Places of the heart: Issues in Indigenous place naming in Torwali of northern Pakistan and Aboriginal languages of south eastern Australia

MUJAHID TORWALI & JAKELIN TROY

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Places of the heart: Issues in Indigenous place naming in Torwali of northern Pakistan and Aboriginal languages of south eastern Australia

Mujahid Torwali
Dara Road, Bahrain, Post box # 19010, Swat KPK, Pakistan
[mujahidsym@gmail.com]

Jakelin Troy
The University of Sydney
L4.31 Quadrangle A14, The University of Sydney, NSW, 2006 Australia
[jakelin.troy@sydney.edu.au]

Abstract
In this paper we compare the demise of Indigenous place names in the Swat region of northern Pakistan with those of south eastern Australia. We will also consider the processes for and issues in reinstating Indigenous place names. This paper contributes to our understanding of ‘endangered languages and their territory/home/land’. Our comments are drawn from research undertaken with our own communities. In both Australia and Pakistan invasion and colonisation have obviated much of the original Indigenous naming. A new system of place-naming and names that derive from the languages of the invaders have replaced those of the first peoples. However, in both Swat and south eastern Australia there are efforts to recover and restore the Indigenous names. This is happening in response to an Indigenous push to revitalise language and culture. The Indigenous place names are integral to this movement as the place names are regarded as close to the heart of their people, to their core identifications with their countries and to a deep understanding of the human relationship to the land.

Introduction
In this paper we, the Indigenous co-authors, write as insiders about our experiences of the changes to the place names in our Countries (our own Indigenous homelands) that are the result of invasions by people from other language and cultural traditions. We will look at what place names mean to our people and how our communities perceive mapping. The comments are based on long term research each has conducted as part of long-term projects to recover and reinstate the original place names of our ancestral lands in the languages of our peoples.

Our two countries are located within the broader Asian region Mujahid from Torwali Country, Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan in the northern hemisphere and Troy from Ngarigu Country, The Snowy Mountains, New South Wales, Australia in the southern hemisphere. Both countries share similar histories of invasion and colonisation particularly by the British in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We hope that this paper will draw more attention to the importance of the ‘langscape’, the language of the landscape, and Indigenous naming of landscapes and shed light on the nature of Indigenous mapping in our countries.

Torwali place names in Bahrain, Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Reasons for islamisization of place names in Swat
Mujahid is Torwali, known as Mujahid Torwali is a Torwali native speaker from a village known as Kedam, an introduced name that replaced the original Torwali name Kamal كمال. Kamal was originally the name of a person who lived in the valley before the Pakhtun Muslim invasion. The renaming of his village is one of the many examples of places and geographical features, such as mountains, rivers and valleys that have been replaced with more Arabic sounding ones given by the Pakhtun (this is the local name in Swat, also Pashtun more common in Afghanistan), who are now the majority population in the Swat District of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan.
Swat was a Buddhist and Hindu region until the 11th Century when successive groups of Pakhtun, originally from Afghanistan, invaded the region and introduced Islam to the Swat Valley.

Swat was a diverse cultural centre before the Pakhtun invasion. Archaeological excavations indicate a pre-historic occupation from about 2500 to 1300 BC (Ali 1985: 64). Swat, known as Uddiyana and Swastu at different times (Swastu was the name of the River Swat), was a centre of the Gandhara tradition of Mahayana Buddhism from around 324 BC and became also a Hindu Kingdom in the 9th Century when the Shahi rulers took on this religion. Hinduism and Buddhism coexisted until Islam was introduced by Mehmood of Ghaznavi in 1101 when he conquered the kingdom of Raja Gira (known locally as this kingdom). Previously Alexander the Great had also invaded the region in 326 BC bringing Greek religious, linguistic and cultural traditions. The region had, and continues to have, considerable ongoing trade with China.

