

**A Thesis**  
**on**  
**A Study of Pashto Tappa and Patriarchal Structure in**  
**the Pashtoon Society**

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# **A Study of Pashto Tappa and Patriarchal Structure in the Pashtoon Society**

A thesis submitted to the National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid i Azam University, Islamabad (Pakistan) in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Philosophy in Pakistan Studies.

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## Glossary

Tappa	Two poetic verses; one with nine syllables and the other with thirteen syllables.
Landai	Another name for Tappa; famous among the Pashtuns of Afghanistan.
Patriarchy	Rule of father in actual meaning; male dominancy in a society.
<i>Khor</i>	Sister; a symbol of honour for men in Pashtun society.
<i>Khaza</i>	Women in general; Wives in particular. Another symbol of men's honour.
<i>Izzat</i>	Honour; A term among Pashtuns that has helped men to take control of women.
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Pakhtunwali	Pashtuns' code of honour and life that covers every aspect of their lives.
<i>Melmastia</i>	Hospitality; a trademark tradition of Pashtun culture given under pakhtunwali.
<i>Teaga</i>	Truce; An agreement to end the hostility between tribes often through women.
<i>Badal</i>	Revenge; A vow that the family of the victim takes to kill the culprit.
<i>Jirga</i>	A deputation or a gathering of a tribe under Malik; ancient system of tribal justice.
Malik	Leader of the tribe; a landlord and a very rich man.
Tarburwali	Agnatic rivalry.
Nanwati	Forgiveness through Jirga.

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## **Abstract**

The women in Pashtun culture and society have always faced submissiveness at the hands of male dominancy which has kept them away from enjoying the basic pleasures of life. It has deprived them of their basic rights like education and choice to marry. However, the women did not keep quiet as they continuously recorded their voice to resist against the set norms of the society. This voice had to be the one that should be accepted by the society and therefore; the women started creating Tappa which the Pashtuns, irrespective of their gender, love and sing. Therefore, they recorded their protest in a text that has been preserved historically and in modern world of today, suggests that the resistance against patriarchy has been continuing for centuries.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Pashto Tappa, a unique genre in Pashto language and literature, unavailable in other literature and societies, is a fluid tool of poetic-expression of Pashtuns. Origin of Tappa is unknown but it exists since ages, the Pashtuns take much rejoice in expressing their feelings and emotions in Tappa. The history of Pashtuns is full of love, battles, wars, rivalry etc. These feelings of war, hatred, enmity and love have been artistically expressed by Pashtun writers in Tappa. Besides, the features of Pashtunwali, such as revenge, asylum, honour, respect of woman, etc. are also expressed. Furthermore, the patriotic sentiments, which are dearer to a Pashtun, are articulated. Tappa, in other words, is the true reflection of situational realities forming in Pashtun society. It runs with Pashtun with the passage of time, creating and expressing contemporary feeling and aspirations of people.

Tappa is the oldest and most popular genre of Pashto folk poetry. It may be termed as Misra or Landai as well in some areas but the form of verse, the expression and the feelings are always the same. Tappa touches upon almost every aspect of human life such as social, cultural, political, marital relations etc. Most researchers agree that verse in Pashto literature originated from Tappa. A two-lined verse, the first line of Tappa, is half and the second is full, comprising 22(9+13) syllables. According to Yar Muhammad Maghmoom, Tappa or Misra or Landai is perhaps the oldest form of Pashto poetry, representing the culture, and civilization of Pashtoon, and describing their virtues of an ideal manhood, honor, bravery and justice.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Khattak, Yar Muhammad Maghmoom, *The Roshananites and Pashto Literature*, Pashto Academy University of Peshawar, 2005, p15.



The Pashto Folk Lore poetry, contributed greatly to the cultural traditions of honor and valor, has reached to the contemporary period by either written script or verbal dictations. Orally, it spreads through generation after generation while, in written form, literature recorded it. This folk genre not only adds to our literary contributions, but also to keeps alive the features of bravery and honour. The poetic contributions, have safeguarded the notable deeds of Pashtun fighters who sacrificed for their land, honor and religion. Muhammad Zawak has expressed his views about folk poetry such as he says, “In Pashto language, the folklore embodies all the aims and targets of common thoughts in themselves such as religious and love stories and wars and political events, Pashto Landai, lyrics, ballads etc, and other Pashto lyrics are considered as a part of the Pashto folk literature, which are unwritten to this day, and transformed orally from one generation to another.”<sup>2</sup>

The researchers’ opinion vary on the issue of the origin of Tappa. A renowned researcher on Pashtun culture and history, Salma Shaheen in her book *Roohi Sandary* states that; “The historians have held different opinions about the oldness of Landai or Misra. Some call it the genre of Century. While some are of the view that it originated in the 1st Century Hijra. Whatever is the disagreement of historians and researchers may be, I myself think that no one can say with authority about the origin, nomenclature, poet or poetry of Tappa or Landai. Similarly its era time can also not be determined.”<sup>3</sup>

The historical evidence suggests that Pashto Tappa had always been a very deep rooted form of the desire of rebellion against a male dominant society which refers that since ages, the Pashto society has always been a patriarchal society. Patriarchy is a system in which all the power rests

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<sup>2</sup> Zawak, Muhammad Din, *Pukhtanay Sandaray*, Pakhto Tolana Kabul, 1916, p2-3.

<sup>3</sup> Shaheen, Salma, *Rohi Sandaray*, Pashto Academy, University of Peshawar, 1984. P.33.

in men's hands like political and moral authority, control over property and all social privileges. Pashtun society is a form of patriarchal society in which men dominate in all aspects and women are submissive and dependent on them. Even the property is inherited by the male lineage. The same situation is also portrayed in the folk literature (stories and poetry). Majority of Pashtun's population residing in rural areas and are not exposed to the modern means of communication. This folk literature serves as an instrument of socialization.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, because of male dominance, the written scripts of Tappa have always been hard to find.

Society provides us lane that what kind of behaviour is expected from us. Socialization process starts from the very first day. In learning the gender map both significant and generalized other effects our socialization. All of us then act according to that gender map and our culture's guidelines to what is appropriate for our sex. The interesting thing which makes Pashto Tappa unique in literary context is its meaning which concludes that it has always been a voice of the oppressed against the dominant class and because of its poetic connotation, it was acceptable to the majority of the Pashtoon Society.

### **Origin and Nature of Tappa**

Pashto Tappa is, according to the researchers, associated with the Pashtoon Women who have been oppressed since ages and it is so because the narration is, according to the researches (Like Professor Dawar Khan Dawood, Salma Shaheen etc.), mostly done by the women who have this poetic way to express their desires and feelings. The nature of Pashto Tappa, according to Professor Dawar Khan Dawood, is feminine which suggests that it has always been a feminine voice.<sup>5</sup> A number of Tappas had been composed and sung by men too. Actually Tappa is the genre of Pashto

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 47

<sup>5</sup> Dawood, Professor Dawar Khan, *The Pakhto Tappa*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, July, 1984.

folk poetry which every Pashtoon can not only compose but also sing. Very often in his own personal tune adjusted to circumstances, without fear of ridicule but the greater part of thousands of Tappas in current use are made by the women. Being essentially emotional expressions the dealing with most common and the most celebrated of human relationships, that between lover and beloved. A related favorite theme of Tappa is that of separation not only the lover from the beloved but of a friend from his friends, of a man from his country and his family. <sup>6</sup>

## **Problem Statement**

Ideally when we talk about gender as a socially constructed phenomenon, both masculine and feminine gender have equal right of self-worth, right to control their own lives and right of decision making. But in patriarchal societies in general and Pashtun patriarchal societies specifically women are submissive and remain supportive. They don't have say in decision making even for her.

## **Research Question**

The research question, therefore, is

- *How do women express their thoughts feelings and do resistance against patriarchal norms and values in a patriarchal society through Tappa?*

Supporting questions are to be:

1. How do women succeed in expressing their repressive thoughts through Tappa and how did it become acceptable to the male dominated society?

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<sup>6</sup> Pashto Tappa, worldpress.com

2. What were those patriarchal Norms which were addressed in the Pashto Tappa?

## Literature Review

Pashto folk poetry truly represents Pashtu culture. Among all the folk genres Tappa is the most effective in reflecting the norms and traditions of the Pashtun society. Pashtu language is proud of Tappa because it is rare to be found in any other world literature. Many books have been written with different themes on the Pashto Tappa, majority of books are in poetry some books are available in descriptive form. These books cover different aspects of the Pashtun culture and society, some books related to the said topic have been reviewed for the purpose of the background study and clarity.

Dr. Hanif Khalil's book *Pakhtun Culture in Pashtu Tappa* is a remarkable contribution in the Pashtu literature. He gave an overview of the folk literature and its history, and also shed light on the Importance of Tappa in preservation of the cultural values and traditions.<sup>7</sup> He discussed all the aspect society in the analytical study of the Tappa. He discussed the social, economic, religious and tribal life, wars and resistance against the internal as well as external threats.

Professor Dawar Khan Dawood, in his book *The Pakhto Tappa*, discusses about the origin of the Pashto Tappa which, according to him, has always been a feminine voice.<sup>8</sup> According to him, the feminine connotation attached to the Pashto Tappa and the meaning of the word indicate its feminine roots. He discusses about the folk literature; however, the book is does not cover the aspect of resistance against patriarchy which women depict through Tappas. This research is aimed at explaining it.

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<sup>7</sup> Khalil, Hafif, *Pakhtun Culture in Pahsto Tappa*, NIHCR: Islamabad, 2017. P. 04.

<sup>8</sup> Dawood, Professor Dawar Khan. *Pashto Tappa*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: July 1984. P. 04.

James C. Scott in his book *Domination and the Art of resistance* says that in a huge dominant social structure every subordinate group creates its hidden transcript that represent the critique of power behind back of the dominant.<sup>9</sup> Further he used the term Hidden transcript for off the stage voices of the subordinate and powerless people while Public Transcript for dominated ones who has power and say on the stage and dominate the other group. Sometimes public and hidden transcripts switches for the privilege of both groups.

For the study of culture and society Dr. Salma Shaheen's book *Da Pakhto Tappa: Muasharati Aau Saqqafati Asar* is considered. As far as Tappa is concerned the book "Pashtu Tappa Its Societal and Cultural Impact" is a remarkable contribution in the Pashto literature.<sup>10</sup> It has discussed the history of Tappa and its impact on the Pashtun society. In this book the author traced the history and development of the Pashtun Tappa time to time. Further author discussed different aspects of the Pashtun social life and explored the aspect of love, hate and morality in the light of the Pashtu Tappa.

