

A Sociocultural Investigation of the Preservation and Resilience of Baluchi Culture Amid Modernization in *The Wandering Falcon*

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Abstract

The paper explores the tension between tradition and transformation within Baluchi culture as it confronts the force of modernization. The present paper also explores the preservation and the resilience of Baluch cultural practices through the lenses of diaspora theory and cultural identity, particularly in the context of modernization through the narrative *The Wandering Falcon*, written by Jamil Ahmad and published in 2011. Despite external pressures, the Baluch people uphold their way of living such as tribal revenge customs, the significance of lineage, symbolic attire, leadership structures, and the practice of bride price. These cultural elements serve as anchors of identity, enabling Baluch communities to navigate and adapt to changing milieus while preserving their distinctive heritage. The analysis highlights the dynamic interplay between cultural preservation and adaptation, demonstrating the Baluch community's commitment to sustaining their cultural identity amidst global influences.

Keywords: Wandering Falcon, Baluch, Diaspora, Culture, Modernization

Introduction

The paper explores the intricate ways in which Baluchi culture navigates the pressure of modernization, particularly concerning the preservation of its unique traditions and the resilience of its people. This subject has been rapidly gaining attention in literary and cultural studies, as scholars increasingly focus on how indigenous and marginalized communities struggle to preserve their cultural identity amidst modernization. Daniel Lerner (1958) explains: "Modernization is the process whereby traditional societies are transformed into modern ones, fundamentally altering values, behaviors, and institutions". In *The Wandering Falcon*, this theme is prominently explored through the depiction of Baluchi traditions,

resilience, and the pressures of external forces.

Several literary works across cultures engage with the tension between tradition and the encroaching forces of modernization. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is influential text that portrays the disintegration of Igbo society under colonial rule and missionary influence, illustrating how external forces disrupt indigenous norms and belief systems. Emmanuel Obiechina comments: "Achebe's novel is a profound reflection on the vulnerability of African societies whose organic cohesion is shattered by the forces of colonization and missionary enterprise".

Equally, *The God of Small Things* wrote by Arundhati Roy subtly critiques the impact of global capitalism with cultural homogenization on Kerala's traditional family structures and caste hierarchies. Padmini Mongia notes: "Roy's novel powerfully critiques how colonial history and contemporary capitalism continue to affect the lives of marginalized communities in Kerala, challenging traditional hierarchies and social norms". Similarly, *The Wandering Falcon* also engages with the theme of tension between tradition and the encroaching forces of modernization.

Ahmad's debut book *The Wandering Falcon* is an extraordinary work of literature that offers a rare glimpse into the lives, cultures and antiquities of the tribal people, inhabiting the fringes of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. He pens with authenticity, authority and empathy capturing the nuances and diversity of the tribal world, their customs and codes of honor, their resilience and adaptability, their hopes and fears.

The narrative consists of nine interconnected stories that revolve around a central character, Tor Baz, the orphaned son of a runaway couple who defied their tribal laws. The tale does not track a chronological or lined order, but rather wave back and forth in time and space, producing a mosaic-like structure that imitates the intricacy and diversity of the tribal race. The fiction also does not have a clear storyline or a climax, but rather presents a sequence of happenings that exemplify different facets of the tribal life and customs. The novel is not driven by a central protagonist or a plot, but rather by a "sense of place" that is vividly evoked by Ahmad's descriptions. The researcher will focus on three main aspects: narrative structure, characterization and cultural practices.

Tor Baz, the child of a couple who ran away from their families, comes from both important tribal leaders and outlaws. He moves from one tribe to another; traveling through mountains, open fields, small towns and tents where tribal people live. Today's media often talks about this faraway area as a place full of conflict, spy missions and political issues. But this story shows the culture from the inside, sharing the life, values and honor of the people through strong and meaningful storytelling.

Ahmad's book also engages with the question of modernity and its impact on the tribal way of life. He demonstrates how the tribal people have been affected by the changing geopolitical realities, such as the separation of Pakistan from India, the entry of Soviet forces into Afghanistan and the later emergence of the Taliban and the US-led war on terror. He also shows how they have responded to the forces of modernization, such as education, technology, commerce and migration. He depicts both the positive and negative aspects of modernity, such as its potential for empowerment and development, as well as its threat to the traditional values and structures. He also examines how modernity creates tensions and contradictions within and between the tribes, as some embrace it while others resist it or

adapt it to their own needs.