After Mehmood’s conquest Swat continued in the hands of Muslims but the great majority of people remained non-Muslim. He granted land to the Dilazaks and the Swati tribes and in 1024 the Swatis expelled the Dilazaks. The name for the region, Swat is associated with this tribal incursion. The next incursion was the Yousafzai tribe who were being expelled from their lands in Afghanistan in the early 16th Century AD. They expelled the Swatis and established the dominance of Islam. It was and continues to be a very difficult time for non-Muslims who are the original inhabitants of Swat. The Yousafzai fought the non-Muslim Indigenous population, generally referred to as Kohistani ‘people of the mountains’ including the Torwali and pushed them away from the fertile flatter river lands towards the high mountains and, in the process, some converted to Islam. The period to the mid 19th Century was one of warring feudal landlords until Sayyid Akbar Shah in 1849 established the Islamic State of Swat. In 1926 the British recognised the Principly State of Swat and the rulers became known as Bacha Saib and then the Wali. Swat was ceded to Pakistan by the last Wali Swat in 1969.

The conversion to Islam of many of the Torwali and other Indigenous inhabitants of Swat was during the rule of the influential mullah Akhund Abdul Gaffir or ‘Saidu Baba’ the great grandfather of the first Wali Swat. He actively preached Islam and sent religious scholars into communities who already escaped towards the mountains in Swat to convert them from their traditional religions. Mullahs started visiting different parts of Swat and converting non-Muslims including the Torwali in Bahrain by force, with the sword and pressured negotiation. It is still seen as a tragic time by many in the communities and the rulers of Swat ordered his officers to work on controlling the population, raising revenue and renaming the region with Muslim place names. Some of the names pre-Islamic names are still extant but people feel ashamed of using those names because the Wali of Swat in particular enforced the use of the names and he as a man who commanded respect, albeit by forced. Now there are efforts by the Swat based community organisation Idara Baraye Taleem-o-Taraqi ‘institute for education and development’ (IBT) and other activists who are working to preserve those names as part of their heritage culture and languages.

In their attempt to convert all the people of Swat to Islam the Pakhtun have continued to work towards Arabisation of the people and their languages. Replacing Indigenous place names with more Arab sounding or Muslim names continues to be part of this process. Place naming is a key method by which people claim their identity in the landscape and changing place names is a well-established tool of colonisation. The Torwali continue to use, in general conversation, their Dardic names for mountains and other geographical features and for villages, towns and cities but they are under significant pressure to switch to the Arabised Pakhtun names.

The Norwegian anthropologist Frederik Barth was one of the earliest modern anthropologists to undertake fieldwork in Swat. He was there in the mid 1950s and observed that at that time it was still possible to track the history of the invasion of Swat by Pakhtun tribes and the progressive displacement of its Indigenous peoples into the higher more difficult mountain terrain. He wrote: ‘Traditional history, in part relating to place-names of villages and uninhabited ruins, indicates that Kohistani inhabitants were driven progressively northward by Pathan invaders. This northward spread has now been checked, and the border between Kohistani and Pathan territories has been stable for some time. The last Pathan expansion northward in the Swat valley took place under the leadership of the Saint Akhund Sadiq Baba, eight generations ago.’ (Barth, 1956: 1080)

Barth also identified what he believed were ‘the three major ethnic groups in Swat State, North-West frontier Province, Pakistan. These are: (1) Pathans-Pashto-speaking (Iranian language family) sedentary agriculturalists; (2) Kohistanis-speakers of Dardic languages, practicing agriculture and transhumant herding; and (3) Gujars-Guji-speaking (a lowland Indian dialect) nomadic herdsmen. Kohistanis are probably the ancient inhabitants of most of Swat; Pathans entered as conquerors in successive waves between A.D. 1000-1600, and Gujars probably first appeared in the area some 400 years ago. Pathans of Swat State number about 450,000, Kohistanis perhaps 30,000. The number of Gujars in the area is difficult to estimate (Barth, 1956: 1079)’ He went on to describe the use of the Swat region by each of these groups that is still broadly in evidence and which also indicates the pattern of renaming of places. In the mountainous strongholds of the Torwali above Bharain to Kalam and along the Chail Valley it is still possible to hear people using pre-Islamic Indigenous namings.
Mujahid: field research into Indigenous place-naming in Swat

