swati social order.

Within the village politically violent action is always possible but rarely occurs. A murder, whatever the cause, leads to revenge. As mentioned above, political alliances then drop away and the affair becomes one of feud between two nuclear families. Much more likely in village politics was exile. Should one family become overwhelmingly powerful, their disgruntled *tarbur* would flee the village to find temporary refuge with a
nearby ally. The refugees would encourage their host to plan warfare on their home village in hopes of humbling their proud relatives.

Exile, while sometimes lengthy, was almost always impermanent. The exiled party was never totally accepted by its hosts on the grounds that "a man who would betray his own kin would certainly betray us as well." Furthermore, the exiles had no rights in land in their host's territory, while their claim to land within their own village continued in force. Eventually, the exiles would tire of living on charity and return home to claim their patrimony. Sometimes they had to return as supplicants, but more often they were invited back by their tarbur in order to strengthen the manpower of the village. Occasionally, the exiles returned as members of an invading army and used the strength of their new position as conquerors to settle old grievances.

Violence between villages varies according to the genealogical distance between them. Villages which are closely related have a ritualized form of warfare which formerly occurred at the close of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting. The villages were paired according to genealogical and spatial proximity — the two attributes are considered isomorphic in Swat—and the young men would meet in a field to fight with slingshots. There were always a number of injuries and sometimes a death. No revenge was taken for these fatalities, which were seen as accidental. In these fights the youth of the whole village participated together regardless of party affiliation.

Fighting between more distantly related villages was considerably more violent and was known by the people themselves as jang (warfare). Whereas ritual war was within the group of "brother" villages, real warfare was between "brothers." It was to these more distant villages, who could wage real warfare, that exiles fled. Fatalities in these wars could be quite high, as the fighting parties rallied their allies and bodyguards for attacks on opposition strongholds. Deaths in such wars, however, did not involve revenge or even lasting enmity. Conversely, killings committed by turncoat tarbur who had joined the enemy were avenged. For example, in the last great intervillage war (around
1900) one ambitious man joined the village's enemies. With his help, the enemy group invaded the exile's home village, and during the occupation, the traitor killed two of his cousin's bodyguards and destroyed a great deal of property. Later, with the aid of allies and defections from the enemy, the defeated party regained strength and recaptured its home base, once again balancing the regional distribution of power. The exile was banished by his allies, who did not want the responsibility of protecting him from vengeance. He was obliged to return home and allow two of his sons to be killed in compensation for his crimes. He accepted this punishment as just, rejoined the village jirga, and retained a position of prestige in the village. His grandsons are presently among the most powerful men in their neighborhood. It is significant that the exile's erstwhile allies were not held responsible for the deaths which occurred in this war. Also noteworthy is the Swat attitude toward betrayal. The exile, having failed to win power by manipulation within the village, took the risk of moving the conflict onto the intervillage arena. His treachery was seen locally merely as a political ploy which failed and not as anything particularly reprehensible. This matter-of-fact attitude toward betrayal, so difficult for the Westerner to understand, is simply a realistic acceptance of the structurally motivated individualism of Swati politics.

The causes of large-scale wars seem generally to have focused on exiles. Men who had killed a tarbur or women who had shamed their husbands would flee to the protection of a powerful family, which was obliged to offer protection. If this refuge was violated by enemies of the refugee, then the host might become involved in a feud with people who were remotely related to him. Such an event could bring together very large lineage/village groups. Also, exiles could instigate a war by throwing themselves on the mercy of their host and demanding that he avenge any wrong which had been done them.

Of course, as Sillitoe (1978) notes, political leaders can manipulate situations to further their own political ambitions. Ambitious and courageous men with aptitudes for
strategy favored warfare since it increased their local authority and prestige. The role of
the protector, however, is ambiguous and malleable. He can choose to stress his place as
mediator between the refugee and his or her pursuers. As a supposedly disinterested
outsider, he could try to work out some sort of settlement to end the situation amicably.
Or, conversely, he could use the exile's complaints to justify beginning a war. Then
again, the ability of the host to use the situation for his own advantage is limited by
external circumstance as well. A host who is reluctant to fight will be forced to it should
the refugee be attacked, for instance.