Similarly, Raza Hamdani's book *Razmia Dastanay* is also worth mentioning. In this book the author discussed the bravery and courage of the Pashtun and their resistance to the external and internal influences and the preservation of their culture and traditions. Further he discussed the role of the poets, historians and people related to the field of literature that they had an important role in preserving the different historical events and tales through their poems and narrations. They encourage and appreciate the efforts of the people in preserving their culture and traditions.

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<sup>9</sup> Scott, James C. *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcript*, Yale University Press: London, 1990. P. 59-60

<sup>10</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. *Da Pakhto Tappa: Muasharati Aau Saqqafati Asar*, Pashto Academy; Peshawar. 1989. P. 06.

Muhammad Nawaz Tair and Thomas C. Edwards, book *Rohi Adab* is a selection of Pashtu proverbs. In the second edition of the book includes notes on the Pashtun culture, social usage of proverbs, Islam and the code of honor, stories and the form and structure of Pashtu proverbs.<sup>11</sup> The book is the English translation of the mountainous Pashto proverbs which contains about 1350 proverbs.

Another book of Muhammad Nawaz Tair “*Tappay au Jawand*” is a good work contributed in the Pashtu literature. The author provides detail history of the Tappa and also discussed the different aspects of the Pashtun society and daily life in the light of Tappa. It is an analysis of the Tappa and society. Further he also shed light on the appreciation of love and beauty with special emphasis on the Pashtun society and its reflection in Tappa.

Asad et al. in his article *Role of Patriarchal Norms in Deprivation of Women from their Political Rights in Pukhtoon Society* claims that Pashtun society is patriarchal and women are in the subordinate position. Men dominate in every aspect of life and deprive women from their basic rights. Women have no say in the decisions even made for them. Further he says that women have no participation in political activities. They have been restricted to the household activities only.

Qaiser Khan in his article *understanding gender in Pak.Afghan society: A sociolinguistic analysis of folk stories* says that in Pashtun society women are depicted as a subordinate and suppressed group. Further he discussed that how gender is portrayed in Pashto folk stories. A man as a stakeholder has all powers of decision making and is responsible for earning and taking care of his family. Women are bound to obey him and take permission about doing anything. Power structure gave a very limited space to the women. In Pashtun society the division of labour is gender bias,

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<sup>11</sup> Tahir, Professor Muhammad Nawaz, *Rohi Adab*, Pahsto Academy; Peshawar, 2005. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, translated by Syed Safdar Ali Shah), p. 09.

women is bound to work in the boundary of home. She has to wash and cook for her family and the pride of the family is associated with the women.

Noor Muhammad Danish Bettani in his article *Epical elements in Pashto Tappa* discussed the epic elements in Pashto Tappa. Pashto Tappa explains social, cultural and political aspects of pattans pashto Tappa articulate the impact of wars, love, bravery respect of women, honour and asylum etc. In short Pashto Tappa is a total reflection of the pashtun realities, pashtun society and pakhtunwali.

Asante Lucy Mtenje in her article *Patriarchy and Socialization in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus and Jamaica Kincaid's Lucy* explained how the socialization processes in patriarchal strict society affect the mother and their daughters. As we know that power system is unstable and changing thus patriarchy privileges male rather than female. The female is only a child bearer for their husbands. Female children are subordinate to male because they do not continue their family line. In some cases the worth of the female is her ability to produce a male child for her husband as they immortalize the family name. Women as a mother socialize their daughters in patriarchal system the same subordinate position because they are female. Patriarchy is unfavorable to the development of the female and the mothers also unconsciously socialize their daughters into same inferior position. According to the Novels as she analyzed the daughters resist against the patriarchal power and work towards their empowerment and are struggling against repression.

Isabella Crespi in explained in her article *Gender socialization within the family: a study on adolescents and their parents in Great Britain* that how the socialization build our behavior and thinking. Socialization is the main factor on which our actions- a male or female- are judged as appropriate and proper or inappropriate and improper. She focuses on how families mediate gender



roles and the effects on the young generation towards the gender. Certain actions are being associated with both gender and internalized through socialization, on the basis of these actions specific genders are valued. Like a woman is valued because of being sensitive, weak and delicate, caring, submissive and maintaining good relationships while men as strong, warrior, tough and rough and confident. As gender stereotypes of society use unfeminine and unmanly and sissy for those who negate these values and not obey the societal rule attached with their gender.

Further she tries to conceptualize the gender socialization and suggested that family life and relationships are more important, secondly the relational factors are of greater explanatory power. While the cross-gender relationships like between father and daughter and mother and son could be a strong factor in reducing stereotyped thinking.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The dominance of one group over other creates isolation among the different strata (men and women) of the society. It creates distance between the powerful and powerless, dominant and subordinate. It creates social disturbance and people feel divided in the society. Ultimately when the distance increases people resist against the dominant system through different means. James C. Scott in his book *Domination and the art of resistance* describe that resistance against the powerful and dominant group.

The subordinate group shows resistance off the stage through different means like novel, drama, poetry etc. which James C. Scott called Hidden Transcript.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand the dominant group has power and has say in the matters related to the subordinates. Their voice goes on the stage and sometimes publically they express their thoughts. The term used for that voice by Scott is public

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p-61-62

transcript. A comparison of the hidden transcript of the weak with that of the powerful, and of both hidden transcripts to the public transcript of power relations offers a substantially new way of understanding resistance to domination.

## **Aims and Objectives**

This research is threefold. It contains the discussion regarding patriarchy, women oppression and rebellion all compiled in a form of 2 lines of poetry which makes it an interesting study. Therefore, the primary objective is to find out these concepts in the Tappas and how they are interlinked. It is also an objective to find out the societal behaviour towards the acceptance of these rebellious poetic thoughts.

## **Limitation**

This is a descriptive study of Pashtu Tappa and it includes the content analysis of the available secondary data. Therefore it does not include any primary source because, as it has already being mentioned, that Pashtu Tappas do not have the factual origin of the poets. Therefore conducting interviews would become meaningless.

Pashtu Tappa varies from place to place in terms of its geographical connotation. Therefore all the geographical differences are hereby excluded. The Tappas which include social problems like presence of patriarchy and submissiveness of women will only be analyzed.

Physical access to the rural areas of KPK would be difficult in terms of finance. Therefore the available literature among the libraries of the urban centers of KPK like Peshawar, Mardan etc. will be consulted in search of data.

Due to lack of financial resources most the data will be collected from digital libraries and internet search engines. The economic conditions of the Pashtun society are not the concern and therefore, they are excluded. Similarly, the political aspects are not taken into consideration because the women in Pashtun society have never had any recognized political standing; excluding the strata of few successful women who, given their urban upbringing, have made it to the political houses of representation in KPK. Urban vs rural debate is also not considered for this topic because Pashto tappa has no boundaries.

### **Organization of the Study**

The organization of this research study will be as follows. Chapter 1 will be the proposal which consists of several topics. In this chapter the topic will be introduced thoroughly which highlights meaning, evolution and nature of the Pashto Tappa. This chapter will also explain the historical background of the Pashto Tappa, how did it become a cultural roots of Pashtun society and how it has created impact over the period of time. After introduction, the main questions statement of the problem will be included after all these. Furthermore, literature review shows how this research work is distinguished from other works. It will also explain the organization of the study. Furthermore, objective of the study, importance of the study and conceptual framework will describe respectively. Chapter 2 will highlight in detail the methodology of the research. Further it also deals with research design like the collection of data and methods of data analysis and the selection of Tappa. Chapter 3 will further explain the “the patriarchy Pashtun’s society” and how the routine life of a Pashtoon revolves around the patriarchal norms and traditions. The women will be specified and to be focused upon as the evidence suggests that they are affected more. Chapter 4 will explain “the art of resistance in the literature especially in Pashto folk literature” and how Pashto Tappa is a symbol of resistance against the patriarchal norms and traditions.

Various Tappas including their translations and explanation will be stated in the chapter and in the same chapter, the already stated conceptual framework will be applied. At the end of this research work, the findings and the conclusion will be stated and the research will be summed up while giving a few hints to further carry this research work on while remaining in the boundaries of Pashto folk literature and especially, the Tappas.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

The purpose of the chapter is to define the theoretical framework for the research on the Pashto Tappa and resistance against the patriarchy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Many research papers and books have been concerned. The study of the folk literature not only provide an account of the past periods and their society but also reveals that how the women especially deficit their personal social and cultural identities. The findings of the research shows that there are many different ideas with the passage of time and the behavior of the male and female towards the society and in the relation between men and women. Patriarchy is the ideology which provides the basic for the reproduction of the unequal gender relation. As Eagleton and Barrett explain how (sexist) ideology work by delineating the strategies and mechanisms which provide help to the dominant ideologies in sustaining power over the subjected ones. According to some researchers the research the language and gender sometimes focus on identifying the role of language in creating and maintaining social inequality between men and women. They also state that the language reflects the society and also shape the society in which it is spoken. Different social groups use different varieties of language and same people use different language in different situations. The first two points are critical and controversial while the other two are descriptive. These points are not limited to gender only but include all the social groups.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework:**

This study has two different dimension that are being attempted to put together: One is Patriarchy and the other one is resistance that has been shown through the Tappa as per the hypothetical notion of this study. The aim is to explain patriarchy by theorizing its existence in Pashtun Society

and then find traces of resistance in that patriarchy by exploring the Pashto Tappas. The explored content would then be conceptualized by putting it to a test against the theory which explains the resistance. Therefore, at first, the theory of Sylvia Walby is being consulted in this research to explain patriarchy.

### **2.1.1 Theoretical Framework; Patriarchy**

Sylvia Theresa Walby is a British academic and professor who has her major interests in explaining and theorizing gender relations. In her book 'Theorizing Patriarchy', she gives a detailed account of patriarchy and how it is treated in the world by various existing social structures like Marxism, capitalism etc. and also how it is perceived by the feminists themselves. Her theory consists of the view that patriarchy needs to be understood at various levels of abstraction.<sup>13</sup> She explain that at the highest level of abstraction, a system of social relations exists which, according to her, can be seen in the capitalist society of her country Great Britain and the way racism operates there. At the lesser level of abstraction, according to her, six structures of patriarchy exists: i) The patriarchal mode of production, ii) Patriarchal relations in paid work, iii) Patriarchal relations in the state, iv) male violence, v) Patriarchal relations in sexuality, vi) Patriarchal relations in cultural institutions.<sup>14</sup> Further she explains that in each of the given structures, a set of patriarchal practices exists as structures are the emergent properties of the practices. Therefore, she further elaborates these six structures and following assumptions can be drawn from them:<sup>15</sup>

1. Patriarchal mode of production is related to the house hold affairs between the Husband and the wife.

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<sup>13</sup> Webly, Sylvia. Theorizing Patriarchy, T.J. Press, Cornwall, UK: 1991. Pp. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. pp. 20-21.