Mujahid’s fieldwork in Swat is revealing Indigenous place naming that is not only retained in local memory but is preferred by his community. Using these names gives people real pleasure and is seen as part of the community-led move for Torwali language and cultural revival. Mujahid also works with IBT which has been instrumental in many of the recent linguistic and cultural documentation projects. The findings discussed here have particularly been assisted by Zubair Torwali, Aftab Ahmad, Rahim Sabir, Sajjad Ahmad, Javid Iqbal and Elders of the Torwali community.

The culture and languages of the Indigenous land in Swat Kohistan (Torwali belt) reveal the history of its nations. In the Torwali belt of Swat Pakistan now the people are using the old and Indigenous names for places. The Indigenous names of most of the villages, rivers and mountains were changed or are subject to ongoing attempts to change them into Pashto or Arabic, particularly from the time of the kingdom of the last Wali Swat, Mian Gul Jahan Zeb (1945-1969). He was from the Yousafzai tribe of Pakhtun and was zealous in his attempts to convert the languages and cultural forms, music etc., of the Dardic community into Pashto or Arabic. The Wali of Swat and the religious people of Swat considered the Torwali and other Indigenous communities as recently converted and in need of encouragement to embrace Islam completely. The Wali became very focussed on converting the names of places into Pashto and Arabic. During the time of the Wali of Swat officials were also Pakhtun and they were easily able to change the Indigenous names of the Torwali and Gawri (area beyond Torwali) belts into Pashto and issued notifications of these changes from their offices. The people of the Indigenous belt were completely uneducated, and they didn't understand the importance of retaining their languages and cultural traditions. At that time the Torwali people felt ashamed as they were newly converted Muslims, they were ashamed about what they were before converting to Islam. The officials dictated to them that Torwali culture and languages were the remnants of their pre-conversion lives and that they should let go of any remaining vestiges of Torwali language and culture.

Some of these changes evident in the Swat Valley are the following names converted from Torwali to Pashto or Arabic:

- Gurnaal became Gurnai
- Toowal/Too’al/Too’aal became Torwal
- Xhamait became Ramet
- Kamal became Kedam
- Chat Gaam became Balakot
- Darshash became Bahrain
- Darail became Darolai

Chat Gaam meaning ‘Village on the top’ is another Indigenous Torwali belt village name that was changed by the Wali Swat. It has become Balakot village but Torwali elders still call it Chat Gaam to retain its historical meaning and the local sense of place. But the younger generation has almost forgotten the indigenous name. Chat Gaam is located on the top of the hills near Mankial.

Interview with Hawaldar of Torwal, Swat.

Hawaldar is an aged Torwali man living in the Torwal village of Torwali belt in Swat Kohistan. Hawaldar was born in Torwal village in 1948 to poor parents. He narrates that Torwal is the new name of the village as before the Wali of Swat the village was called ‘Toowali/Too’al/Too’aal’. Some people claimed that Toowal stands for the family of Too who was the first person living in the Torwal belt in the 17th Century. Hawaldar explained the old names in Torwali belt and said that the names connect the history back to the Dardic people of the area. He said that there is a special meaning behind each Torwali name of the area. He explained the name of the Kafar/Kafir Paan, the ‘way of non-believers’ which were the tracks through the mountains used by the Kafar. The Kafar were the people of the Torwali belt or the Torwali people. The Torwali were non-believers until 200 years ago but following attacks on the Torwali belt by the Yousafzai of Swat (Pakhtun) when they occupied most of Swat this changed. The Torwali, Dardic people, were pushed back into the mountains and this is why in general the Pakhtun called the Torwali and other Indigenous people in Swat Kohistanis ‘people of the mountains’. According to Hawaldar the Kafar Paan were used as business tracks by the Kafars. He said the Kafar of that time were very clever, intelligent and strategic, always ready for attack from their enemies. They had used Kafar Paan and other tracks as strategic points. The Kafar Paan continue to exist and people use them to visit their relatives between Torwal (Toowal) and Kedam (Kamal) Villages.