The rewards of war at this level were primarily for renown. Certainly there were
material benefits of success, and Swati elders recall pillaging the fields of defeated
villages. But homes were never ransacked, and men forced into exile left their valuables
in the care of local religious men with the full expectation of returning to reclaim them.
Rather than wealth, the winner's prize was the carved columns to the loser's men's house,
which were carried away as emblems of victory. Successful warriors did not expect to
hold on to their conquered territory, since their very success meant that former allies
would defect, join the defeated group, and rebalance the system. The end result of the
several intervillage wars recorded was a "great name" for the war leaders and their
families, but no apparent aggrandizement of their property.

It is in situations of intervillage war that the saintly class of religious mediators
became arbitrators. While the village jirga mediated disputes between non-elite within
the village, and feuds between proud tarbur were left to run their tragic, but quite
restricted, course, war between villages could not cease without the intervention of an
external noncombatant saint, whose mediation allowed both sides to back off without
undue loss of face. The fact that these mediators were rewarded with land grants which
lay between the potentially waring villages indicates both the primary role of the saints
and the relative lack of land pressure during the era of warfare. It is noteworthy that this
land was reclaimed by strong Pukhtun clans several generations later when land pressure
began to be felt. This reclamation did not infringe on the property rights of anyone except the dispossessed saints and so did not lead to increased warfare. Thus, by removing land from the tribal property and deeding it to weak saintly lineages, the Pukhtun, consciously or otherwise, provided themselves with a land reserve from which powerful lineages could draw in the future without violating the rights of any group that could offer serious resistance.

This is not to suggest that land pressure does not lead to warfare. In fact, fighting occurring in Swat between Pukhtun landlords and their tenants is directly related to land pressure. The Pukhtun, increasing in population, often wish to remove their tenants or to increase tenant rents. The tenants, encouraged by a stress on tenants' rights under the mildly socialist regime of the Pakistan People's Party (which fell in 1977) now claim the land as their own. The weakness of the military government in Swat has allowed tenant revolts in the region to persist, but this type of warfare between classes is new to Swat. Previous battles were between proud Pukhtun leaders who fought for lineage pride and prestige. In this earlier form of war neither land nor property was permanently confiscated, and looting of produce was sporadic and not of great importance in terms of subsistence, as evidenced by the absence of reports of hunger during intervillage wars.

In the past, there was another type of warfare which was much more destructive. This was war between regions, and it grew from the same causes which led to intervillage war; that is, the exile of a group which then sought the intervention of an external third party to redress the balance of power. In this case, the third party entering the fray was not simply another village, but another district. In Swat, as I have argued elsewhere, the external third party was the State of Dir. Dir ruled by hereditary kings, gladly provided sanctuary for Swati exiles. Under favorable circumstances, the army of Dir would join with the exiles, invade Upper Swat, and establish rule there. But Dir was not content simply to redress the balance. The King of Dir wished to annex Swat, and began exploiting his victory by levying taxes and confiscating wealth. The Pukhtun remember
these invasions as times of severe scarcity and hunger. Eventually, Dir's exactions led to
an activation of the segmentary principle of unity against invasion. The Swati parties
united (usually under the leadership of a non-Pukhtun religious charismatic) in a war of
resistance and Dir was driven out. Three such wars are recorded in the past 150 years.

A final type of war, also destructive, involved expansion rather than defense. For
structural reasons, the segmentary lineage system is one which tends to expand at the
expense of its less well organized neighbors. The Pukhtun of Swat conquered their
weaker neighbors to the north, the fierce Kohistani peoples. This expansion ceased in the
mid-1800s as the harshness of the terrain, the lack of booty, and the ferocity of the
Kohistani resistance all combined to defeat the Pukhtun armies. Pukhtun wars of
aggression apparently were led by strong men anxious to raise their personal prestige and
accumulate a following through leadership in battle and redistribution of spoils. At this
late date, it is difficult to discern exactly who followed such men, but it seems that great
war leaders were temporarily able to unite fighting men of many different lineages in
loose alliances brought together for the sake of conquest. The secular leadership of
expansionist warfare appears to be in marked contrast to leadership in wars of defense,
which often arises from saintly lineages and relies upon religious exhortation to
encourage resistance.

CONCLUSION

Violence in Swat is highly structured along several lines; the stress on revenge, the
utilization of types of mediating bodies and leaders, and the scale of genealogical
distance and corresponding physical propinquity of the rival elements. Far from every
genealogical level being a replica of every other, each more inclusive patrilineal segment
has its own specific rules of violence for hostilities with segments of equal scale.
Moreover, relations involving revenge take precedence over other forms of violence and
opposition, so that a death in a village party dispute dissolves the parties and leads to a personal vendetta between two nuclear families. In intervillage wars, as well, murders by *tarbur* are avenged, while those by more distant enemies are not. The formal patterning of revenge thus acts to restrict the range of feud and violence.

