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# Concepts of *hewād* ‘Homeland’ and *millat* ‘Nation’ in Modern Pashto-Language Schoolbooks

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## Abstract

The article discusses two basic socio-cultural and socio-political concepts of ‘homeland’ and ‘nation’ as they are presented in Pashto-language schoolbooks printed in 2009 and in 2012. To complete the discussion some examples found in the Dari-language 1960s schoolbooks have been added as well. The analysis shows intertextual relations at both the language and meaning level that create the key message of school textbooks, i.e., the pyramid of values: *home/family* → *homeland/nation* → *national pride*, aimed at raising national awareness among today’s Afghans.

## Keywords

Afghanistan – Pashto schoolbooks – homeland – nation

## 1 Introduction

Davis (2002) pertinently demonstrates that Afghan schoolbooks can be a superior way to promote diverse content ideologicalised by the state apparatus. From the very beginning of modern education in Afghanistan such publications were, and still are, used to stimulate the national consciousness of pupils representing various ethnic or linguistic groups, by referring to two paramount concepts: ‘nation (Dr. *mellat*, Ps. *millat*)’ and ‘homeland (Dr. *vatan*, Ps. *he-*

*wād*)<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we are going to briefly analyse both concepts in Pashto-language data only.<sup>2</sup>

In modern Afghanistan, one of the very first but still tentative and general references to both of the above-mentioned concepts appeared at the end of the 19th c. in the *Tāǰo-t-tavāriḫ* (“The Crown of Histories”), i.e., the autobiography of the then ruler, Abdorrahmān-Xān (1880–1901). Both concepts were still understood, to a large extent, traditionally, although new points of reference can be noticed in their definitions. In the case of ‘nation’, it still personified rather a religious community than a nation (in today’s sense of the word); nevertheless, Abdorrahmān-Xān underlined the integrity of different groups residing in Afghanistan. The need to strengthen the importance of community provoked him to ordain the *Ĝašn-e mottaḡaḡiye-ye melli* (“National Integrity Day”) holiday, later replaced by Amānollāh-Xān (1919–1929) with the *Ĝašn-e Istiqlāl* (“Independence Day”) to commemorate the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) [cf. P9], and to adapt the *Ziyā-l-mella-va’-d-din* (“Light of Nation and Religion”) title. And when it comes to the homeland, the metaphor of the home appeared for the first time (Abdorrahmān-Xān 2015: 424–475).

Both concepts took a more specific shape in the 1910s, i.e., during the reign of Habibollāh-Xān (1901–1919), due to the intellectual and politician Mahmud Tarzi (1865–1933), who presented his Ottoman Tanzimat-inspired modernisation thoughts to a modest group of Kabul-based intelligentsia *via* the Persian-language *Sarāǰo-l-axbār* (“The Torch of News”) newspaper (cf. Schinasi 1979). Since his understanding of both concepts might have been (and often was) confusing to an Afghan audience, he decided to discuss them in detail in a series of articles concerning four inseparable, in his mind, issues: *din* (religion), *dawlat* (state), *mellat* (nation) and *vatan* (homeland). The reader can discover that homeland resembles a container, kind parents or a tree, nation is a content, children or a fruit, which makes both concepts inseparable from each other. Homeland is thus a territory and nation is the group of people living there. The nation-building process cannot take place without order and discipline, for which the state, i.e. qualified and educated officials, was responsible. To strengthen his vision of the four mutually dependent and defined

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- 1 We use ‘pupil’, never ‘student’, when speaking about a person who is being taught in a school, as well as ‘Afghan’, never ‘Pashtun’, when speaking about a citizen of Afghanistan regardless ethnic, linguistic or religious background.
  - 2 This article is partially based on the paper *Education in the First Afghan Short Story Pānzdah sāl-e qabl by Moxles-Zāde* delivered by Mateusz M.P. Kłagisz and Khalil A. Arab during the St. Petersburg International Conference of Afghan Studies, 27–29 June 2017, St. Petersburg, Russia.

concepts, Tarzi appealed to the hadith: "*Ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*" ("Love towards homeland arises from faith") (Georgian 1967: 360–362).