2. Patriarchal relations in paid work means that the women have been deliberately excluded from the skilled jobs.
3. Patriarchal relations in the state implies that the state has bias towards patriarchal structures.
4. Male violence is systematic and state refrains from interfering in it.
5. Compulsory heterosexuality is demanded from the women.
6. A structural representation of women through various institutions.

(The explanation of these assumptions are written in the next chapter which discusses patriarchy in detail.)

With these assumptions, the women of KPK as per described in the collected empirical data will be put to test and it will be extracted that how patriarchy can be measured and up to what extent in Pashtoon culture and society.

Sylvia Walby also argues that there have been various degrees and forms of patriarchy and presents a model. She argues that there have been Private form of Patriarchy and Public Form of Patriarchy. She states that in her Country Britain, the society has transformed towards Public form of Patriarchy in 20<sup>th</sup> century from Private form of Patriarchy which was present in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Walby maintains that both patriarchy and the status of women changes in the response to each other over time. In Europe, for example, Walby maintains that changes in the status of women over time with women's increased access to the public sphere have resulted in a shift from "private patriarchy" to "public patriarchy". Public patriarchy is a form in which women have access to both public and private arenas. They are not barred from the public arenas, but are nevertheless subordinate within

them. “Women are no longer restricted to the domestic hearth, but have the whole society in which to roam and be exploited.”<sup>16</sup> (See the table below)

Form of Patriarchy	Private	Public
Dominant Structure	Household Production	Employment/State
Wider Patriarchal Structures	Employment/State	Household Production
	Sexuality	Sexuality
	Violence	Violence
	Culture	Culture
Period	19 <sup>th</sup> Century	20 <sup>th</sup> Century
Mode of expropriation	Individual	Collective
Patriarchal Strategy	Exclusionary	Segregation

**a) Private form of Patriarchy:**

Sylvia Walby explain private form of Patriarchy as the structure that had existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain and now it has been transformed into Public Patriarchy. While explaining Private patriarchy, Walby adheres to her idea that it had existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and it had households

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 43



as dominant structures where the women had to live as subordinate to the men. With this dominant structure, the wider structure also existed in which the women were expropriated individually by men and the employment opportunity to them was primarily the household works. They were forced to remain inside in the name of the culture and the women were not allowed to take up a job. The mechanism of forcing was violence which the men used to commit against the women in their individual capacity. It was unthinkable of women that they have other sexual tendencies than heterosexuality. The patriarchal strategy was that if a woman refuses to obey and comply with the existed norms, she would be excluded from the family as well as from the society. Therefore, the women accepted to remain in shackles of patriarchy rather than resisting against it because of the fear of being declared an outlaw of the society.

#### **b) Public form of Patriarchy:**

The transformation from Private form of patriarchy to public form of patriarchy happened in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the world shifted towards modernization. The modern equipment brought war due to which, the women played their ancient role of assisting men in war by accepting low wages jobs like nursing etc. With the continuous and rapid changing in the societies around the world, the women became more active and started locating jobs but they were included on a very small scale and that too on very low wages. According to Walby, the form of patriarchy changed from private to public where the dominant structure became employment/state rather than the household. However, the remaining wider structures including violence, sexuality and culture not only remained intact but further intensified. For instance, the violence against women started to incorporate a new dimension which was harassment at work place by the male colleagues. Instead of physical violence, the verbal violence became prominent and it still exists in most of the cultures of the world. The women who started to show their sexuality openly, were segregated from the

society collectively. Furthermore, Walby has been successful in avoiding the rigid and solid ways of thinking about the patriarchal structures by recognizing the change in the form of patriarchy over time from private to public patriarchy.

This research is aimed at finding out the transformation of Pashtun society with respect to the presented model of transformation from private to public form of patriarchy. It is also aimed finding out that up to what extent, this theory could be applied to Pashtun women and Pashtun society and later, it would help in finding the presence of resistance once the patriarchy is proven to be existed in Pashtun society.

### **2.1.2 Theoretical Framework; Resistance**

The main purpose of this research is to find out resistance that is present in Pushto Tappa, a very ancient and respected category of Pushto literature. For this matter, James C. Scott's book 'Domination and Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcript' is being consulted.

James C. Scott is an American political scientist who has worked all his life on the subaltern classes and how these classes challenge and resist against the domination being imposed at them. James C. Scott, in this book, declares at the beginning that the subordinate groups, in order for their survival, have adopted a key strategy which was to mould their desires, feelings, fears and happiness in accordance with the dominant class. He describes this kind of interaction between the subordinates and the dominants as 'The Public Transcript'. In explaining the Public Transcript, he says:

“The public transcript, where it is not positively misleading, is unlikely to tell the whole story about power relations. It is frequently in the interest of both parties to tacitly conspire in misrepresentation.”<sup>17</sup>

James C. Scott argues that the subaltern classes tend to hide their true emotions behind their blank faces as a survival instinct and here he addresses the slavery of black people in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. To strengthen his argument that there is more to tell about power relations, he extracts that when more and more power is exercised by the dominant class against the subaltern class, the public transcript becomes more and more stereotyped which in turn does not represent the whole truth.<sup>18</sup> He further evaluates the presence of Public Transcript. At first, he describes that Public transcript doesn't have the opinion and notions of the subaltern class(es). He extends his argument by declaring that the subaltern, in order to protect himself from the violence of the dominant, obeys and fulfills the wishes of the dominant because it is expected of him. However, his obedience is misinterpreted into his will by the dominant and that is how the dominant presents his Public Transcript which contains merely a unidirectional document. Therefore, in order to present the other side of the story or what he calls “off stage” story, he presents his idea of ‘Hidden Transcripts’.<sup>19</sup> He explains it as:

“The hidden transcript is thus derivative in the sense that it consists of those offstage speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript. We do not wish to prejudge, by definition, the relation between what is said in the face of power and what is said behind its back. Power relations are not, alas, so straightforward that we can call what is said in power-laden contexts false and what is said

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<sup>17</sup> Scott, James. C. *Domination and Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcript*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press: 1990. Pp. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. pp. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. pp. 4.

offstage true. Nor can we simplistically describe the former as a realm of necessity and the latter as a realm of freedom. What is certainly the case, however, is that the hidden transcript is produced for a different audience and under different constraints of power than the public transcript. By assessing the discrepancy between the hidden transcript and the public transcript we may begin to judge the impact of domination on public discourse.”<sup>20</sup>

The basic notion of the hidden transcripts is that, as James C. Scott states, it is presented and created for a totally different audience by any acceptable mean. This different audience might be the subaltern class itself which was addressed in the hidden transcript. Hidden transcripts are all those activities that the subaltern refuse or are being refrained by the dominant class to perform in the public sphere. However, it doesn't mean that the public sphere is all body of lies and private sphere is the only truth. Public sphere does contain evidence and hence the private sphere is the one that further adds in its authenticity. That is why the power relations between the subordinate and dominant group can be understood better with the help of these hidden transcripts.

Later in his book, he describes that hidden transcript is like a treasure that is hidden with the traces. He calls it ‘disguises’ that are used by the subaltern classes to disguise their transcript. He says that when it comes to folklore, ideological insubordination of subordinate groups also takes a quite public form in elements of folk or popular culture. They are often ambiguous and they are presented through public transcripts because they do not pose any threat to the dominant class.<sup>21</sup>

He states:

“...subordinate groups might wish to find ways of expressing dissonant views through their cultural life is simply as a riposte to an official culture that is almost invariably demeaning.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pp. 157.

The culture of the aristocrat, lord, slave masters, and higher castes is, after all, largely designed to distinguish these ruling groups from the mass of peasants, serfs, slaves, and untouchables beneath them.”<sup>22</sup>

He adds dance, music, poetry and other forms of art as the main representatives of the folklore as well as the hidden transcript. In his theory, he describes the presence of Oral traditions that have been continuing throughout the centuries and instead of the dominant class which is often educated, the oral traditions are the ones that linger on for generations after generations in the subaltern classes. He says:

“The great bulk of lower-class cultural expression has typically taken an oral rather than a written form. Oral traditions, due simply to their means of transmission, offer a kind of seclusion, control, and even anonymity that make them ideal vehicles for cultural resistance. To appreciate how the folk song, the folktale, the joke, and of course, Mother Goose rhymes have borne a heavy weight of seditious meanings, the structure of oral traditions merits brief elaboration.”<sup>23</sup>

While considering the subaltern classes' condition, he argues that the oral communication has always been the primary method of expression of their feelings to the other individual as it has been more effective than the written communication because in written communication, the script is the proof of the feelings of the author whereas the oral communications can be interpreted differently with reference to the context. Therefore, the subaltern classes opt to express their feelings to the more accepted and wide range mediums of oral communications (including gestures, clothes, dance, and so on) if they have to address the bigger audience. In this case, the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. pp. 157-158

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. pp.160

oral traditions can be changed or moulded in accordance to the circumstances. However, the communication between two people is the most authentic and preserved form of communication. The hidden meaning could be found in this communication. Despite having its disadvantages, its primary advantage is that a folk song can be performed in hundreds of ways; from the apparently inoffensive before hostile audiences to the openly seditious before a friendly and secure audience.<sup>24</sup> This is how the oral traditions are preserved by the subaltern groups by turning them make them artistic. This artistic pieces, whatever their form or shape is, are being enjoyed by the dominant audience and have become the part of the culture which describes the truth about it. Therefore, this research is being conducted to find out these hidden transcripts in ancient oral folklore of Pashtun society in order to find the truth as well as the resistance against the dominant group that was male after establishing the level of patriarchy with the help of Sylvia Walby's theory.

## **2.2 Deniz Kandiyoti: The Patriarchal Bargain**

For further clarification of the concepts, some other theoretical works are being consulted. In 1988 Kandiyoti Deniz introduced a term “the patriarchal bargain” to explain how women loving under patriarchal strategies to security and optimize their life options. According to her theory women responses vary extensively according to the objectives and opportunities available under patriarchy. Such responses range from eager collaboration where women act as a guardian of patriarchal customs and values to different levels of the passive and active resistance. He uses the term “classic patriarchy” which is a feature of societies in the South and East Asia as well as in the Muslim Middle East. The foundation of Classic patriarchy is on the household in which senior

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid. pp. 162.

man has the authority over all other members. This is the key source to ensure their subordination and dependence and to control women's social, economic and political participation. She identified another form of patriarchy which is the inheriting of senior women authority in the household works through a cycle of women's power and interestingly, the women internalized it by themselves from senior women. That's why, she believes that such women are also the contributing factor in patriarchy as they get benefits from the unequal patriarchal structure that depends on their role and position in the life cycle. This arrangement identifies the reconciliation of women to the prevailing gender orders and get involve in striking a bargain with patriarchal structure.