Research objectives

This paper aims to explore how the novel *Wandering Falcon* portrays the erosion of traditional societies under external pressures. The research objectives are given below:

- To analyze how the novel depicts the tensions between traditional Baluchi cultural practices and the forces of modernization.
- To explore the challenges faced by endangered cultures like the Baluch in preserving their heritage amidst external pressures such as modernization.

Research Questions

The research question guiding this study is

- How the tensions between traditional cultural practices and the force of modernization are depicted in *Wandering Falcon*?

Secondary question is:

- How do the endangered cultures like Baluch culture face challenges in preserving their heritage in the face of modernization?

Literature Review

Across the world, numerous indigenous and marginalized communities face huge pressure from the forces of modernization. The Igbo people in Nigeria, as portrayed in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, undergo the dismantling of their traditional structures under colonial rule and missionary influence. Also, Native American tribes in the United States have long battled the erosion of their cultural identity due to forced assimilation policies, land dispossession and the suppression of native languages and spiritual practices. The Maasai of East Africa and the Ainu of Japan confront comparable challenges as their conventional lifestyles are increasingly constrained by state policies and economic modernization.

In comparison, the Baluch people navigate their own cultural survival amidst restrictive state interventions, disrupted nomadic traditions and the socio-political marginalization in the borderlands of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan. Like these global communities, the Baluch confront the dilemma of retaining ancestral customs while adapting to an ever-changing world. However, what makes the Baluch experience mainly distinct is their portrayal through Ahmad's narrative, which captures their resilience, symbolic traditions and strong attachment to tribal identity even when confronted by violent state apparatuses and the encroachment of modern ideologies.

In the course of history, the Baluch developed into an independent linguistic and cultural community with the largest concentration found in Pakistan, followed by Iran, Afghanistan, Oman, Bahrain and Turkmenistan (Breseeg, 2004, p. 64; Dashti, 2017, pp. 1–3; Samad, 2014, p. 306; Taheri, 2012, p. 7). And, Balochistan is an underdeveloped region wherein people are struggling for their sociopolitical-economic rights (Hamid et al., 2019, p. 133; Sial & Basit, 2012, pp. 10–11). These Baluch people have a rich cultural heritage characterized by various backgrounds, language, and social patterns.

Over the past century, considerable migration patterns have led to the establishment of Baluch communities across the globe. The Baluch were pastoralist or semi nomads and had

routine migrations along established routes between focal grazing areas (Breseeg, 2004; Dashti, 2012; Wirsing, 2008). This global dispersion, coupled with the force of modernization, has raised both challenges and prospects for the preservation of Baluch cultural identity. While some traditional practices face the risk of dilution, the diaspora has also facilitated a reimagining and reinforcement of cultural norms in new contexts. Understanding how Baluch communities navigate these dynamics offers valuable insights into the resilience of cultural identities amidst external pressures.

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was the name given to a 27,220 km² region along Pakistan's northwest border-line. It embraces seven main tribal districts and six surrounding areas. English fictional authors have been exploring the Federally Administered Tribal Areas for years, especially the ones who keep an eye on global politics. They seek out the motives behind political mistreatment in such areas. The studies of these fictional writers have revealed that the tribal clans residing alongside the Pakistan-Afghan boundary are being treated as voiceless and valueless objects.

The Wandering Falcon by Jamil Ahmad is a compilation of tales that offers a rare and nuanced perspective on the tribal people of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. The book has received critical acclaim and praise from several reviewers and critics, who have highlighted its literary merits, its historical and cultural implication and its relevance to the contemporary world.

Shamsie (2011) writing for *The Guardian*, agrees that the novel is “a book of glimpses into a world of strict rules and codes, where the individual is of far less significance than the collective” and notes that the effect of this is “strangely beguiling”. She also observes that the novel is not driven by a central protagonist or a plot, but rather by a “sense of place” that is vividly evoked by Ahmad's descriptions.

Tor Baz, the main character of the fiction, can be best understood through William Glasser's idea of human nature. Glasser says people are driven by five basic needs: survival, love, belonging, power and freedom. These needs are clearly pictured in the text through personality of Tor Baz. He is the central figure of the book. He appears in most of the stories—not as a star, but as someone who manages to survive. His ability to survive comes from his position between different groups. He does not fully belong to any one community, which allows him to move freely among all of them. This makes him a kind of universal figure.