In this manner, Tarzi's intellectualisation inspired successive generations of Afghan ideologues and politicians to express their own thoughts and subsequently to focus on the progress of the country (cf. Ruttig 2011). Among Tarzi's inheritors one should indicate the Wəṣṣ Zalmiyān (Awakened Youth) Party and its members who deconstructed his conceptions, introducing their own ideas. As an example, we can name Ġolām-Mohammad Qobār, who, in the article *Vahdat-e melli* ("National Integrity"), presented a definition of such terms as 'nation', 'nationalism', 'homeland' or 'state'. Although the Wəṣṣ Zalmiyān Party believed in pan-Afghan nationalism, its program emphasised, *inter alia*, the promotion and development of the Pashto language as a common ground for further all-Afghan integration, independent of ethnic or linguistic divisions. It was, indisputably, an enticing key factor for Pashtun nationalists across the country, because of the strong consolidation between Pashtun nationalism and the Pashto language. In addition, this actually propagated a vision in which the Pashtuns were recognised as the heart of the nation. It is no wonder that instead of uniting all groups, the Wəṣṣ Zalmiyān Party actually drew clear boundaries between them, giving prominence to the cultural distinctiveness of the Pashtuns (cf. Bezhan 2017).

As we can learn from this general introduction, the process of consolidation of the various groups residing in Afghanistan into one nation and the transformation of the country into one homeland has never been a coherent politico-intellectual project—the identification of the nation with the Pashtun ethnos, the transfer of Soviet ethnos-constructing patterns (korenisation, i.e. nativisation) highlighting the ethnic mosaic of the state, or the program of rebuilding the national structures carried out as part of Operation Enduring Freedom after 2001. The fact that both concepts, i.e., nation and homeland, also appeared in school textbooks published after 2001 in every grade proves their importance in the aforementioned process of (re)building the state. Moreover, it represents the next step of a parallel process of nation-building carried out from a top-down, Kabul-based perspective; it is impossible to shake off the impression that the content of analysed school textbooks shows a supposedly utopian vision rather than reality. Contrary to appearances, today's nation- and homeland-building strand is not an independent stage but is yet another stage. It shows, after all, tendencies to use well-established thought patterns, duplicating language clichés or ideological solutions noticeable, among others, in textbooks from the 1960s or 1970s.

Analysed data consists of 21 readings from Pashto textbooks [P1–P21] intended for grades I–XII and commissioned by the Ministry of Education in

2009 and, with minor amendment, in 2012. The applied research tools combine a linguistic, sociological, as well as historical perspective. In this manner, it allows us to study how, in the opinion of the authors, language should influence the social life of an individual and the entire community.

The political changes that took place in Afghanistan in mid-August 2021 have had a direct impact, *inter alia*, on the local education system. At the time of preparing the article, we did not know to what extent they would influence the content of school textbooks, especially both those concepts that were of interest to us. One may guess that the religious element will be highlighted. We indicate any changes in the footnotes.

All translations from Arabic, Dari, as well as Pashto were made by Kłagisz and Drozdowska. All dictionary definitions according to Akbar (2021) and Aslanov (1975).

## 2 Analysis

We start the following analysis by quoting the reading *Afġānistān* that has been composed for second-grade pupils. Our decision to do so has been based on both the concept of nation, as well as of homeland to be found in the text:

*Afġānistān zmuḡ xoḡ islāmi hewād dāy. Grān Afġānistān škālī bāġuna, hask aw ġāg ġruna lari. Loy, loy sinduna aw arzaštman kānuna lari. Muḡ ʔol dā xpəl hewād bačiyān yu. Xpəla xāwra aw hewād rābānde grān dāy. Zmuḡ dā hewād markaz kābol dāy [P1].*

Afghanistan is our beloved Islamic homeland. In great Afghanistan there are beautiful gardens and orchards, as well as high mountains. There are long rivers and valuable mines. We are all the children of our homeland. Our land and homeland are dear to us. Kabul is the capital of our homeland.