### **2.3 Valentine Moghadam: The Patriarchal Gender Contract**

Moghadam also focuses on the belt of the classic Pakistan which includes Pakistan, Afghanistan and some parts of India. She discusses the transformation of the patriarchy and the family due to social structure, female education, economic and demographic developments. In most of the families the wife's role is to take care of the children's and home maintenance and obey her husband, while husband men has the authority to control her appearance in the public sphere. She called this arrangement the patriarchal "gender contract" and is internalized by the state/ society by means of law or personal status code. Further she argues that from the last few decades we have witnessed changes due to the modernization and industrialization in the region, despite all these changes and state reforms that gender contract is continued while its shift is changed from classic to neo-patriarchy.

Kandiyoti and Moghadam's conceptualization supplement Walby's theory. Both Moghadam and Walby argued that its forms are changed from private to the public patriarchy and from classic to neo-patriarchy but still male domination retained which means the control is shifted from husband

or father in private sphere to the collective appropriation in public sphere. Gender contract is retained despite the social transformations.



## Chapter Three

# Patriarchy and Pashtoon Livelihood

### 3.1 Definition of Patriarchy

Patriarchy has a variety of definitions. Max Weber defines it as “*a system of government in which male dominate societies by their position in the households.*”

The term patriarchy is evolved since Weber and especially in the writings of the radical feminists, who are of the view that women is dominated by men and other theories like dual-system theory which state that the patriarchy is developed and exist alongside Capitalism and racism.

According to the Sylvie Walby, *Patriarchy is a system of social practice and structure in which men dominate, exploit and oppress women.*” (Walby1991, p.20). Social structure and practice is used in the above definition which implies that each and every man is dominating and women are subordinate.

### 3.2 Patriarchy: A Historical Perspective

Like men, women are and always have been actors and agents in history. Since women are half and sometimes more than half of humankind, they always have shared the world and its work equally with men. Women are and have been central, not marginal, to the making of society and to the building of civilization.<sup>25</sup> Women have also co-shared with men in collective memory, which turns the past into cultural traditions, provides the link between generations, and connects past and future. This oral tradition was kept alive in poem and myth, which both men and women created

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<sup>25</sup> Lerner, Gerda, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, Volume 1, Oxford University Press, New York Oxford: 1987. Pp. 4.

and preserved in folklore, art, and ritual and the explanation of this phenomenon is the basic purpose of this research. However, before moving towards explaining this phenomenon, a comprehensive understanding of patriarchy is necessary.

The word ‘history’ itself is questionable because the system of this world since the beginning of mankind, has always remained in the hands of male who have an obvious physical advantage over females. The men who, in order to populate the Earth, depended on the other gender had omitted it from the pages of history. Since the invention of writing in ancient Mesopotamia, the history writers included the priests, the clerics, royal servants appointed by the Monarchs of different eras or the professionals who were trained under specialized trainers to learn the art of writing. All these were men and what they found significant or what they were told to write by the other men was written and hence recorded in the history. Women were completely sidelined in this because they were not thought to be significant enough to make any sort of changes to the path of history. A counter argument has always given in this regard that most men who were peasants, soldiers or other common professionals, they all were also kept away from contributing in the history. However, the counter argument is that some men might have been kept away from history making but it was because of their class, not because of their sex.<sup>26</sup> The subordination of women by men is historical but it is not a natural process. It was, like gender, created with the passage of time and it was nurtured and now it was structured in every society of humankind and now we know this system as ‘Patriarchy’. Therefore, to understand patriarchy in Pashtoon society, it is essential to understand how patriarchy works and up to which extent this concept can be applied on Pashtun Society.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. pp. 7

### 3.3 Theoretical Explanation of Patriarchy

Sylvia Welby has theorized patriarchy in to different levels of abstraction. At a low level of abstraction, according to her, patriarchy comprises of six fundamental structures: the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male relations, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions.<sup>27</sup> These structures define the properties that are in development phase. The definitions of these structures are as follow:

- i. Patriarchal mode of production means the relations that are at the household level. At this level, the labour of women is stolen or exchanged for receiving a mere amount necessary for life maintenance. The house wives, under this structure, are the producing class whereas the husbands are the expropriating class.<sup>28</sup>
- ii. Patriarchal relations in paid work explain the exclusion of women from more skilled and well paid jobs which forces them to opt for less skilled and less paid jobs.
- iii. The state, because of its capitalist organization, is patriarchal in nature and it tends to keep the status-quo.
- iv. Male violence is the most diverse from of patriarchy because it includes various aspects. In some aspects of male violence or domestic violence, the state does not become a party (Like in many third world countries, the state does not interfere, in majority cases, in the marriages of women against their will, Choice of child birth and child abortion etc.). However, in some cases like rape, killing, harassment etc. the state interferes.

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<sup>27</sup> Welby, Sylvia. *Theorizing Patriarchy*, T.J. Press, Cornwall, UK: 1991. Pp. 20.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pp. 21

- v. Patriarchal relations in sexuality consist of compulsory heterosexuality for women and the sexual double standard.<sup>29</sup>
- vi. The cultural institutions create and are responsible to create the representation of women in a given society according to that society's culture, religion and traditions which, in fact, are already patriarchal.

Welby also describes two degrees of patriarchy: Private and Public.<sup>30</sup> Private patriarchy deals with the house hold structure as the top tier of patriarchy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century whereas the public patriarchy deals with patriarchy at employment places and at the level of state as the top tier of patriarchy. Private patriarchy is more individualist in nature whereas public patriarchy is more collective in nature. The World has shifted from Private to public patriarchy between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the main purpose of segregation and exclusion of women has been served at both degrees.

The observation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's rural lifestyle and settings tell us that the Household or the Private form of patriarchy is still dominant as majority of the women are not allowed to work with men because of the dominant religious and cultural restrictions. The women, in order to survive and live, have to listen and agree with the male dominancy in these parts. When there is lesser higher education facilities for women that lead to the fewer places for women in the job market, the marriage remains the only viable option left for the women and they opt it and become the producing class in the patriarchal mode of production whereas the men remain at the top tier of patriarchy by maintaining their status as the expropriating class.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. pp. 22

Culture, as per the modern feminist literature, is gendered and though being gendered, it is an important thing which contributes in the maintenance of patriarchy. Culture is a process of socialization and socialization has always been different for the women as it has been for the men. For instance, in most processes of socialization, the little girls are always told to remain quiet and keep their voice down whether they laugh or cry. Contrary to that the boy child enjoys the privilege to laugh or cry in whichever way he likes.

Considering private form of patriarchy, in most of the cultures, the gendered norms are rooted deeply and it all contributes in the submissiveness of the women. The dress code, the dress colour, the celebrations during a festive, the moral code, the work and even games, all are different for both men and women and these differences are structured in the minds of both the boys and the girls from the very early age. With the passage of their growth, the boys opt more active role in a society whereas the girls tend to opt for a more passive role which indicates her submission. In terms of education, most cultures prioritize boys over girls as of the gendered role associated with the man that he would bring food and provide for his family.

In Public form of patriarchy, the most cultures around the world have associated various public roles for the women as well. For instance, the hardcore works like logging and chopping trees, work of masons, electricians, mechanics etc. are associated with men and these profession have rarely any woman interested in them. Contrary to that, the roles of that of teacher, doctors, nurses and other medical professionals etc. are the roles which women tend to opt more. This actually is the influence of culture which has nourished the child in the beginning that the women are made for more delicate roles and that she is a weak being.

Culture is interesting in a sense that it has always two ways influence. The culture shapes the individual upon which the individual plays its part to shape the culture. Therefore, both in Private

as well as Public form, when the culture succeeds in shaping the individual, particularly a woman, she then contributes and plays its part by providing the same environment to his or her child and through this continuous process, the patriarchy regenerates and continues. Patriarchal society features patrilineal descent, property laws guaranteeing the inheritance rights of sons, male dominance in property and sexual relations, military, political, and religious bureaucracies. These institutions are supported by the patriarchal family and in turn constantly recreate it.

In most of the cultures throughout the history, the men have always given preference over the women in every aspect of life. The birth of male child is celebrated more often. The male child is given more preference as he is considered to be the bearer of family name. He is associated with the roles of enhancement of family property, prestige and honour. Contrary to that, the female child is worth only to receive the bride price by her father at the time of her wedding. She has been trained her whole life in her own father's house about how to behave with the in-laws and how to live her life there. After marriage, she becomes a household worker (or in very strict words a servant) and serves her husband as well as her in laws to their pleasure. She was expected to give birth to the children for her husband and the children are always associated with the name of their father. In case she doesn't give birth to children, the husband is allowed to re-marry whereas most cultures don't allow the same privilege to women. In case of some medical issue with the man, the societal norms put its blame on woman by name calling her. In case the husband dies, the widow woman rarely marries again whereas the man has the authority to marry again and again whether or not his wife is alive.

Like Culture, the religion has always been another tool and instrument to impose patriarchy historically. Private as well as public forms of patriarchy both include religion as a patriarchal safeguard. The culture changes with the change in environment but in order to keep its norms

intact, the culture needed legitimacy. This legitimacy was provided by the religion and it has been used by the religious clerics to maintain the patriarchal status quo ever since.

Culture changes because of change in environment. It means that culture, itself, is a comprehensive set of practices that have been going on historically. These practices are transferred through both oral and written traditions of a human society. When the change in environment of a society occurs, it impacts the culture. Change in environment, historically, happens due to various reasons like natural calamity, invasion by an enemy, famine, disease etc. With this change, the practices of a society are impacted. Therefore, in order to keep those practices intact, the religion is used as a tool to provide those practices the required legitimacy. The male dominated societies also developed because the male created not only the practices to subdue women but also legitimized it through religion. In most of the cultures, it became impossible for women to resist against the societal norms as those norms were associated with the 'Will of God'.

These practices continued for centuries and the status-quo remained intact in most of the cultures all around the world. After modernization, the women started to become vibrant and started to demand their own rights which led to the development of women and gender studies. The women realized that they have been deliberately excluded from the history. With modernization, the waves of feminism emerged and the women started creating their own literature and started finding traces of the work of all 'woman-kind' in the existing literature. This search indicated that the women had always resisted verbally against the societal norms and traditions by associating themselves with poetry and fine arts. The main focus of this research is to trace the element of resistance in the existing Pashtoon literature in the form of Tappas which would be a useful contribution to the cause of women.

### 3.4 Patriarchy and Pashtoon Society

In order to find the extent of patriarchy in Pashtoon Society, it is important to understand some facts about it. Pashtoons in Pakistan are the Muslims and most of them belong to a hardcore Deobandi-Sunni sect whereas the rest belong to Shia sect. Their culture has remained intact for hundreds of years; although the modernization has started to change the societal mentality in urbanized areas; mostly elite sectors of urbanized areas of this province. However, the rural culture still depicts the picture of old Pashtoon culture where the male has dominancy over the female. Religion has been an important part of Pashtoon lifestyle for centuries. The religion has provided the cover and legitimacy to Pashtoon culture which is the reason why the women take veil and cover their faces and whole body because of the teachings of the religion. It also provides men to restrict the women within the walls of the house which they accept as the teachings of the religion which, in fact, has less to do with the religion and more to do with the cultural practice.