Interview with Meraj Gul.

Gurnaal Village, now Gurnai is another Torwali village situated among the high green mountains at a distance of 7km from Bahrain Swat. Gurnaaal is the Indigenous name for Gurnai Village which was a change made by the Wali of Swat in 1950. According to Meraj Gul of Gurnaal Village, born 1935, Gurnaal was the name of a Sikh (Singh) community leader, Guru Naal, who lived in Gurnaal before Islam. He was commemorated in this village name, but the Wali Swat changed Gurnaal into Gurnai without reference to any specific meaning just to Islamisise the Indigenous name.

Chat Gaam meaning ‘Village on the top’ is another Indigenous Torwali belt village name that was changed by the Wali Swat. It has become Balakot village but Torwali elders still call it Chat Gaam to retain its historical meaning and the local sense of place. But the younger generation has almost forgotten the indigenous name. Chat Gaam is located on the top of the hills near Mankial.

Chat Gaam Became Balakot

Xhoogoor became Laikot

Pooran Gaam became Zor kalay (Pooran Gaam is pure Torwali and means ‘old village’ and the Pakhtun changed it into Zor kalay which means the same in Pashtu

Kaanga became Kaanga
which also has a Torwali name, Manikhaal, and is a village which is around 15km from Bahrain Town. The Indigenous Torwali name of the summer pasture Shaa see Baan means ‘the last pasture in the area’, or ‘the most far away pasture in Kedam Valley’ but the name is now changed into the more Pashto sounding Sir Banda which mean ‘the top pasture’, the Pakhtun simply translated the name of the pasture into Pashtu.

Bahrain is the capital town of the Torwali community situated between the two rivers, river Swat and Daral river. People from all the Torwali villages visit Bahrain once in a week and mostly they visit on Friday for Juma Prayer and shopping. The indigenous name of Bahrain was Swat Darshash and then changed into Baranyal and then into Bahrain following the influence of the Wali Swat. Ayeen/Aeen village is one of the old villages of the Torwali community and is a distance of 2km from Bahrain. The Indigenous name for or Ayeen village was Ain and is another name changed by the Wali’s Pakhtun officials. Abib Abad/Habib Abad is the nearest village to Bahrain. Its name was only just recently changed, 6 or 7 years ago, from its original form of Laambat under extreme pressure from the local religious elders who forced the villagers to change the name because Laambat is a Hindu or non-Muslim name.

Indigenous names are still current in areas unreached by or of no economic interest to the Pakhtun. As Barth wrote in his mid 1950s paper considering the economic ecology of the region the Pakhtun had no interest in land that was not easy to cultivate. These are mostly the arid and difficult to reach areas in the high mountains of the Torwali belt. These areas are purely used by the Torwalis for summer pasturing or as grazing land for cattle. For example: Baaksaar is a summer pasture that is a walk of 10km from Bahrain, the main Torwali town. Local people go there with their cattle during the hot days of summer.

Panaashi is another summer pasture near to Baksaar and which is also of no interest to the influential or religious groups.

Xhaimet is an old village in the Torwali belt between Kalam and Bahrain. The name of Xhaimet village has not yet been changed into Pashtu but is slowly being altered. Now mostly people call it Ramet instead of Zhaimet or Xhamet.

Tap see Baan is another summer pasture near Ramet village which is used by the local Torwali communities and that has kept the name pure and unchanged.

Khanakai is also a distant pasture used by the Torwali and still unchanged.

Ashokhaa is on the outskirts of Ayeen village, it has kept its name because it has no road or other facilities.

Ponkia is an ignored and neglected village opposite to Torwal village. There was no bridge or road to Ponkia village. Its people lived a tough life, made worse by the devastating Swat flood in 2010. No one was interested in Ponkia and the name remained unchanged. However, the village is now being developed and it is possible the people will change the name because Ponkia as Islam is making more inroads into the valley.