Speaking about the homeland, the authors apply the standard Pashto noun, *hewād*, that can be explained in the form of a series of synonyms as, *inter alia*, the country, the homeland or the state as well as the district or the region. In this case, the noun *hewād* appears in its primary meaning 'country' or 'homeland'. Statistically, this lexeme occurs more often than the synonymous Perso-Arabic noun *vatan/watan* indicating homeland, fatherland or motherland, as well as a place of birth or home region.

While going through the reading, one quickly realises homeland is specified as Islamic: “*Afġānistān zmuž xož islāmi hewād dāy*” (“Afghanistan is our beloved Islamic homeland”). This utterance weaves a dense network of Jakobsonesque inter- and intratextual correlations. Firstly, it refers to the official name of the state, i.e. the Islamic State of Afghanistan (Ps. *Dā Afġānistān Islāmi Dawlat*).<sup>3</sup> Secondly, it refers to the preamble to the 2004 Constitution: “*Az bārgāh-e xodāvand-e mota’āl ested’ā dāram tā in qānun-e asāsi bā re’āyat-e ahkām-e din-e mobin-e eslām (...) barārari-vo barādari-rā beyn-e mellat-e Afġānestān ta’min namāyad*” (“I pray to God Almighty that this constitution, by observing the rules of the religion of Islam, ensures (...) equality and brotherhood among the people of Afghanistan”) [*Qānun* 2003: ii].<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, to its Article 2: “*Din-e Dawlat-e Eslāmi-ye Afġānestān din-e moqaddas-e eslām ast*” (“The sacred Islamic faith is the [official] religion of the Islamic State of Afghanistan”) [*Qānun* 2003: 1]. And finally, to its Article 3: “*Dar Afġānestān hič qānun nemitavānad moxālef-e mo’taqedāt-o ahkām-e din-e moqaddas-e eslām bāšad*” (“In Afghanistan no law can contradict the articles and commandments of the sacred Islamic faith”) [*Qānun* 2003: 2]. The quoted-above utterance also refers to the fifth-grade Dari reading *Vatan-e mā* (“Our homeland”) that says, *inter alia*: “*Din-e mā eslām ast*” (“Islam is our religion”) [D6]. Additionally, it refers to the national anthem (Ps. *milli surud*), set out as an appendix in each schoolbook, especially to its last lines: “*Num dā haq mo dāy rahbar / Wāyu Allāhu Akbar (×3)*” (“We will follow the one God / We all say ‘God is the greatest!’”).<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, the statement about the Islamic nature of the homeland, discussed in the cited reading, intertwines with other readings to be found in this and other schoolbooks, especially those texts concerning religious matters. For example, in the same second-grade schoolbook, one can find two readings strictly regarding Islamic matters: *Xudāvand* (“God”) and *Hazrat Mohammad* (“Prophet Muhammad”), but there are also some in which the motive of religion appears. This emphasis on religious content should not surprise us. It is a legacy of socio-ideological processes that led to the politicisation of Afghan Islam in the 1980s and 1990s and made it an active participant in the local political scene (cf. Davis 2002).

3 Since mid-August 2021 the official name of the state is Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Ps. *Dā Afġānistān Islāmi Imārat*).

4 In late-September the Taliban government announced that the 1964 Constitution with some amendments would temporary be restored [*Daily Sahab* 22.11.2021].

5 Since mid-August 2021 the official anthem of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is a Pashto-language a cappella song entitled *Dā dā bātorāno kor* (“It is the house of the brave”).

The authors of the second-grade reading *Afġānistān* also employ the Pashto noun *xāwra* explained in the consulted dictionaries as, *inter alia*, the soil, the earth as well as the country, land, or territory. By doing this, they juxtapose *xāwra* with *hewād*, which suggests a kind of semantic difference between both lexemes. The noun *hewād* defines in their eyes the homeland itself, i.e., intellectual *abstractum* with some profound sociological significance fashioning other intellectual *abstracta* like, *inter alia*, the nation; while the noun *xāwra* should be rather interpreted as the land, soil or territory occupied by *hewād* the homeland. A great advantage of such an assumption is the fact that a larger part of this reading remains a paean on the beauty of Afghan nature. This reasoning is also supported by the fact that the noun *xāwra* already appears in the first-grade reading entitled *Zmuḡ hewād* (“Our homeland”) [P21] where it refers unequivocally to the earth.