The cultural practices of Pashtoon society are still heavily influenced by their ancient code of Pashtunwali. The Pathan's life is governed by his Pakhtunwali or Pashtunwali, which is an unwritten code of honour.<sup>31</sup> Pashtunwali is a value orientation code, which emphasizes "male autonomy, self-expression and aggressiveness for honour ("Izzat"). Pashtunwali, or the code of honour, contains values which are dear to Pathan and which regulate all facts of his life.<sup>32</sup> Some cardinal features of the Pashtunwali tradition are: Melmastia (hospitality), Teaga (truce). Badal

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<sup>31</sup> Ahmed, International Journal of Learning & Development ISSN 2164-4063 2012, Vol. 2, No. 3 315  
[www.macrothink.org/ijld](http://www.macrothink.org/ijld) (1976, p.75)

<sup>32</sup> Alam, Dr. Anwar. *Women Role and Status in Pukhtoon Society (A Case Study of Village Sufaid Dheri, Peshawar)*, International Journal of Learning & Development ISSN 2164-4063 2012, Vol. 2, No. 3. Pp. 315. Available at  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.680.535&rep=rep1&type=pdf>



(revenge), Jirga (Deputation) Tarburwali (agnatic rivalry) Nang (honour), and Nanwati (forgiveness).<sup>33</sup>

### **3.4.1 Women in Pashtoon Tribal Setup**

Traditionally, Pashtoon society is a tribal society in which every person is a member of one of the major tribes of Pashtoons. The Pashtoons can be divided into three major groups: the tribe, the lineage and the extended family.<sup>34</sup> Tribal Pashtoon culture, as other tribal cultures, is based on strict hierarchy. On top of the hierarchy, there rests the Malik who is considered as the leader of the Clan. The Malik is generally the wealthiest individual with scores of acres of land to his name. In modern times, the advanced technology and the changing economic environment have affected the wealth of many tribal Maliks and many of the other Pashtoons who are below to them in societal status have become richer than them. However, it still hasn't affected the respect and social status of Maliks. After Maliks, traditionally, Pashtoon respect those who have more land than the others and this is how hierarchy has been continuing for many centuries.

The landless Pashtoons are considered at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They are generally poor but do follow the tribal traditions rigorously. The women of Malik's family are not allowed to show their face to an unknown person and they are forced to sit at home but the women of poor Pashtoon families do work in the fields. They also work in richer Pashtoon families' homes and perform house chores. The women have respect as the mother, the daughter and the sister but aside from this respect, mostly the women have no role to play in any other matter except the household affairs.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

In Pashtoon Society, the tribal restrictions, traditionally, get tougher for the women who come at the top tiers of hierarchy whereas the restrictions become much relaxed when they come toward low tiers. For instance, the women of a Malik's family are not allowed to show their faces. They are always guarded and protected and if they go outside to market, they have to follow certain rules. A male family member always accompanies them. Contrary to that, the Pashtoon women who work in the fields, can work with their faces open. They don't have to follow the set rules as strictly as they are expected to be followed by the Malik's family. They can roam around relatively less restrictions but majority of these women also tend to cover their faces in the presence of some unknown male.

### **3.4.2 Factors Indicating Patriarchy in Pashtoon Society**

After having an analysis from the history, the Pashtoon society is being put on the historical parameters that indicate patriarchy and male dominancy in any given society. The historical parameters are as follow:

#### **a) Education:**

The Pashtoons are mostly Deobandi Muslims. Famous scholar of Deobandi sect Maulana Abul Ala Mawdudi once said, "The right sort of education for women is that which prepares her to become a good house keeper."<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the Pashtoons have not been fond of girls' education until the very recent past. The Pashtoons believed that the women need only that sort of education or skills that would help them in the future after their marriage. This culture remained intact from top tier to bottom tier of the society. However, with the development, the top hierarchy of Pashtoon society started becoming indulged in women education up to some extent. Which was why the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. pp. 312

women of higher families started acquiring education but they were also put under restrictions. Only a handful amount of women have gone to the graduate colleges and a very minor percentage of women in KPK have been to the universities. According to the economic Survey of Pakistan 2013-2014, the literacy rate of KPK men was 72% whereas women was 36%.<sup>36</sup> In 2014-2015, the literacy rate among men rose to 76% whereas it fell to 35% of that of women.<sup>37</sup> Among this, the literacy rate for the women of rural areas was only 11% compared to 70% of male literacy rate. Therefore, it indicates that in KPK, the men are generally preferred over women to get education and the women are generally associated with the household chores. Therefore, the women have no access to create a difference in society or to challenge the patriarchy to its core.

#### **b) Honor:**

Honour is considered to be the most important feature of Pashtun society and it is always associated with the women. Honour or 'Nang' is the thing which forces Pashtun men to fight and die and it has been going on for centuries. Despite associating it with women, Honour can also be associated with the tribe. If the tribal reputation or the reputation of any household is on the stake, the Pashtuns fight. Now this reputation comes is question because of a woman mostly.

If the reputation of the tribe or the reputation of the tribal leader 'the Malik' gets hit, the whole tribe considers it as an insult to them and hence everyone stands with the Malik in order to restore his lost honour. This tradition has been going on for centuries but today, because of vast urbanization and enhancement of tribes at very distant places, this tradition is rarely carried out. It has almost vanished from the urban areas. However, it still exists in rural areas.

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<sup>36</sup> Economic Survey of Pakistan 2014-2015 pp. 170  
[http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters\\_16/10\\_Education.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_16/10_Education.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

The Honour, however, mainly associated with the women. The women has no right to like someone and to be involved in any sexual activity prior to marriage is considered as the worst sin a girl could commit. The male of Pashtun society is the one who declares what is right and what is wrong for the women. The young male has the right to administer his sisters as well as his mother. He could dictate and stop his mother and sisters, even relative female cousins, from doing any social activity or to be a part of any activity. However, despite all of the restrictions, if a woman becomes affiliated with someone in love or in a sexual activity and his brothers or cousins come to know about it, the woman often loses her life. It is called 'Honour Killing'. The woman doesn't even have the right to justify or rather accept or reject the crime she has been blamed to be involved in by her brothers, father or other male family members. Similarly, if a woman leaves her house and runs with the one she loves and starts a family after legal marriage, there are very rare occasions on which her marriage is accepted. Mostly, the women who runs and gets married, have fear for their lives. Once they run and leave their house, they know that they had nothing left to go back to. The women who run and get captured by their families are often killed. Many women who start their lives in other cities are killed by their family members in the name of honour. It has been reported that almost 33000 women have been killed in the name of honour since 2001. Most of the time, the case is not reported because the killing of a woman in the name of honour is considered the rightful thing in order to preserve the honour of the house as well as the honour of the tribe.

### **c) Marriage:**

The right of marriage is granted to both the Muslim men and Muslim women in the Sharia. Several sayings of the Prophet of Islam declare that the women also have the right to like a person with whom she wants to be married to. Also, it has been declared in the Quran that the tribes and clans are only for the identification of a person. It has nothing to do with any other thing. However, the Pashtuns prefer their own tribe's women traditionally and only the sons and daughters of the Maliks get married outside the tribe in order to make alliances with other tribes.

The Pashtun women have no say in their marriage what so ever and this has been going on for centuries. Both the men and women are supposed to be married within the tribe but this rule is relatively stricter for the women than it is for the men. The women is supposed to accept and say yes at the time of her marriage or 'Nikah' which is being held with the man her father or elder brother has preferred for her. It is unthinkable in traditional Pashtun society that a woman says no to the choice of her father or elder brother. The woman, because of their training and subjugation, could never dare to refuse in the face of her father or elder brother because it would damage their reputation. Because of this training, the women never exercise her religious and legal right to be married with the person of her likeness. The matter of likeness could end in a devastating manner and therefore, the women are not allowed to like someone before their marriage and if they do, it becomes impossible for them to be married to the person of their likeness in majority of the cases.

#### **d) Inheritance:**

The Pashtun society has a certain religious colour to it and the people tend to follow the religion with staunch belief. The male usually go to the mosques and offer prayers. The religious celebrations are conducted in a very humble manner. The people tend to grow beard as it is considered to be a sign of the follower. However, despite all their religious tendencies, the Pashtuns are very traditional and cultural when it comes to the matters of inheritance. Traditionally, the women have not been considered as the shareholder in the property and inheritance. This is because the women have always been considered the property of her husband after marriage and the property of her father prior to her marriage. The word ‘property’ here is deliberately used as the women have no say in the matters related to her education, marriage and health care. The women are expected to leave their share of property for their brothers. The society is so entrenched with this notion that the women, before asking for their legal and religious right, think that if this is even worth asking.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, in order to acquire her share, she has to fight her own brothers who opt to refuse to give her the due share and besides this struggle, she is not supported by the society or even her family. Rather, she is labelled as avaricious and self-interested. However, due to the family expectations, peer pressure and the already set precedent in the society by her elder women of the family, she foregoes her rightful share of the property or inheritance which leads to her further subjugation to man. By refusing to accept her share, she sets a wrong example for her children; especially her daughters and hence this cycle continues.

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<sup>38</sup> Rizwan, Sumbla. *Can't a woman ask for her property share?*, The Express Tribune, August 24, 2014. <https://tribune.com.pk/article/22354/cant-a-woman-ask-for-her-property-share>

### **e) Non-Existing Economic Opportunities:**

Functional theory of gender inequality argues, “Female is largely dependent on the male for protection and security”.<sup>39</sup> This theory focuses on the fact that the women in patriarchal societies remain subordinate to men because of their lack of access to the economic opportunities and the men, in order to enhance subjugation of the women further, always try to minimize the economic opportunities for them. With economic control, the male forces women to obey him and hence his rule continues.

The wave of modernization has changed many aspects of the traditional Pashtoon society which includes economic control. With education, the urban class of Pashtun Society contains women who work along with men in various social spheres like educational institutes, white collar office jobs, hospitals etc. However, there too, the men have the control and the major administrative positions always belong to women. Several cases of harassment have been reported throughout the years in which women got harassed by their male colleagues and sometimes even beaten and threatened. There have been many debates on the issue but the difference between theory and practice remains. The educated Pashtun class of men debates and knows the existence of their dominance over women and knows its pros and cons, they still never take any bold steps to lessen this existing dominance because of they fear of being excluded from the tribe and the caste. The economic power gives men the political power over women and hence the men carry on with their rule and dominance over the women in one way or the other.