Afzal (2020) provides a thorough analysis of the novel's portrayal of the natural world along with its impact on humanity. He examines the tactics in which the novel defies the traditional boundaries between humans and non-human entities, highlighting the interconnectedness of all living beings.

The same things happen in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. The Igbo people tried to practice their cultural practices but Missionaries destroyed their community. They challenged their practices and called them primitive. The Europeans guarantee the Igbo public that they will help improves their lives. Because of this, the Igbo believe the missionaries will bring good things, as they see the Europeans as more advanced in technology. For example, the Igbo call the bicycle the “iron horse” (Achebe, p. 127) because they had never seen one before. However, the real goal of the colonizers is to take control of the land and its resources for themselves. This is why they set up colonies in Igbo society and try to win the people's trust. At first, they appear friendly but gradually, they force the Igbo

people to accept their way of life which ends up destroying the Igbo culture.

At first, the Igbo people are not interested in the colonizers but later, they begin to support them. The missionaries help them realize that some of their cultural practices like killing twins and exiling the “osu” to the Evil Forest are wrong. By teaching these ideas, the colonizers are able to gain a foothold in Igbo society and begin to dominate the people. It may seem like this happened because the Igbo were unwise or uncivilized, but that’s not true. The Igbo people have an open mindset and see others as part of their family. Even though the colonizers mistreat them, the Igbo remain polite. Except for Okonkwo and a few others, most people in the village support the missionaries. Even the village leaders back the colonizers. If the Igbo people had united to protest against the Europeans, the colonizers wouldn’t have been able to stay. This shows how the arrival of modernization harms the Igbo people and their culture.

Although Achebe is part of the Igbo community and culture, he does not over-praise or idealize Igbo land in *Things Fall Apart*. Instead, he presents both the good and bad facets of Igbo life. He gives a clear picture of their society, faith, politics and economy without trying to make them seem better or more emotional than they are (Nnoromele 147).

Drawing upon the parallels observed in the cultural disruptions depicted in *Things Fall Apart* and *Wandering Falcon*, this literature review underlines the lasting relevance of understanding how communities navigate identity in the face of external pressures. While existing scholarship has explored the impact of colonialism and modernization on various cultures, a focused examination of the Baluchi experience, particularly through the lens of the Powindas nomadic tradition as portrayed in *Wandering Falcon* remains crucial. This paper addresses this gap by specifically investigating the adaptive strategies and resilience mechanisms employed by the Powindas to uphold their cultural distinctiveness amidst the ongoing forces of modernization within the Pakistani context.

Research Methodology:

The present research primarily employs a qualitative tactic to explore the preservation and transformation of Baluchi cultural practices as depicted in Ahmad’s *Wandering Falcon*. Through close textual analysis, the study examines how traditions such as tribal leadership, honor codes and social rituals are both challenged and sustained in the face of modernization and globalization. The research is grounded in diaspora theory and concept of cultural identity proposed by Stuart Hall, which views identity not as a fixed essence but as a continuous process of “being” and “becoming”. This theoretical lens allows for a deeper understanding of how cultural identity is negotiated across changing historical and geopolitical landscapes, particularly within marginalized communities like the Baluch. By focusing on narrative and symbolism, the study reveals the ways in which literature can act as an influential medium for cultural expression and resilience.

For a long time, the word *diaspora* was mainly used to describe the Jewish people who were forced to leave their homeland. They spread across different countries and faced hardship and discrimination. Over time as situations changed, the meaning of *diaspora* became broader. Now, it is often used as a symbolic term for many groups such as refugees, immigrants and people living in foreign lands.

Modernization refers to a transformative process over which traditional societies adopt new

technologies, establishments, values and social structures aligned with modern industrialized nations. According to Lerner (1958), modernization includes “the process of social change in which less developed societies acquire characteristics common to more developed societies”. This includes shifts from rural to urban living and from kinship-based authority to bureaucratic governance.

In the context of *Wandering Falcon*, modernization manifests through state-imposed education systems, the regulation of border mobility and institutional frameworks such as the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). These developments challenge the autonomy of tribal systems, such as the authority of the *sardar* or the communal justice of the *jirga*, disrupting the self-regulating mechanisms of Baluchi society.

In post-colonial studies, diaspora writers often pen down about their homelands or the native countries of their ancestors, helping to highlight their unique cultural values. Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, first published in 1978, explores how the West created an image of the East as the “other”. Said explains that Western views of the East were built on biased and critical descriptions. His book became a key text in post-colonial studies because it reveals how colonial ideas and power structures are hidden within different forms of knowledge and representation.