Behind the structuring of violence lies the Swati social order which focuses on the nuclear family as a relatively autonomous unit within the egalitarian structure of the segmentary lineage system. The shifting dual parties superimposed over the triads of *tul*, *palao*, and clan reflect the reality of uneven development and the manipulation of alliances on the ground. This system allows a great flexibility on the part of individual players. Structural cohesion is maintained by the ties of blood and the obligation to revenge. Though highly restricted, this obligation is the kernel of the social order, and provides the minimal stability necessary for system continuance.

Barth (1959a:84) notes that the range of blood responsibility was formerly wider, but has narrowed "in line with the general political trend whereby descent groups are losing their corporate political functions, and also with the legal principles exemplified in the courts of the neighboring administered territories." Twenty-five years after Barth's fieldwork, revenge continues to be taken by the Pukhtun. The problem is not the change of the system, but its persistence, despite the existence of law courts. In fact, early in the reign of the local central government, death sentences were carried out by the nearest relative of the victim, thus satisfying both law and custom. Revenge as a central cultural value cannot be understood through historical analysis or through efforts to find first causes. Rather, a descriptive portrait of the Swati social order puts the revenge motif into its proper context and demonstrates its centrality within the total society.

Following Geertz (1973), I contend that the systematic description of social order has analytic value in that a pattern is postulated which has predictive power. For example, during the 1977 national elections which were marred by serious bloodshed throughout Pakistan, it was possible to accurately predict that Swat would remain relatively peaceful
due to the precedence of revenge over party. It was also possible to predict that the Pukhtun vote in Swat would split in the traditional balanced opposition of the *dullah*. The model of individual manipulation within the system accounts for the shifting loyalties which characterize Swati politics, as well as for the long-term balance of the system, since alliances alter to level any overly powerful element. The role of third parties as mediators, manipulators, and unreliable allies is also apparent in the model.

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2. Robertson-Smith, 1903, 68.

11. The seventeen killings include a killing of a friend, three killings of affines, two killings within the nuclear family, four killings in the ongoing war between tenants and landlords, and seven killings of *tarbur* or *tarbur*'s servants. Of these killings, six occurred during my fieldwork, while the remainder occurred between 1970 and 1977. These are the killings of which I have good histories, and by no means exhaust the list.

12. Contra Barth's (1959a:82-85, 125) cases of village leaders embroiled in blood feuds, the leaders I interviewed all claimed not to engage in any revenge fights. In fact, it is a mark of an elite lineage that it avoids feuds whenever possible since it is recognized that such fights are ruinous. Genealogies of village leaders do show deaths by violence but not in the violence of feud. Rather, leading men were killed in intervillage wars or in battles with Dir. Despite the impression generally created by ethnographies of the Pukhtun (including my own), violence is quite rare.
and everyday life is certainly more courteous and safer (Bourdieu 1974) than ordinary life in many supposedly less violent societies.

xiii The killer in this case was said to have waited so long to take revenge because he was prudently saving money to support his family after his inevitable exile from Swat.


xv Hart, 1980, 45.

xvi Black-Michaud (1975), following Barth (1953), argues for a dichotomy between vengeance killing, which does not involve corporate responsibility, and feuding, which does. For the Swat, this dichotomy is too radical. Rather there is continuum of support, from the obligation to blood revenge incumbent on the nuclear family of the victim to the withdrawal of the victim's more distant relatives from positions of alliance with the killer. A similar argument is made by Salzman (1978) against Peters's (1967) claim that segmentary lineage theory fails to allow for the actual importance of affinal ties. "There is a difference in the weight of affinal ties between situations in which a man will not support his agnates against his affines and in which a man will actively support his affines against his agnates" (Salzman 1978:62). Degree of support is the vital factor, and men in Swat do not support their affines or their party members in cases of blood revenge.

xvii When Swat was ruled by a King, his method of retaining power was to grant a stipend and military backing to the weak third parties at the village and District levels. Khan Badhur, whom Barth (1959a) discusses at length, was a leader of this type.

xviii Barth, 1959a, 122.

xix Lindholm, 1977.