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<sup>39</sup> Alam, Dr. Anwar. Op. Cit. pp. 316

### **f) Domestication of Women:**

No opportunity of further education, no economic opportunity and no say in the marital affairs force women to be domesticated and the women let men rule over them and accept their role as a subordinate class. The men domesticate women, force them to remain within the boundaries because they believe that they have the divine right to make decisions for the women and that they could make better decisions for their women. With this domestication, the women have to opt certain rules. For instance, the men work outside to earn bread for their families. The women take care of the house, the parents of her husband, along with her own children. In tribal setup, bringing water is the duty of women for which they have to travel a few miles every day and that too while covering her face. With these responsibilities, the women of lower and middle classes also work in the fields. This all hard work is considered to be the duty and divine responsibility of women and therefore, she never earns money working for her family. All she earns is respect and that too comes only if she works while remaining in the set boundaries of families' honour.

Although, the modernization and urbanization has changes or rather transformed various concepts but still, a heavy majority of the women opt to or are forced to remain within the walls of the house and take care of the family. The alarming thing is that the majority of educated women also opt to do the same because they could not challenge the set parameters of the society. The parents of Pashtun girls are still reluctant to send their daughters to co-ed schools, colleges and universities and also the work places where they have to work along with men. Therefore, a very tiny percentage of working women rarely open their faces and majority follow Purdah. Many working women work before their marriage but tend to resign from the jobs after their marriage because of the traditional notion that a women's place is at her husband's home and she is the queen of the house whereas to earn bread is the responsibility of the man.



### 3.5 Patriarchy and Resistance:

Throughout the history, it has been observed that every time one class of human beings dominates the other class, the resistance emerges and the subordinate class tends to find ways to express its grievances. In terms of Patriarchy, James C. Scott explains the politics of the subordinates and those who dominate as “public transcripts” and “hidden transcripts”. Public transcripts are used to explain the “open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate” and hidden transcripts to describe the “discourse that happens ‘offstage’ beyond direct observation by power holders”.<sup>40</sup> In this regard, the famous Female activist Jac sm Kee states, “Writing is a weapon that is powerful because what is said by one person reaches many ears.....”<sup>41</sup>

In traditional Pashtun society, the women are deprived of education and therefore, they had no knowledge of writing but in terms of art, writings are not the only way to explain grief, happiness, sorrow, subjugation, loss, defeat and victory. There are various other forms of art which are defined by James C. Scott as the ‘hidden transcript’. In Pashtun society, the only form of art the women had access to was saying the verses which are known as ‘Tappas’ The women had the privilege to say and sing Tappas on various occasions and hence they have been one of the primary care takes of the hidden culture of women. This research is aimed at exploring this aspect because with all this subjugation and limitations, the women must have expressed their opinion and notion of resistance through the only way given to them that was saying ‘Tappas’.

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<sup>40</sup> Chisale. Sinenhlanhla Sithulisiwe, *Patriarchy and Resistance: A Feminist Symbolic Interactionist Perspective of Highly Educated Married Black Women*, Submitted at UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA. 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

### 3.6 Concluding remarks:

Pashtoon society is the classical example of Sylvia Welby's theorization of Patriarchy. The men dominate the women both in the given private as well as the Public sphere. However, as compared to her primary audience the West, the Pashtun society is still in transition phase. It is being transitioned from Private sphere to Public sphere where there is a male dominant class ruling and controlling the activities of women. However, contrary to Sylvia Welby's notion of Patriarchy, the men in Pashtun society explains the logic of their rule through religion and as no women is in there in religious intelligencia, the women are forced to accept it as the teaching and guiding of the religion. The legitimacy of men's rule is derived from the Sharia which, according to the religious clerics, define men as the protector of women and denies their rule because of their physical advantage. The wave of modernization has led to a sense of enlightenment because of which the people now question the legitimacy of the rule but still, the rule and dominancy of the male exists and the women not only remain subjugated but are often killed if they resist. Therefore, the women have traditionally opt to resist in a vocal and acceptable manner. The women were forced and even threatened to keep their voices down. Pashtun women, since their childhood, are told and trained in every manner so that they might embrace their 'womenhood'. They are told how to sit, how to behave, how to eat, how to talk, how to keep their shawl (Dupatta) always on their head when their father and brothers are home, how to smile, how to laugh, how to walk and even how to sleep. The societal norms are so strict that the women could never think of resisting against it; however, the women have raised their concerns through the voice of Tappas. The tappas are the vocal cords which help the women to sing at the very least. The women, despite their difficult circumstances, have opted this field to voice their concerns. The study of Pashto Tappa indicates that the women have raised their concerns through Tappa in various fields regardless of their social stature. The

women have opted this field because only in this field, they are free to speak whatever there is in their hearts. This research is, therefore, aimed at exploring these hidden meanings and topics that are described in these Tappas.

## Chapter: 4

### Tappa: An Epitome of Pashtun Culture

#### 4.1 Tappa and Landai; An Introduction

In the opinion of the researcher that Pashto poetry began with '*Tappa*' or '*Landai*' which is considered to be the most important genre of Pashto literature and folklore. Landai is thought to be a thousand years old genre that has been continuing ever since the first recorded piece of Pashto poetry that was written by Ameer Karor. Landai is that genre which is completed within one and a half sentence. As its first sentence is called 'Landa' or 'Kotah' which means short; therefore, it is called Landai. The first sentence has nine syllables whereas the second sentence has thirteen syllables. Landai is also known as Tappa; however, the name Landai is famous is Afghan Pashtuns whereas Tappa is commonly known as a genre of poetry among the Pashtuns in Pakistan.

The history behind naming of '*Tappa*' or '*Landai*' is very interesting. It is said and the historians' hypothesis' conclude that Tappa means 'Muhur' or stamp in ancient Pashto language. However, with the passage of time, the Tappa became more and more associated with the poetry and the music it presents and the history of its name vanished. Some historians also argue that the Pashtuns usually use this word '*Tappa*' as a proverb in their daily lives whereas some argue that '*Tappa*' means to clap and it is extracted from the word which means '*Tali*' or clap as the Pashtuns show their happiness and enthusiasm by clapping with their hands. Also because it is necessary among the Pashtun culture to clap with the rhythm of the music, therefore, this genre of clapping while singing is named as '*Tappa*' or '*Landai*'. It is also said that '*Tappa*' has come from the word '*Thapki*' which means to tap and because this tap on someone's back or shoulder gives him courage to come over his fears so that is why it is named as Tappa. Some people among Pashtuns

argue that because Tappa has to be sung in a very loud voice which results in cough or sore throat that makes people unable to sing so that is why it is known as 'Tappa'. In some clans of Pashtun society, 'Tappa' is also known as 'Misra' or verse because it is said that the effect of its words are similar to the Egyptian sword which cuts thoroughly and therefore, it is known as 'Misra'. Another point of view in this regard is that a verse consists of nine and thirteen syllables and it seems like only one verse because of its structure. So it is called 'Misra' but another group argues that Misra word is derived from 'Misri' which is a type of sweet. As this verse seems sweet to hear, therefore it was termed by the Pashtuns as Misri or sweet.

The origin of the word 'Tappa' is not confirmed among the scholars of Pashto literature and it is still an ongoing debate. However, it is clear that this genre of poetry has existed over centuries and the Pashtoons have fallen in love with this generations after generations and it still touches the souls of Pashtuns.

## **4.2 The Evolution of Tappa:**

It is an established fact that the origin of Tappa is still unknown and there have been a very limited empirical data available on 'Tappas'. However, folklores in every culture, Tappas are traditionally transferred from one generation to another generation orally. Therefore, they can also be termed as 'Oral Transcripts' of Pashtun history and culture which can give us a detailed insight of the evolution of Pashtun society, their norms and their traditions. Folklore is actually the voice of the common people which is present in almost every culture and society around the world. Folklore, in terms of poetry, tells us the stories of the past of a culture. Folklore is said to be created by common folks in a very common and easily understandable language and which tells the story of everyday life of the people of that particular culture. As it is orally transferred to one generation

from another generation within the same culture, therefore it maintains its taste because the culture remains the same. Folklore is the face of the culture and it helps the culture to preserve itself from the changing world. Pashto folklore has discussed almost every aspect of human life and these nine and thirteen word syllables contain ancient wisdom and history within their limited words. It also has the feelings and emotions that have been continuously transmitting from one generation into another generation. Pashto folklore contains historical events, geographical characteristics, national ideologies, local customs, traditions and tribal biasness which means that it has touched almost every single aspect of tribal life in which men and women both live.

Jens Enevoldsen, in his book, 'Sound the Bells, O Moon, Arise and Shine!', says that Tappa is the fundamental genus of Pashto poetry which a Pashtun not only can tell but can also sing in his familiar environment.<sup>42</sup> Qudratullah Shahab, the famous mystic and author, says,

“Tappa addresses human emotions. In the background of Love, meeting a lover, being apart from the beloved, patriotism, ancient traditions of the society, it appears as if the ruby in the precious ring. The only difference is that Tappa is free from replication and silhouette. It has the intensity, freshness and eternity of boiling emotions.”<sup>43</sup>

Sher Muhammad Khan Gandapur in his book, 'Tareekh-i-Khurshid-i-Jahan' (History of the Sun of the Universe), writes that in the army of Sultan Mehmud Ghanzavi, a man went by the name of Malik Khalu who was a resident of Gomal. When Mehmud Shaznavi's army was passing through the 'darra' or Gomal pass, the fiancé of Malik Khalu said these verses:

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<sup>42</sup> Enevoldson, Jens. *Sound the Bells, O Moon, Arise and Shine*, Universty Book Agency: Peshawar, 1969. Pp. 05.

<sup>43</sup> Raza, Muhammad Afzal. *Pashto Lok Adab*, Academy Adbiyat, Islamabad: 1989. P.20.

چہ د خالولنکرے رشی  
زفہ گوملتہ د اخیل یار دی دنلہ خمہ

‘Chi dah khalu lakhkrr rashi

Zaba Gomal ta da khpal yar didan lazama’

“When Khalu’s Army will arrive, I will go to Gomal so I may be able to see my beloved.”<sup>44</sup>

The given Tappa is quoted by the famous historian Uqaye Habibi as the proof of the existence of Pashto Tappa for at least a thousand years; however, it is far old than that. Sahibzada Muhammad Idress, in his book,; Tappay; Ao da Shiar dard’ (Tappa and the sorrow of verse) writes on page 02 that Professor Pareshan Khattak argues:

“In reference to genre, there is no difference of opinion regarding the popularity of Pashto Tappa and everyone agrees to the fact that Pashto Tappa is the voice of scalded heart.”<sup>45</sup>

Pashto Tappa is not the inheritance of few. Rather it belongs to the millions of Pashtuns who own it, sing it and have succeeded in preserving it. They are owned by the whole of Pashtuns as a nation. It exists in every Pashtun tribe with a little variation in its tone. The creators of Pashto Tappa are rarely known to the common folk because it is created by the society as a whole.