It is interesting that the authors of the second-grade reading *Afġānistān* have not clarified the concept of homeland in any way, i.e. they neither introduce any synonymous concepts, nor propose additional definitions. The homeland and Afghanistan itself are simply collated, because the very first sentence, introducing the pupil to the content of the reading, says: “Afghanistan is our beloved Islamic homeland”. Such a statement makes equality between the two terms: ‘homeland’ and ‘Afghanistan’. The message to be found in this sentence takes the form of a semantic loop—Afghanistan is our homeland *ergo* our homeland is Afghanistan.

That should come as no surprise, because the concept of homeland appears, as acknowledged, in the above-mentioned first-grade reading *Zmuḡ hewād*:

*Zmuḡ hewād ęer řkalay dāy. ęer zangaluna aw hask ġruna lari. Pə řkalo dro ki ye sinduna baheři aw xāwra ye dā ġlo dāno dā karəlo lə pāra gaęora da. Dā hewād ęer kānona ham lari. Hewād muḡ ta dā yawa kor pə řān dāy, no rāzāy ęe xpəl hewād wadān aw ābād křu. Ābād de wi zmuḡ ġrān hewād Afġānistān!* [P20].

Our country is very beautiful. There are many forests and high mountains. Rivers flow in the beautiful valleys and the soil is good for growing crops. The homeland also has many mines. The country is like a home to us. So, let’s build and cultivate our homeland. Long live our beloved homeland Afghanistan!

Surprisingly, this reading is richer in terms of language and content as it offers a deeper insight into Afghanistan’s wildlife. Its authors make reference to high mountains, rivers and mines, as well as forests that are not mentioned in

the second-grade reading *Afġānistān*. The homeland, almost always defined as *zmuž* (“ours”), is being described in a symbolic and schematic way. Basic definitions and metaphors refer to the pupils’ immediate surroundings like high mountains, fertile land, long rivers or green woods. The repetition of the same, or analogous, utterances creates a sort of clichés that can be successfully used when discussing Afghanistan. Apparently, it is a practice that has been successfully applied by authors of different Afghan schoolbooks since at least the 1960s, as some of the definitions and metaphors seem to be phrases copied from earlier Dari schoolbooks, e.g., from *Bayraġ* (“Flag”) [D1] or *Vatan* (“Homeland”) [D3; D4; D5]. Perhaps, one of the sources of such definitions and metaphors could be sought in Tarzi’s *Afġānistān, asar-e manzum* (“Afghanistan, in verse”) published in 1912 in which he discusses, *inter alia*, the natural resources of the country [cf. Schinasi 1979: 263].

The authors of the *Zmuž hewād* reading also explain that the homeland resembles a house and a home (Ps. *kor*). The fact that the metaphor of a house/home describing the homeland also comes up in the third-grade reading *Hewādanay mina* (“Homeland love”) can be considered a gradual familiarisation of the pupils with synonymous terms: “*Hewād zmuž dā tolo Afġānāno gaḍ kor dāy*” (“Our homeland is a common house for all Afghans”) [P11]. It hence provides an outlet for their emotional feelings toward the homeland identified with Afghanistan. By calling the homeland a house/home, the pupil demonstrates that the concept of homeland has no (more) abstract meaning for him.

Browsing all the readings at our disposal, we have arrived at a conclusion that the readings’ authors gradually broaden the spectrum of the issue we are interested in—they introduce the pupils to the concept of homeland and its definition presented in the tenth-grade text: “*Hewāduna lā belo belo qawmuno aw qabilo cxa ġor di (...). tār yawa bayraġ lānde rā tol aw pā yawa nāma yadežī*” (“Countries are made up of different nations and tribes (...). [Country is] Gathered under one flag and called by one name”) [P15]. For the record, it is the flag that helps one better understand the concept of homeland and nation. First of all, it creates an additional link between homeland and nation as both of them do not exist without the other. Without the flag (as well as the coat of arms and the anthem) one cannot speak about the nation. Secondly, the flag is a symbol of national unity, which the authors of the schoolbook emphasise in many texts. It is no surprise that the description of the flag and the values represented by it appears in the first-grade text *Bayraġ* (“Flag”):

*Zmuž bayraġ dre ranguna lari tor, sur aw šin. Bayraġ zmuž dā milli yawwāli nāša da. Rapanda de wi zmuž milli bayraġ! Sarluṛi de wi dā Afġānestān xalk!* [P2].