The Indigenous Torwali community continues to face ongoing problems from the dominant communities particularly the Pashto speaking Pakhtun and the wider community who are Urdu speakers. In Pakistan the dominant communities always try to shift or even kill the local, Indigenous culture of the ethnic linguistic minorities. The national government wants all the ethnic groups to speak the National language, Urdu, or the dominant larger Indigenous languages of Pakistan, Pashto being the largest. The government also wants to own the expression of local regional cultures in order to control Indigenous peoples. Governments have used religious ideology, religious leaders and their followers to dominate people and make them cooperate because religion is the main weapon of public control in Pakistan. Governments mix religion with every aspect of daily life for their own interests and also use religious arguments when they failed to convince people of their policies with any other strategies. It is in this context that place naming and the language of the Indigenous landscape is being systematically Islamicised across Pakistan, not only in Swat.

**Troy: reinstating Aboriginal place names in south eastern Australia**

In south eastern Australia, Troy has assisted the people of the Sydney area, the capital of the state of New South Wales (NSW), to reinstate some of the names for geographical features around the Sydney Harbour. The original Aboriginal names for these features gradually lost currency following the British invasion of Australia in 1788. In the early 2000s the Sydney Aboriginal community, supported by the Geographical Names Board New South Wales (GNB), approved the official use of Gadigal and Dharug names for headlands, inlets, beach fronts and bays around the harbour. This is possible because the GNB has a 'dual naming’ policy that permits the addition of the original Aboriginal name to the existing introduced name. Over time the introduced names may go out of use, as has happened in the case of the famous Uluru, formerly Ayers Rock, in Central Australia which had its original Pitjantjatjara name restored in 1993.

Across NSW Aboriginal people are reinstating Aboriginal names for geographical features assisted by the GNB. Troy’s own community, the Ngarigu of the Snowy Mountains in the lower south east of Australia are looking at dual naming the highest mountain in Australia which is in their ‘Country’ or territory. Currently the mountain is named Kosciusko and into the future it will have its Ngarigu name reinstated which is Kunama Namadji.

Troy’s clan is Ngamitjimutung and the name Kunama Namadji combines her clan name with the word kunama or ‘snow’ in Ngarigu. Ngarigu language is ‘sleeping’ (has gone out of daily use) but is beginning to be woken up...
and used again by its communities. The people of the Snowy Mountains were also known as the ‘moth hunters’ for the great feasts hosted in their Country each summer where the main item on the menu was the big bogong moth that swarmed in the rocky crevices above the snow line. These moths were toasted on hot coals, then ground and made into cakes. Bogong is a Ngarigu word and it is also a place locator or identifier for Ngarigu people. Bogong breed, pupate and fly out only from the rocks in the Snowy Mountains region. Bogong moths are place markers they are from Troy’s Country and their name locates her Country in place in Australia. Animals, birds, insects, plants, tracks, clan groups are all integral to an Indigenous place naming system. Place names for Aboriginal people are not limited to the broader western notion of names for geographical features. They also demonstrate the inseparability of people from Country because the names for these features describe the ‘landscape’ which is the Indigenous understanding of the environment described in the local languages. The names derive from things that create meaning for people that are evident to them in their Country, other living things within the environment (such as the bogong), the stories and the ceremonies of the Country and the activities of its people. Aboriginal people say that Country owns us, we don’t own Country. Maps are not only geospatial images with names, labels and coordinates; rather, they are mind maps and heart maps that position people in the landscape.