Tappa is traditionally sung by someone who has a soulful voice if it is to be sung in a function. Otherwise, every Pashtun sings and owns it. It is sung at a gathering by the singers who traditionally, in the honour of Tappa, place their right hand on their right ear in order to sing it in a loud voice. There are some exclamatory notes that are added by the singers at the beginning,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p. 20

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

during or at the ending of the Tappa. Some most commonly known exclamatory notes are ‘Ya Qurban’, ‘Ya-Darzarshama’ and ‘Ya Kazar’ etc. These words have no particular meaning associated with them but they are traditionally put in almost every Tappa. They are added only to fulfil the artistic requirement of Tappa.

Tappas, at the occasion of a gathering or a function, are sung in a competitive manner in which the singers compete with one another and sing responsive Tappas to win. The audience enjoys this sort of competition the most because it gives them joy as well as connects them to their heritage and culture. The Tappa is not created in order of a Tappa. The creators of Tappa, generally unknown people, say words which are shaped automatically and become aligned to meet the criteria of the Tappa on their own. It could be said that the people who sing, refine the words on their own to shape their words into Tappa.

### 4.3 Types of Tappa:

Subjectively, there are ten types of Tappa which are as followed:<sup>46</sup>

- i. Tappas associated with praise of God and the Prophet. In this type of Tappas, God and his prophet are praised and receive the tribute of love and affection from the devotees. The Pashtuns are all Muslims and therefore, this type of Tappa is very common in Pashtun society. An example in this regard is as followed:

هڼه د خټي ډ رسول بنه ده !

دانور ډ هڼ ډ ليلى خاور ډ بښنه !

‘Meena da Khuday da Rasool Khda!

Da Noori minay libasi khaory bashina!’

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. pp. 22-26



“The love of God and his Prophet is good; expect this affection, all affections will be vanished”

- ii. Tappas associated with politics. In these types of Tappas revolution, freedom, nationalism and sacrifice for the homeland are addressed. As:

که نه وطن پرزن گشوي دشوي

پتار د زلفو به کفن دوتگن دم

‘Kado Watan panang shaheed shvi

Patar da zulfo ba kafan dar ta gandama’

“If you die for the honour of the homeland, then I will sew your shroud with the threads of my hair”

- iii. Tappas related to the environment. An example is:

بلبلرني پله پچه و راغے !

سپارلی راوري سپینے لڄے سر ڦيڙون

Abasyn biya pa cha pu raghay

Siparli ravari spini khulay sra payzwnona

“The river Sind is on its peak. Spring has brought the faces of silver and nose ring of gold.”

- iv. Tappas related to society. An example is:

بيٺيلو ولاشنه زمين دي

چه وخت ۽ رڻي پهريلو ٿور ۽ وڃن

‘Pukhtano wara shina za maryan di

Chi wakht ye rashi pa siyalai toray wahina’

“All Pashtuns are lions. When time comes, they use their sword with bravery.”

- v. Tappas related to History. An example in this regard is:

کپہ هی بن کبشی شیدن مشوی

خپگو لوی بن گیلو له دسینو

‘Ta pa mewan k shaheed na shway

Khudaye gu la liya be nangy la di sahtama’

“If you don’t get martyred in the battle of Mewan, then Swear in the name of Almighty, I would nourish you for the sake of disgrace only.”

- vi. Tappas associated with the Taunts. For example:

دشرمه غریکلی ین مشم !

دسوالیاری ده اوسبه خاور مشی ینو

‘Da sharma ghag kawaly nasham

Da sawal yari da us ba khowri shi maina’

“I cannot speak of shyness because this solicited companionship would end by now.”

- vii. Tappas related to Pride. For example:

تورعبه نکیرون وربه خکرو

چه موشوده هیبتی ے رولی ینو !

‘Toray bay nakro nur ba sakro

Chay mu shodah da pukhtany rodalay dina’

“What we would do if not to showcase our gallantry. We have been fed by Pashtun mothers.”

viii. Tappas related to affection. For example:

عشق سرے نہ غلطی

د رنگہ زیار وی ستارے گریز وینہ

‘Aashiq saray na ghaltigi

Da ranga ziar vi stargy toray garzavina’

“The man with affection cannot be mistakenly identified. The colour of his face must be pale, yellow and he has collyrium in his eyes.”

ix. Tappas related to Sorrow. For example:

پہ دنیا غم کی مینادی وی

پہ ما ہمیشہ د غم جن دے ولارے وینہ

‘Pa dunya ghum kala khadi vi

Pama hamesh da gham jhandy valaray vina’

“The world is a place of sorrow and happiness but the sigils of sorrow fly on top of my head.”

x. Tappas related to prayer. For example:

زمین خہ و خہ دعا

رب د د غم ہادہ و سیرتہ وینہ

‘Za ma pinnza wakhta dua da

Rab di da gham da bada osata maina’

“I pray for five times a day that May God keep you safe from the breeze of grief.”

- xi. Tappas on Miscellaneous topics. It includes Tappas related to the grief of beloved, the sight of beloved, being apart from beloved, luck, wait of the beloved, dreams, desires, wishes, remembrance, prosperity, travel, on the eyes and beauty of the beloved or any beautiful scene related to the village, or the springs and fountains, on arrogance and on the holy festivals etc. For example:

مال په ورځ د اختر رښه !

زڼه دروخ متور سټگي سره لاس نه

‘Ma la po raz da Akhtar rasha

Za ba dar ouzam toray stargy sra lasona’

“O dearly beloved! Come meet me on the festive of Eid. I will put collyrium in my eyes and henna on my hands for you.”

These types of Tappas indicate that the people have expressed their views in a very bold manner through this genre of poetry. Because of its purity, it affects the hearts, minds and souls of Pashtuns and therefore, it could be said that Tappas are an effective way of communicating ideas, thoughts, and opinions about almost everything related to Pashtun society.

#### **4.4 Women and Pashtun Society:**

Pashto Tappa possesses a number of dramatic characters of the pashtun’s common life and the Pashtun woman has a significant importance in it. A French philosopher Voltaire said that woman lap is the first cradle of a man and from there he learns everything as long as he remains

confined to the house. Physically, women are weak and the religion, law and society have defined some customary and traditional restrictions for them and in some sense, have imprisoned their human soul. But the Pashtun women throughout their life respond well to the Pashtun traditions and remained well aware of their limits. She protects and preaches the old traditions of the Pashtun Society. She bears difficulties and hardships for her daughters, sons, husband, and brothers and for other persons of the family and demands nothing in return. She expresses her sentiments against this brutality in the following words:

خڼي په څگن اکړم

لک ستي پسرول چې وکښي نلوت هي م ه

Khudaya pa sa gunah karigam

Laka satti pa sro lambo ki nasta yama

*“Oh Lord! For what sin am I being thrashed at?”*

*I am sitting in a red flame like a burning (Hindu) woman (Satti)”*

Pashto Tappa represents the feelings and emotions of the Pashtun women up to a great extent and their study and their nature suggest that majority of them are written by the women but their names are unknown. It is probably because Pashtun women care about their coyness and most importantly, the Pashtuns are reluctant to associate any public thing with the name of women. As Tappa is the expression of the pain of the heart, so they did not want to associate them with their name. Pashtun woman owns an unmatched role because of her womanhood and while representing her role in the Tappas, she has touched various dynamics of the society which would be given later in this chapter.

A Pashtun woman is absolutely affectionate towards her children and she wants to have children because she wants them to know how it is to be a good Pashtun. She nourishes her children, especially the male ones, in such order that they become familiar with the trademark norms of the society. She teaches them about the norms of Pakhtunwali, Honour (Nang), hospitality, courage, gallantry, sacrifice and love of the motherland. On the other hand, she teaches her female children about how it is to be a good wife so she may take care of her house and her husband in the future after her marriage. However, both mother and her female child shares a closely affiliated bond in which both share some intimate secrets like their place in the house as well as in society. In order to express their feelings of being confined, being worthless and being a subordinate, they sing Tappas which they transfer from generation after generation. The mother teaches her daughter and the daughter carries on with the tradition.

In Pashto Tappa, it is clearly indicated that the whole society discourages as well as hates the notion of being dishonest and therefore, they hate a man who is accused of being dishonor and a man without honour. Where there is given the characteristics of an honest, brave and courageous man, the characteristics of his contrary are also given to avoid. It is commonly said among the Pashtuns:

خځي مېرنگه زوئے رام کرے

کځې دېدېسے ځې ښې ستړگوشه

Khudaya Benanga Zoway Ra makray

Ka pa didan pasay ye rdanda po satrgo shama

*“O Lord! I beg you not to provide me with a coward son*

*Even if I go blind, I would be hating his sight”*

The sight of a courageous man is a sight of pleasure for any brave Pashtun. Courage is most highly appreciated of all the characteristics in Pashtun society and therefore, it is said:

پټور کن دے غچے جور شه

هېرنگی آواز دے رام شه هينه

Pa tor dakkan de saleh jorr sha

Da beynangy awaz de ra ma sha maina

*“May your Shrine be in the darkness of Deccan,*

*I must not hear a single word of your cowardice”*

The history is a witness of the fact that Pashtun mothers have always wished for brave brothers and sons who could maintain their respect and honour as they have always sacrificed their beloved ones on the motherland. They have never refrained them from any act of gallantry and to restore honour. In many Tappas, dishonoured and coward men are being discussed with hatred and pity.

Literature is the expression of feelings and emotions of a person and Pashto Tappa is absolutely filled with emotions and feelings. A type of literature is that which is confined within the boundaries of culture. The other type is the one which is free of all the shackles. Traditionally, the writers of literature are always in search of tribute and praise. The other, or folk literature, is the one in which the creator is neither considered as a writer or a poet nor he or she cares about it. In this type of literature, the feelings and emotions of the creation, whether poetry or prose, is considered to be above all kinds of praise.

The Pashtuns are naturally resistive to any foreign influence. They love their traditional and cultural laws and cultural norms and also respects his motherland with his life. For its integrity, he could even give his life without any doubt. His passion for war and either to kill or to be killed in the name of honour, respect and love for mother land is unmatched. Although these laws and regulations may seem very inappropriate and binding, he still respects them with all his heart and soul as they have been existing for centuries and his forefathers have all respected them before him. He protects them and whatever the circumstances may appear because of them, he compromises with them but never abandons his traditions. Though he is in absolute compliance with these societal laws, but when there is a matter of certain emotions like love, hatred, enmity, honour, killing etc. he becomes vulnerable to them and hence, he shows his resilience through the coined language of Tappas and everyone who understands what he is going through, appreciates his courage to speak the language of Tappa to showcase his true emotions. Therefore, it can be said that besides a healthy critique on the obsolete societal system and limitations, a continuous process of self-evaluation has been going in Pashto folklore for centuries in terms of Tappas.