There are three colors in our flag: black, red and green. Flag is our national community sign. Let our national flag wave! May you be proud Afghanistan people!

The authors of the tenth-grade text also apply to the second of the analysed concepts, i.e. nation: “*Xalk če pa yawa t̄akele ġuġrāfiwi sima ke astugəna lari, gaç t̄ārix, šarik farhang, an’anāt aw milli wyāruna lari, yaw millat balal keži*” (“People who live in one chosen geographic area, have a common history, unique culture, traditions and national pride are called one nation”) [P15]. It seems to be a simple definition and there is no broader context. However, what draws our attention in that explanation is the fragment that takes into account national pride. It should be noted that in compliance with their *Weltanschauung*, for Afghans, especially Pashtuns, self-esteem and worth are nothing without pride. Apparently, it is not only national pride, but also the pride of the ethnic group that merges with the former one into a single social-and-national component. That kind of pride has the highest value and the most important form of socialization, which results in a specific political, economic or social attitude.

Next to the gradation of information concerning concepts of nation and homeland, we can observe a different process of gradation of emotional charge. The gradual awakening of pupils’ love toward their Afghanistan takes the form of transposition of the concept of patriotism from the house/home (also as the family), *via* the concept of nation and homeland, to love for the Afghan nation, Afghan homeland and, finally, Afghan unity. First, we deal with descriptions of nature, and then, gradually in each subsequent reading, other important and relevant concepts appear. One gets the impression that the readings begin with general descriptions and lead to more detailed ones, going deeper into the definitions of nation and homeland *via* stories with a clearly metaphorical meaning or selected examples of the classical, e.g., *Milli yawwāli* (“National Community”) [P12] by Gul Pāčā Ulfat (1909–1977) and modern, e.g., *Də watan tarāna* (“Song of the Homeland”) by Sāleyman Lāyeq (1930–2020) [P8], poetry only to end with a brief history of these lands *Də Afġānāno hewād* (“The Homeland of the Afghans”) [P4]. Such a process of gradation of the content, intensification of emotions or interconnection of various readings at the inter-text level may indicate a well-thought-out strategy.

Interestingly, the reading we chose as the starting point of our discussion is also accompanied by a basic drawing that illustrates its content.

As one can see, the drawing portrays a group of six children—four boys and two girls. All except one boy wear traditional garments, including elegant Pashtun attire called *perāhan-tunbān*—the boy clothed in it also has a kind of turban with a protruding tip on his head called a *paṭkay*. Only one boy is don-





FIGURE 1

The drawing accompanying the second-grade reading *Afġānistān* [P1] is rather of poor quality and has traces of deliberate alterations. As one can see, the original slogan written on the banner has been replaced with a new one

ning a pair of Western-style trousers and a Western-style shirt. The three boys in the front row are holding hands. This gesture signifies both friendship as well as group unity and can be interpreted as the need for unity among all Afghan society (This topic appears in other readings and other school textbooks). Children, marching, carry the slogan “*Zmuḡ grān hewād Afġānistān dāy*” (“Afghanistan is our beloved homeland”), which is, in a way, their ideological and identity declaration. For if they regard Afghanistan as their homeland, they consequently must regard themselves as its children.

The noun children (Ps. *bačiyān*) eventually appears in the analysed reading, creating a Jakobsonesque intersemiotic connection with it as well as with the national anthem: “*Dā watan Afġānistān dāy / Dā izzat dā har Afġān dāy / Kor dā sole, kor dā ture / Har bačay ye qahramān dāy*” (“This land is [called] Afghanistan / It is the pride of every Afghan / [It is] The land of peace [and] the land of the sword / Each of its children are brave”). The intersemiotic connection between the drawing and the reading is established by the slogan and the first sentence of the reading: “*Afġānistān zmuḡ xoḡ islāmi hewād dāy*” (“Afghanistan is our beloved Islamic homeland”).