The concept of displacement is also applicable which was taken from the Diaspora theory. It was basically derived from old French word *desplacer* which means remove to a different place. It is the forced or involuntary movement of people from their homes. It is a central factor in the formation and experiences of diasporas. It leads people to social, cultural, and psychological alienation. Psychological displacement states the internalization of colonial ideals, beliefs and standards by colonized individuals. It includes the adoption of the colonizer’s perception. Frantz Fanon extensively studied the notion of psychological displacement. In his research, he debates the patterns in which colonialism can lead to the internalization of colonial stereotypes and development of a ‘colonial mentality’ among colonized peoples.

Stuart Hall’s idea of cultural identity is also applied in the analysis of the main text. In his 1996 article *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, Hall argues that identity is not just about “being” but also about “becoming”. It connects both the past and the future. According to Hall, identities are always changing and are shaped by time and place. Hudson also draws on Goodenough’s (1957:71) definition of culture, which supports the idea that culture can be studied from both anthropological and moral viewpoints. Goodenough explains that a society’s culture includes everything a person needs to know or believe in order to behave in ways that are acceptable to others in that society.

The discussion of culture cannot be separated from the people whose values and actions shape it. It is through their behavior—or lack of it, that culture becomes real and visible. In exploring the connection between people and culture, Cuddon (2013: 179–180) notes that important questions include how people become part of a culture, how culture is linked to power, and why some cultural forms are given more importance than others. This suggests that some cultural values can be identified and judged based on how relevant or outdated they are in the society that follows them. With this in mind, it is meaningful to examine key parts of the Baluchi social system as shown in Ahmad’s *Wandering Falcon*, in order to understand how these values still hold—or do not hold—meaning in today’s cultural and social world.

Discussions:

In *Wandering Falcon*, things like the customs, values, and social structures central to Baluchi culture are depicted. At the start of narrative, Gul Bibi and her lover were on run from her tribe. They took shelter in a fort for five years, where she gave birth to the baby boy. They didn't name him. One day, a camel rider from her tribe Siahpad, found them in fort. The Subedar told them about this person. They packed their necessary things and left the fort at early dusk. Her father and her husband with other tribal people chased them for five days.

On the morning of the sixth day, they caught them while they were resting near pond. As they both decided earlier that whenever they will be caught by her tribal people, he will shoot her. So, her lover shoots her in the back, when the tribal people reached, they killed him. After that, they entombed them separately in two towers. These people "*used mud and water to plaster the towers*" (p.10). Their tradition of constructing plastered towers shows the "*way in which the Siahpad avenged insults.*" Their act of revenge serves as a tangible manifestation of their cultural identity, deeply rooted in tribal honor and collective memory.

Fredrik Barth (1959) discusses how among Pashtun and Baluchi tribes, "physical markers such as graves, towers and shrines serve as lasting testimonials to acts of bravery, vengeance or leadership". This practice not only reinforces communal bonds but also ensures the transmission of ancestral values across generations. For the Baluch diaspora, the preservation of such traditions is crucial in nurturing a sense of belonging and continuity. Engaging in cultural practices, even symbolically, allows diasporic individuals to navigate the complexities of identity in multicultural settings, ensuring that their heritage remains a vital part of their lives.

In Baluchi culture, the sardar (tribal chief) holds a central and revered position, embodying leadership, authority and the preservation of tribal identity. Every tribe has its sardar who take all the decisions for their public. The line *has there ever been a Baluch who did not have a sardar?* (p.19), which the Roza Khan spoke in front of court. It reflects the community's deep-seated belief in the indispensability of a sardar, highlighting that the absence of such a leader is perceived as a profound insult and a threat to the tribe's cohesion.

J. G. Lorimer (1907) discuss detailed descriptions of Baluchi tribal systems confirming that each tribe had a hereditary *sardar* who acted as the military, judicial and cultural head. "*Among the Baluch, tribal loyalty and identity are inseparable from allegiance to the sardar, whose authority was reinforced through lineage and tradition*". The sardar serves as the primary authority within the tribe, accountable for upholding order, resolving clashes and making decisions that influence the collective welfare. Roza Khan was the leader of tribe yet he was old and had no special wisdom to offer his people. He even cannot guide his camel without advice of his partners. But these people *needed a symbol, and it mattered not to them what his age or condition was* (p.14).