**Tracks**

For Indigenous people worldwide maps are complexes of deep understanding of Country. So, throughout Muja-hid’s Country in Swat as discussed above the region is criss-crossed with Kafar tracks or tracks of the ‘unbelievers’. These are ancient walking routes where people herded their sheep up and down the valleys and continued to use them as secret walking routes for people resisting the Islamisation of their communities. These tracks long predate the coming of Islam to the Swat Valley. The tracks have names and they cross over named places, sometimes a rocky outcrop or a mountain or a lake and each of these geographical features are also named in parts as well as a whole, so a lake will have names all around its edge in addition to being named as a single body of water. Similarly, in Troy’s Ngarigu Country there are many walking tracks and these are being ‘rediscovered’ by non-Indigenous people. One is the Bundian Way that starts in the High Country of the Snowy Mountains and ends up almost in Melbourne hundreds of kilometres away. These tracks joined clan groups and map their relationships with each other.

**Non-Indigenous mapping of Indigenous concepts for association with country**

In Australia there have been some recent late twentieth Century attempts to map of the social and linguistic boundaries of Indigenous peoples. One such map that includes Troy’s Ngarigu Country is ‘tribes of south eastern Australia’ after Norman Tindale’s 1974 epic publication ‘tribal boundaries of Aboriginal Australia’. This is a non-Aboriginal ‘map’. A static view of the dynamic and ever-changing relationship with the land that Aboriginal people have had for tens of thousands of years as we lived through climate changes, social changes and catastrophes like the invasion of our Countries by the British, beginning in the late eighteenth century. Tindale’s map ‘names’ our Countries according to the information he collected, from our peoples and from those who had invaded our Countries, about how we named ourselves. It is some kind of truth but what was he mapping, given the complexity of our own mapping of social, cultural, natural, linguistic connections with land? It is a snapshot of something at some point in time that many Aboriginal people are now critiquing while still using it in the face of any better information. Troy’s people now refer to themselves as Ngarigu and broadly state their territory as mapped by Tindale but without a strong sense of where or what that name is or of the accuracy of the Ngarigu territory boundary.

The next major attempt to map Aboriginal boundaries was in the 1980s and this is the now so-called ‘Horton’ language map of Australia published by The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and created by David Horton for the Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (1994). This is another static map with names for Country largely meant to be associated with language groups. But it was drawn also using Tindale as a guide. These are images made by non-Aboriginal people in an attempt to place names on Aboriginal Country to understand who was where.

**Indigenous agency in research about mapping**

We, Troy and Mujahid, as Indigenous people with a shared sensibility about many things including our relationship to Country are working together to find a new way of understanding Country and representing it to the wider world. We are claiming ‘Indigenous agency’ in our research. In order to unpack this idea, we quote Troy when interviewed by Lesley Woods, Nguyampa woman from western NSW, about what is important to Indigenous people in undertaking research and the idea of Indigenous agency in research:

I personally think that really ethical practice is when you go as a researcher to do work with people, whatever you are doing research on, you’re engaging with what they know and what they own and, by being the researcher and having the privilege of working with people and the privilege of writing up what you have learnt, does not ever give you any ownership over it; that’s what I believe.

… if the analysis is a jointly negotiated analysis, so for example if a language speaker is explaining how their language works to me, we immediately have a
collaboration in which the language speaker has an equal partnership with me around the analysis. So, the language speaker has intellectual rights to whatever it is that he or she has put into that analysis (Woods 2017: 34).

Troy is also inspired by the notion of ‘emotional history’ and what new methodologies that might open up in her research and that might help in developing thinking about what are Indigenous approaches to research as something qualitatively different to what is usual in the academies. Emotional history is to feel or sense the moment and understand complexities that less emotional engagements miss. Shino Konishi, Yawuru historian, suggests that we should turn away from purely the empirical, emotionless histories that have characterised Indigenous histories of Australia and allow ourselves to be moved by what we discover in our research. Researching the Indigenous naming of places is to delve into the emotion of the landscape to develop an Indigenous, connected understanding of place.