### 3 Homeland

We have classified various lexemes used by the authors to designate the concept of ‘homeland’ into five categories: 1. Toponym, 2. Homeland, 3. State, 4. Place, and 5. Dwelling place.

The first category, ‘Toponym,’ is represented by the choronym *Afġānistān*. The second, ‘Homeland,’ is represented by the above-explained nouns *hewād* and *watan*, as well as by the Pashto noun *ṭāṭobay* meaning a fire(place) or

dwelling. The third, 'State', is represented by *mamlekat*, meaning simply a state, or by *pāčahəy*, meaning a kingdom. The fourth, 'Place', is represented by *sima* meaning a territory or a region, or by *zməka* meaning the earth. While the last, fifth category, 'Dwelling place', is represented by *də osedunko zāy* meaning a place of residence, *də afgān kor* meaning an Afghan house/home, *kor* meaning a house or a home (but also a family), or by *maskan* meaning inhabitanacy. Their distribution in the respective readers is as follows:

Grade	Reading	Category				
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
I	<i>Zmuž hewād</i>		H			K
	<i>Bayrağ</i>	A	H			
II	<i>Afgānistān</i>	A	H			
	<i>Də xpəlwāki ǰašn</i>	A				
	<i>Bayrağ</i>	A				
	<i>Yawwāli</i>	–	–	–	–	–
III	<i>Hewādanəy mīna</i>		H			K
V	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>		W	M		K
VI	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>			M		
	<i>Də watan tarāna</i>		WT			
VII	<i>Də yawwāli ǰaṭa</i>					3
VIII	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>	A				DK
IX	<i>Də milli yawwāli arzašt au artyā</i>	A	HT		S	3
	<i>Yawwāli</i>	A		P		
X	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>	A			S	
	<i>Watan wāyi</i>		W			
XI	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>	A				
	<i>Də watan mīna</i>		HW			3
	<i>Zmuž hewāda!</i>		H			3
XII	<i>Də watan mīna</i>		W			
	<i>Də Afgānāno hewād</i>		HWT		S	ON

A = *Afgānistān* / D = *də afgān kor* / H = *hewād* / K = *kor* / M = *mamlikat* / N = *maskan* / O = *də osedunko zāy* / P = *pāčahəy* / S = *sima* / T = *taṭobay* / W = *watan* / 3 = *zməka*

As we have already explained, the most interesting of these terms is the lexeme *kor* (house/home). It produces a dense network of connections on two

levels—textual and non-textual. On the one hand, it refers to the metaphor of homeland the house/home that was present in schoolbooks since at least the 1960s: “*Vatan xāne-ye mā va xāne-ye moštarak-e tamām-e hamvatanān-e mā-st*” (“The homeland is our home and the common home of all our compatriots”) [D5]. We are of the opinion that this is an indirect, perhaps unconscious, reference to the metaphor of Afghanistan as the curtilage that one can find in Abdurrahmān-Xān’s writings. Secondly, it interweaves the reading with a single passage of the national anthem: “*Kor dā sole, kor dā ture*” (“[Afghanistan is] The land of peace [and] the land of the sword [i.e. courage]”). Finally, it makes reference to the vocabulary describing family relations—*baččiyān* (children) or *zāman* (sons)—used as synonyms of the nation (below). In this place, it is also impossible to forget about a reading to be found in the second-grade schoolbook *Yawwāli* (“Unity”).