For the Baluch diaspora, the concept of the sardar remains a symbolic anchor, representing continuity and a link to ancestral roots. Even when physical proximity to traditional leadership is not possible, the diaspora often seeks to uphold the values and structures associated with the sardar through community organizations and cultural events. It is often said that tribal systems are naturally "democratic" or even "communistic" in their original form. In many cases, this means that all members of the tribe usually the male members have

the right to participate in decisions that affect the community, either directly or through chosen representatives. Tribal leaders are generally seen as speaking for the shared interests of the group or the wider patriarchal family. However, this traditional leadership structure was changed or “corrupted” when it became formalized under colonial rule.

The ceremony for choosing a new sardar involves the participation of representatives from all sub-tribes and clans. As part of the tradition, these representatives place a turban on the chosen leader’s head to show their agreement and loyalty. Sometimes, the representatives do not follow the previous sardar’s nomination and instead choose someone they believe is better suited for the role. However, the selection is usually limited to male members of the sardar’s family such as his brothers, sons or nephews—and sometimes includes other respected members of the tribe.

Further, Ahmad portrays that how these tribal people practice the tradition of bride price. The groom pays the price for her bride. These people think that if a person will not pay the price of bride, he will not respect her. As General says, “*No man respects his wife or her family unless he pays a price for her.*” (p.25). David M. Schneider (1968) writes: “In many traditional societies, the payment of bride price legitimates marriage, strengthens kinship ties and publicly affirms alliances between families.” Later in the novel, the bear keeper’s family also paid the price for Shah Zarina before the wedding ceremony started. At the end of story, Tor Baz also buys the Shah Zarina from Afzal Khan for marriage purpose in three thousand rupees.

In their culture, the bride price known locally as *lub* is a longstanding tradition where the groom’s family provides a payment to the bride’s family as part of the marriage arrangement. This practice is deeply embedded in the social fabric. Its cultural significance is that it is symbol of respect and commitment. It signifies the groom’s commitment and the value placed on the union, fostering mutual respect between the families involved. It shows that how these people maintain their cultural practices when dispersed from their homeland. For the Baluch diaspora, preserving the tradition of *lub* is a means of upholding cultural identity and continuity. Engaging in this practice abroad reinforces connections to ancestral heritage and affirms communal values.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the tradition of bride price is also common in Igbo society. Marriage in the Igbo community is seen almost like a transaction, where women are exchanged as brides for a bride price. For example, Akueke’s bride price is settled at twenty bags of cowries and both families agree on the amount. In this society, men often believe it is acceptable to beat and mistreat women because they are considered inferior to the men who hold more power and control.

Moreover, Ahmad shows that how these people took their revenge. *Pushtunwali*, the traditional code of the Pashtuns, (p.30) emphasizes the principle of revenge, which obligates individuals to seek justice for wrongs committed against them or their family. However, this code explicitly prohibits exacting revenge upon women and children, reflecting a moral boundary that safeguards non-combatants. In their law, it was clear that “*revenge could not be visited on women and children.*”(p.30) This is also the cultural practice in their community that these tribal people respect their women and children and don’t take their revenge from the female and children.

And these people realize that a child grown into man by “*the wearing of a shalwar*” which

signified a transition into manhood, (p.30). It highlights two significant aspects of Pashtun culture as governed by Pushtunwali, the traditional code of conduct among the Pashtuns: revenge and transition of boy into manhood. The act of wearing a *shalwar* (traditional trousers) signifies a young Pashtun male's transition into manhood. This rite of passage marks the individual's readiness to assume adult responsibilities and adhere to the societal expectations outlined in Pushtunwali. The adoption of this attire symbolizes maturity and the acceptance of cultural duties, including the upholding of honor, bravery and the protection of family and community.

In the context of diaspora theory and cultural identity, these practices serve as foundational elements that preserve Pashtun identity across generations and geographies. For Pashtuns living outside their ancestral lands, maintaining such customs becomes a vital link to their heritage, reinforcing communal bonds and cultural continuity amidst external influences.

As in 1958, the authority imposed the restrictions on the free movement of Powindas. These tribal people wanted to cross the border. The soldiers in the fort didn't permit the caravan to cross the border. When these tribal people tried to cross the border, they shoot them. So, at the end, Gul Jana and her husband also killed in the raking fire. These tribal people believe that Quran can prevent them from tragedy as Gul Jana called out to Dawa Khan, her husband that she was *"going with a Koran on my head. Nothing can happen to me."* (p.36). The excerpt illustrates a profound moment where traditional beliefs intersect with harsh realities. Gul Jana's act of placing the Quran on her head symbolizes a deep-seated faith in its protective power, a practice observed in various cultures where religious texts are believed to offer physical and spiritual safeguarding.