Mujahid’s Torwali Country, like Troy’s Ngarigu Country, is mountainous. Truly mountainous. Troy’s people claim the highest peak in Australia, Kunama Namadgi/ Mt Kosciusko. However, at 2,228 metres it is a hill by Mujahid’s standards. At the end of his valley is Koshian, one of the highest peaks in the world at +8,000 metres. In spite of these differences, we share the same emotional connection with our Countries and the features of our countries have been renamed from the original names given to them by our peoples and now have names that do not reflect the deep knowledge of the Country. In the case of Mujahid’s Country this has happened through the increasing Islamicisation of his valley over 600 years with a rapid increase in the last 20 as religious extremism swept the valley. Names are now Arabised to serve religious purposes and the deep history of his people held in the original names are being lost. He is doing research with old people in his region to recover the names and the knowledge.

In Troy’s Country the maps created post British invasion in 1788 often contain clues to Aboriginal mapping and naming systems. There is also some community knowledge still extant. Recently an Elder of the Ngarigu community told Troy that Mt Kosciusko is Kunama Namadgi ‘snow’ and her clan name. Troy’s river The Snowy River would have had multiple names for all its bends and other riverine features. Mujahid’s River Swat is called Nhat Mhunnhat. When he thinks about it he calls it Mhunnhat ‘our river’. Most people call it ‘the big river’, Ghenhhat, older people like his grandfather know it as this. There are many small rivers so this is known as the big one to distinguish it from all others. Any impact on the river would impact on the irrigation for farms and on the micro hydro power systems power houses and businesses and it is the main source of drinking water is Swat river. The river is the main power source as all other sources are unreliable. It is also called ‘killer’ because most accidental deaths are people killed by the river. Teenagers suicide in the river. One of Mujahid’s aunts has not drunk the water for 25 years because her son and husband both drowned in the river.

Mujahid says that his language and his landscape are one and the same, it is his ‘langscape’. Torwali should be used for naming the land because it is the language of the land. Usually when you speak to the Indigenous people in Swat and tell them some stories they begin to remember the stories of the land and the place names that are connecting the people to the high summer pastures. The way to travel is also in Torwali it holds the knowledge of paths and maps, the Kaafar paan which means the route of the non-believers the Indigenous people before Islam. The Kaafar were the first people in Swat and along their track are some signs of their Bhuddist traditions. These roads are just above the villages and were the strategic routes. There are myths that they used these ways to fight with the Muslims. The Wali of Swat converted every Bhuddist or Hindu worshipper to Islam. However, some still resist such as the Kelash further up the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who still have their own religion and traditions but are now recently converting to Islam.

These names and their ways keep us connected. These things tell us about our history. If I say Kafaar paan everything comes to my head. Kamal my village was the name of a person, it was renamed Kedam to give it a Muslim name. The names connect us. Extreme people hate the Indigenous names because they are not Muslim names. There are no maps. The names exist in the oral history of the Swat Khohistan or Torwali belt which is the area of the Torwali from Madian to Kalam. We are thinking of developing a project to map the Indigenous place names of Swat. It will need new methodologies if it is to represent the complexity of naming and what the names mean to the Torwali.

In Australia there are two scholarly works that are written as explorations of Indigenous place names in Australia. The first, Hercus, Hodges and Simpson published in 2002 and the second Koch and Hercus in 2009. These publications are also Indigenous authored. In the 2009 volume Michael Walsh and Troy wrote about reinstating by dual naming 20 Indigenous place names for geographical features around Sydney Harbour. This was possible because NSW, as do all states and territories in Australia, has a dual naming policy to reinstate ‘authenticated’ historical Aboriginal place names. Sydney City Council now has a policy of dual naming public places. There is a real energy in Australia around finding and reinstating Indigenous place names. There is also a growing body of literature about the emotional and cultural importance of place naming for Indigenous people.

Conclusion

The history of Troy’s Ngarigu and other people of South Eastern Australia and that of the Torwali is supremely affecting but what is uplifting and should be inspiring for all people is that we continue and, like so many groups of
Indigenous people worldwide, we are rebuilding ourselves and recovering our languages and cultural practices. Understanding our own geography and naming is integral to keeping our connection to Country and our connection to our identities.

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