The *Yawwāli* reading is a story regarding a single family. As one can read, one day an old man called his sons to his place. He gave them a bunch of small wooden sticks to break. Each of the sons in turn tried to squeeze the wooden bundle but could not break it. Then the old man took each stick and broke it separately, stick by stick. Then, he turned to his sons, explaining that if they agree with each other, they will never be broken but if there is any misunderstanding between them, this weakness will destroy them like these sticks [P18] (A similar reading entitled *Fāyede-ye ettehād* (“Benefit of Unity”) [D2] can be found in a Dari-language school book printed in 1969/1970). The interpretation of this reading is also two-level. On the basic level, the cited reading comments on the unity of the family (home). On the metaphorical one, it indicates the need to build the unity of the entire society (homeland). For that reason, the message of the readings remains simple: a house/home resembles the homeland, i.e., the family and the relatives who create it, although they did not construct the walls. It can thus be in the heart, after all, it is often the subject of longings or dreams. It is often a synonym of a joyful life followed by thoughts at every stage of life (and such a scheme is underpinned by readings in school textbooks). Although that sounds like a truism, the house/home usually symbolises happiness, peace, and conditions a sense of security—especially for Afghan people.

#### 4 Nation

We have classified various lexemes used by the authors to designate the concept of ‘nation’ into five categories: 1. Ethnonym, 2. People, 3. Family, 4. Dweller, and 5. State.

The first category 'Ethnonym' is represented by the ethnonym *afġān*. The second category 'People' is represented by *xalk* meaning people, by *millat* meaning a nation and by *tan* meaning a body. The third category 'Family' is represented by *baċġyān* meaning children, by *zāmān* meaning sons, and by *wrorwalāy* meaning brotherhood. The fourth category 'Dweller' is represented by *osedunkay* meaning a dweller or an inhabitant. The fifth category 'State' is represented by *hewādwāl* meaning a citizen, and by *watanwāl* as well as *astogān* both meaning a citizen too. Their distribution in the respective readers is as follows:

Grade	Reading	Category				
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
I	<i>Zmuḡ hewād</i>	–	–	–	–	–
	<i>Bayraġ</i>		X			
II	<i>Afġānistān</i>			B		
	<i>Də xpəlwāki ġašn</i>	A	X			
	<i>Bayraġ</i>	–	–	–	–	–
	<i>Yawwāli</i>			Z		
III	<i>Hewādanəy mina</i>	A				H
V	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>				O	
VI	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>				O	
	<i>Də watan tarana</i>	A	T			
VII	<i>Də yawwāli ғаға</i>					N
VIII	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>					L
IX	<i>Də milli yawwāli arzašt au artyā</i>		M			
	<i>Yawwāli</i>		X	Z		
X	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>		X	W		N
	<i>Watan wāyi</i>	–	–	–	–	–
XI	<i>Milli yawwāli</i>	–	–	–	–	–
	<i>Də watan mina</i>	–	–	–	–	–
	<i>Zmuḡ hewāda!</i>	A				
XII	<i>Də watan mina</i>	A				
	<i>Də Afġānāno hewād</i>	A				

A = *Afġān* / X = *xalk* / M = *millat* / T = *tan* / B = *baċġyān* / Z = *zāmān* / W = *wrorwalāy* / O = *osedunkay* / H = *hewādwāl* / L = *watanwāl* / N = *astogān*

The most problematic ethnonym is *afġān*, traditionally reserved for Pashtuns only. For years, it has been the subject of ideological disputes, as well as political arguments motivated by them. For some circles, it is an expression of Pashtun supremacy, underpinned by Pashtun chauvinism and xenophobia (cf. Mohammedi 2018).

Afghanistan is equated with the man, not the woman, due to a common understanding that the nature of society was patriarchal, as well as due to a purely grammatical interpretation of the lexeme *hewād* or *watan* as masculine. One can suggest that the masculinity of the Afghan homeland refers to the popular conviction that it is the man who is stronger, he is the head of the family and has a higher social position. In that matter, we can perceive it as a message: the father—as a country, and the Afghans—as his children. In addition, personifying the land as masculine can convey also patriotic connotations. A patriotic note for the Pashtuns, as we know, results from the Pashtun code of honor. This explains why in one reading one cannot find any references to, *inter alia*, the noun *mor* (mother) or to the noun *xwandi* (sisters) as synonyms of the nation.