In many Islamic societies, the Quran is not only a sacred text but also a powerful symbol of protection, blessing, and guidance. It is a common tradition in South Asian Muslim communities, including Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, to place the Quran above a bride's head during wedding ceremonies as she leaves her parental home, symbolizing divine protection and invoking blessings for her new life. Annemarie Schimmel (1989) notes that in Islamic traditions across South Asia, "the Quran is often used in rites of passage ceremonies to symbolize safety, purity and God's blessing". This ritual also reflects a syncretism of Islamic faith with indigenous customs, often termed "folk Islam", where local traditions and pre-Islamic practices blend with orthodox Islamic beliefs. For instance, in certain communities individuals carry amulets or recite specific verses from the Quran, believing these actions will shield them from harm.

Gul Jana's *"belief that the Koran would prevent tragedy died, too."* (p.36). However, narrative reveals a poignant disillusionment as Gul Jana's belief in the Quran's protective efficacy is shattered. This moment underscores the tension between cultural practices and the unpredictable forces of nature or fate. It highlights the vulnerability inherent in human reliance on spiritual or ritualistic interventions when confronted with uncontrollable circumstances.

Engaging in these rituals reinforces a sense of belonging and continuity, providing comfort and identity in unfamiliar environments. However, modernization poses challenges to the preservation of these customs. As younger generations assimilate into dominant cultures, there's a risk of traditional practices being diluted or abandoned.

Further, Ahmad shows that *"the drums started beating in a Bhattani village late one evening"*

(p.40). This is also another custom in tribal people that the beating of drum acts as an alarm, signaling danger or summoning the community. This practice is deeply rooted in their cultural traditions and is emblematic of the broader use of drums among various tribal societies. Drumbeats can serve to alert the entire community to imminent dangers, ensuring that all members are aware and can take necessary precautions. John Miller Chernoff (1979) notes that in traditional communities, “drums are not merely musical instruments; they are vital communicative tools that convey urgent messages across distances, often associated with communal mobilization or ritual ceremonies”.

The “*drums signaled danger to the tribe,*” **(p.44).** And, it is their custom that one man from every house has to respond the call and ready to fight. Till the morning, the *Bhittani chigha*, the fighting men, has collected. In the face of modernization, the Bhittani tribe, like many indigenous communities, faces challenges in preserving traditional practices such as drumming.

Ahmad, through his narrative, also throws some light on the judicial system of that community by exemplify the case of kidnapping. Their judicial system is entirely unfair where Jirgas held by tribal elites usually result in unjust and biased judgements mostly in the favor of authoritative ones. Tribal justice lacks ‘fair trial’ which according to Hafizullah Ishaq is a right to a fair hearing by an impartial, just and capable court that guarantees equality of every citizen before the law, equal protection against illegal actions and provides protection against unfair punishments (p.99).

In Waziristan, a group of kidnappers kidnapped the six school-teachers during the night. The officials were informed, when the tribal people make protests against the police for not protecting them. The authorities calmed the people by explaining them the response to the crime will be according to the law. Then, orders were issued under the Frontier Crime Regulations. The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) was a legal system established by the British Raj in 1872 (and later codified in 1901) to manage the tribal areas of what is now Pakistan, especially in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The FCR was created to control the independent Pashtun tribes living along the Durand Line, the border between British India and Afghanistan. However, in 2018 the FCR was abolished when FATA was merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as part of the 25th Constitutional Amendment, bringing the region into Pakistan’s regular legal framework.

A co-researcher study posits that constitutional negation and inconsiderate behavior of government towards these areas have intensified the social and economic marginalization of the FATA residents. It claims that FCR was supposed to be a tool for the security of FATA citizens from lawlessness but it is killing people in the guise of militant operations. FCR didn’t provide for human rights instead blatantly violated fair treatment, liberty and justice. Poverty and marginalization of subaltern groups are the result of FCR structural violence (Zeb & Ahmad, p.1-24).

The bargaining was continued for three days before the final agreement. Finally, “*the jirga of that tribe, an assembly of elders and leaders*” **(p.58)** had paid eighteen thousand rupees for the captives. Olaf Caroe (1958) states, “The jirga, a traditional Pashtun tribal assembly, serves as the cornerstone of indigenous justice, where elders mediate disputes, negotiate compensations, and restore social balance without formal legal institutions.” At last, “*the money and the captives changed hands*” **(p.62)** and in this way another Waziristan kidnapping

case was closed. In this way, the tribal people resolve their issues.

Next in the novel, the guide asked the Hamesh Gul whether they will go to Bagh or not? He replied they will see the flags being raised. The guide asked "Why are the flags being raised? He replied, *"To decide the future of our schools."* (p.78) This line powerfully illustrates the complex interplay of modernization and globalization particularly in Baluchi community. The introduction of schools by the government represents a direct push for modernization. Education is a key component of modernizing societies, aiming to impart knowledge and skills that are valued in a broader, often globalized, world.

Hamesh Gul told the guide that some people feel this *"to a violation of our freedom and independence"* (p.79). The central conflict revolves around whether to accept or reject these schools. This highlights the tension between traditional ways of life and the changes brought about by modernization. Some see the schools as a threat to their established autonomy.

At end of conversation, Mehmood Khan said, *"the flags are now with the young people"* (p.79) The shift in power from the elders to the younger generation signifies a change in societal structure. Young people, often more receptive to new ideas, are taking the lead in determining their community's structure. This is a common characteristic of societies undergoing modernization.

Conclusion:

The study starts from the research question that how are the tensions between traditional cultural practices and the forces of modernization depicted in *Wandering Falcon*? The discussions answer the question by illustrating how deeply rooted Baluchi cultural practices such as tribal revenge customs, the authority of the *sardar*, the system of bride price and rites of passage—come under threat from state-imposed restrictions, shifting political realities, and the encroachment of modern institutions like schools and formal legal systems. Characters such as Roza Khan's symbolic authority as an aged *sardar*, despite lacking energetic wisdom, reflects the community's admiration for ancestral leadership over functional governance.

Similarly, the conflicts over the introduction of schools and the younger generation's acceptance of new ideas *"the flags are now with the young people"* reflect internal community struggles between preserving tradition and adapting to modernization. Ahmad captures the slow erosion of tribal autonomy, especially through episodes like border restrictions on nomads (Powindas) and the use of settler laws such as the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), revealing the fragility of cultural survival amidst external pressures.

Next, analysis answers the question that how does endangered cultures like the Baluch face challenges in preserving their heritage in the face of modernization. The Baluch people face significant challenges in preserving their heritage. Forced displacement, political marginalization, and the intrusion of state governance structures undermine traditional ways of life. Practices such as honor-based revenge, marriage customs, and leadership through the *sardar* system struggle to maintain relevance as external forces reshape societal organization. Modernization introduces new social values, education, and economic systems that threaten to displace ancestral customs.

However, Ahmad also shows that the Baluch adapt by symbolically preserving traditions such as maintaining ceremonies, and codes of honor even when practical circumstances change.

The deep cultural respect for tribal authority, ritual practices like beating drums to summon fighters, and symbolic acts of protection (like carrying the Quran) demonstrate a continuous, though challenged, commitment to cultural identity. Thus, despite facing modernization's disruptive forces, the Baluch people strive to negotiate and sustain their traditions both within their homeland and across diasporic contexts.

Drawing parallels with Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, where Igbo society suffers from cultural erosion under colonial imposition, Ahmad's portrayal underscores a shared postcolonial dilemma: how traditional societies navigate identity when confronted with dominant external systems. Both texts reveal that while modernity can disrupt, it also provokes communities into redefining their cultural boundaries, often through hybrid forms of resistance and adaptation.

Furthermore, the comparative insights drawn from Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* broaden the room of this investigation, linking the Baluchi experience to a wider global phenomenon of indigenous cultures grappling with external dominance. This interdisciplinary approach not only intensifies the understanding of Baluchi society but also contributes to postcolonial and diasporic literary scholarship by foregrounding underrepresented voices from South Asia. The study thus fills a crucial gap in literature by documenting how nomadic and tribal communities assert their identity through narrative, ritual, and resistance in the face of systemic transformation.

Future studies should focus on the lived experiences of the Baluch people through ethnographic research or interviews to complement literary analysis. Researchers may also examine how younger generations of the Baluch diaspora are negotiating their cultural identity in rapidly modernizing societies.

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