## 5 Conclusions

A careful analysis of each of the readings allows us to grasp the intertextual relations at both the language and meaning level. We can observe a certain pattern of creating school textbooks, from general to specific. Therefore, we can conclude that the key message of school textbooks is the pyramid of values: *home/family* → *homeland/nation* → *national pride*. Moreover, this pyramid of values is undoubtedly aimed at raising national awareness among Afghans. Interestingly, the readings are, undoubtedly, aimed at children looking introspectively and trying to understand the essence of the words homeland and nation. Let us emphasize that the vocabulary related to nation and the homeland appears very often and alternately, creating more and more synonyms. Such a procedure not only helps students remember the most important concepts, but also builds their awareness of the further development of the concept of both homeland and nation. Finally, in many readings, we can repetitively encounter various values, which we know from the Pashtun code of honor *Paštunwali* (cf. Rzehak 2011). Moreover, the entire concept of nation and homeland should, therefore, be understood on the basis of such values as unity, community, pride and honor. It seems to have been the goal of the education system over the past decade. Of course, we are not able to predict if and what kind of books will be introduced in the near future. However, we can expect

more religious accents. This is due to the Taliban pyramid of values in which the religious element is given greater prominence.

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### Readings

Dari

- D1 = *Bayraǰ*, [in:] *Ketāb-e avval-e dehāti* I, 1342: 66.
- D2 = *Fāyede-ye ettehād*, [in:] *Qerā't-e dari* VIII, 1348: 4.
- D3 = *Vatan*, [in:] *Ketāb-e dovvom-e dehāti* II, 1343: 6.
- D4 = *Vatan*, [in:] *Ketāb-e sevvom-ā dehāti* III, 1347: 4–5.
- D5 = *Vatan*, [in:] *Ketāb-e čahārom-e dehāti* IV, 1342: 33–34.
- D6 = *Vatan-e mā*, [in:] *Qerā't-e dari* IV, 1342: 63–64.

## Pashto

- P<sub>1</sub> = *Afġānistān*, [in:] *Pašto* II, 2009/2012: 24.  
 P<sub>2</sub> = *Bayrag*, [in:] *Pašto* I, 2009/2012: 103.  
 P<sub>3</sub> = *Bayrag*, [in:] *Pašto* II, 2009/2012: 30.  
 P<sub>4</sub> = *Də Afġānāno hewād*, [in:] *Pašto* XII, 2009/2012: 84–86.  
 P<sub>5</sub> = *Də milli yawwāli arzašt au artyā*, [in:] *Pašto* IX, 2009/2012: 9–10.  
 P<sub>6</sub> = *Də watan mina*, [in:] *Pašto* XI, 2009/2012: 58.  
 P<sub>7</sub> = *Də watan mina*, [in:] *Pašto* XII, 2009/2012: 30–32.  
 P<sub>8</sub> = *Də watan tarāna*, [in:] *Pašto* VI, 2009/2012: 93.  
 P<sub>9</sub> = *Də xpəhwāki ġašn*, [in:] *Pašto* II, 2009/2012: 27.  
 P<sub>10</sub> = *Də yawwāli gača*, [in:] *Pašto* VII, 2009/2012: 87–88.  
 P<sub>11</sub> = *Hewādanəy mina*, [in:] *Pašto* III, 2009/2012: 66–67.  
 P<sub>12</sub> = *Milli yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* V, 2009/2012: 19.  
 P<sub>13</sub> = *Milli yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* VI, 2009/2012: 77.  
 P<sub>14</sub> = *Milli yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* VIII, 2009/2012: 22–23.  
 P<sub>15</sub> = *Milli yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* X, 2009/2012: 41–43.  
 P<sub>16</sub> = *Milli yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* XI, 2009/2012: 66.  
 P<sub>17</sub> = *Watan wāyi*, [in:] *Pašto* X, 2009/2012: 47–48.  
 P<sub>18</sub> = *Yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* II, 2009/2012: 50–51.  
 P<sub>19</sub> = *Yawwāli*, [in:] *Pašto* IX, 2009/2012: 72–73.  
 P<sub>20</sub> = *Zmuž hewād*, [in:] *Pašto* I, 2009/2012: 101.  
 P<sub>21</sub> = *Zmuž hewāda!*, [in:] *Pašto* XI, 2009/2012: 4–5.