Pashto is a simple and an easy language and no other language has a major influence on its structure and grammar. The Pashtuns are hardworking people and they take it as their responsibility to cooperate with one other. The Pashtuns are rigid in the matter of Pakhtunwali and they can never tolerate even a single finger pointed at it in order to weaken it. It is compulsory for everyone to follow the constitution of Pakhtunwali and whenever someone breaches it, he declines the right to be called the follower of Pakhtunwali. However, the Pashtuns are standing firm even at the negative articles of Pakhtunwali like honour killing and patriarchy and they accept it as they accept their religion and its guidelines. The Pashtuns have turned the positives of Pakhtunwali in accordance with the teachings of the religion. Still, the people rebel against it and turn down to



accept it as they consider it equivalent to half of infidelity because it has killing, *peghur*, *swara*, and inequality for women. Although Islam prohibits such practices but a Pashtun, out of his respect for Pakhtunwali, still abides by them. The Pashtuns don't give due respect to the women in many fields of life and that is the reason why thousands of Pashto Tappas are written by women in which they have described their fears, sorrows, grieves, regrets and being oppressed at the hands of dominant males.<sup>47</sup> To be sad and show remorse on the birth of a female child is still very common in Pashtun society. In the book 'Tappa aw Jwand', the author has discussed the role of the women in every culture and society of the world and elaborated it in detail that the women have always faced subordination at every time and at every place and they have never been valued.<sup>48</sup> The women have always been showed to the world as a subaltern. It has been assigned to the women to remain in the Pashtun cultural boundaries and fulfill them at every cost but still they have been the oppressed portion of the society in which they are numbered almost half to the men. These feeling of being overwhelmed and being oppressed become the voice of these women and they start feeling to rebel against the established norms of the society. Hence, they say Tappas in which these feelings are found in abundance.

زما بلي دادلته ويلي

خوش حال نه يم دمن گام نه ملت هي م

Zama abaii dada ta vaya

Khushala na ym da nakaama nasta yama

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<sup>47</sup> Shaheen, Salma. *The Pakhto Tappay: Muashatri aw Saqafati Asar*, Pakhto Academy Peshawar University, Peshawar: 1989. Pp. 37.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. pp. 38

*“Tell my parents*

*I am unhappy here, but I will remain sitting at my in-laws”*

The Pashtuns are of the opinion that even if the daughter is chained with a tree, they must not return to the home of her parents because it would be considered as an insult and dishonour to the family of the daughter. The Pashtun women have proved it to be true for centuries and accepted these norms and traditions for centuries while remaining at their husbands' houses even if they are suppressed and victimized. However, to raise their concerns and to protest against these established norms, the women have always taken the path of Tappas in which they have elaborated their situations and the things they are being forced to compromise with. For Pashtun women, give life for honour in nothing short of a bed of flowers. Whether she is happy or not, she has always been the reason of reconciliation and peace between two families through *swrah*; a norm in which a woman is offered to the aggrieved family for peace. She has devoted herself to the difficulties of life and accepted the fate of an almost slave for the life and honour of her brothers and father but still she has always considered as a burden and an extra person in the society dominated by men. She has always been treated as if she were an animal and she has always been used only for the purpose of reproduction.

کہ مے یار مل وی پروا نیشہ

کپہ مہتے دصحرہ رالچونہ

Kami yar malvi parwa nishta

Ka pa ma ghate da sahra ra chaly na

*“If my beloved is affiliated to me, I might never care*

*I won't mind bringing hardened stones from the deserts”*

Good and evil is everywhere in every society and in every system, some evil persists. The areas; especially those who are backward and have less or no education, have always these sort of norms which is quite a common attribute. Today, the Pashtun society is going through the process of a cultural evolution but still, the folk literature keeps the persisting norms alive and represents the culture in its true form and meaning.

The reality is that these persisting norms are proven tough to be moulded and modified in accordance with the rapidly modernizing society. The simple and traditional Pashtuns are still free of hypocrisy and falsehood and are still unfamiliar with the requirements of modern society. One can only imagine the backwardness of the women of such areas who have always been many steps behind the men and therefore, it can be said that the women are far more uncivilized if we take modern civilization standards into consideration. However, despite all these hurdles, the absence of education, awareness and exposure, the women have proven to be far more resistive and vocal in only communicative way they could find which is Pashto Tappas.

## Chapter 5

### Tappa: The Sound of Women's Resistance against Patriarchy

*Therefore, this same world*

*Uncomprehended by you must remain*

*Uninfluenced by you. Women as you are,*

*Mere women, personal and passionate,*

*You give us doting mothers, and chaste wives.*

*Sublime Madonnas, and enduring saints!*

*We get no Christ from you,—and verily*

*We shall not get a poet, in my mind.*

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, this fact has been established that Tappa is owned by the whole Pashtuns and therefore, it can be observed that in the whole Pashtun population, the women are also included. The structure of Pashto Tappa indicates that most of them are created by the women who didn't have any knowledge or the skill of poetry, but they had the courage to speak up in a way that was acceptable to the dominant male population. In these Tappas, the women spoke their hearts out and they told the feelings and emotions exactly the way they felt and they passed it to generation after generation.

The women have spoken on every issue they felt but most importantly, they knew that they had been suppressed by the dominant male population and therefore, they spoke in a revolting manner against the dominant male population and recorded their act of resistance despite having such restrictions imposed upon them. In order to see the women revolting against the tribal customs, some Tappas have been selected for analyses and therefore, these Tappas are divided into thematical categories regarding the message of the Tappas. The themes are extracted while considering this reality that the author or authors of these Tappas are women and through these Tappas they want to connect to the world. Themes of Tappa and their analysis is given below.

## 5.2 Themes of Tappas and their Analyses

### 5.2.1 An idea of Women's Freedom

موری کو چھ لولہ می وکری

چیتور اوبل می دسپین غرش مال وینہ<sup>49</sup>

Morey ko chyanu la me warka

Chi toor aurbal me da speen ghar shamal wahena

*“O Mother! Marry me to a nomad,*

*So the cool breeze of the mountain may blow my curvy hair”*

This Tappa is iconic in its nature as it is showcasing the only wish of Pashtun women and that is freedom. The women who is saying these words or this Tappa is a virgin young girls who knows that the only purpose of her birth is to get married so that she may reproduce sons for her husband.

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<sup>49</sup> Khalil, Hanif, Op. Cit. p. 21.

She is acknowledging her role as she says to her mother “Marry me” but the wish comes in place when she puts the condition which is that she wants to marry a nomadic person. A nomad, in Pashtun society, doesn’t own land or a fix place to live. They travel from one place to the other and have their cattle with them. They are commonly known as ‘*Bakarwal*’ or the people who own goats as these people do own scores of goats and sheep. These people generally live on the mountains. Their males come down during the summer, they work hard and earn their living. They collect supplies for the winters and then move back to the mountains. The girl in this Tappa is obsessed with the freedom and she envies this lower strata of Pashtun. She wants to be free. She wants to enjoy the cool breeze of the mountain as she has been confined in the walls of her house and she knows that this is going to be her fate even after her marriage. However, her own desire is to be free and therefore, she is asking her mother to marry her to a nomad. The mountain here is depicted as the barrier after which the freedom lies as the lower strata of Pashtun society is relatively less traditional and their women enjoy far more freedom than other Pashtun women. These women work in the fields, can go the markets and even sometimes, enjoy the right to be married to the men of their likeness. Another important thing depicted here is that the girl wants to get married to a nomad so that she may travel the land and enjoy the beauty of nature. She feels that it would be far more exciting than sitting all day at home and cursing her fate that why she is created a woman by God.

This Tappa, both in its structure and in its meaning, poses multiple challenges to the tribal norms and tradition. For instance, the woman’s wish of getting married to a nomad, as a person of her likeness, is a challenge. The marriage of a woman sitting in home to a nomad is unthinkable in Pashtun society and therefore, the class difference is shown. The freedom of nomads is shown which is, generally, not liked by the common Pashtuns as they are pitied and looked down upon

by majority of them. However, this life is envied by the oppressed women sitting in homes and all they want is to be free.

### 5.2.2 Forbidden Love

چلانه رشه دا د وخت دے

پلار مې دسر سودا بېل سر کون<sup>50</sup>

Janana rasha da de wahkt dy

Plar me da sar saoda da bal sara kawena

*“O My Beloved! Please Come. There’s still time.*

*My father is negotiating my marriage with someone else over my head”*

This Tappa showcases the classical example of how love of a female has always been treated in Pashtun society. Even though the religion Islam gives a woman right to marry with her choice and without her consent, forcing her to marry is considered a great sin and ‘Forbidden’ in many sects. However, the cultural aspect of patriarchy takes over and the women of Pashtoon society are forced to marry with the one of their father’s or brothers’ choice. In many Pashtun tribes, there has been a generations old tradition that new born girl is associated with some male that after reaching to marriageable age, that particular girl will be wed to that particular man who is, traditionally, way older than the girl. The girl has no right to say yes or no at the time of her marriage. The girls, out of shyness or sometimes due to their youthfulness, avoid saying yes or no at the time of her marriage and it is considered as their consent to be married and this is a common practice in Pakistan. However, the Pashtuns don’t even bother asking their girls about their marriage. The

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<sup>50</sup> Shaheen, Dr, Salma, *Rohi Sandari*, Op. cit. p. 92.

father takes the responsibility and becomes her counsel at the time of marriage. The father's consent is considered as the girl's consent and hence, the girl has to go to her husband's house for which, sometimes, she isn't ready for.

In this Tappa, the girl is begging her lover to come because she knows that she cannot say anything to her father as he would act as her counsel and fix her marriage to someone she doesn't even know. She also knows that it would be considered a great sin to refuse to marry to a person his father has selected for her. The society would reject her and her father because in Pashtun society, the word of a man is far more valuable than his life. People lose their life for less in Pashtun society but no one could ever think of someone turning their backs on something they promised to do. Therefore, her only hope to be with her lover is if he send his proposal to her house. She knows that if she runs with the person she loves, she and her lover will be tracked down by her brothers, her father and other family members and they both will lose their lives. Therefore, the only way to spend life with the beloved is if he sends his proposal and it is accepted by her family. However, if this little time runs out, then she will be wed to the person of her father's choice and there would be no power on earth that could annul her wedding as the Pashtuns never leave their wives. Pashtun mother, at the time of her sending to her in-laws, says to their daughter that she would not be accepted back at home now except if she comes as a corpse. Therefore, the girl knows that her only hope is a legitimate marriage in front of everyone. Otherwise, she would have to abandon her love as well as the wish to be with her beloved. Another Tappa can be seen in this regard.

زما اچياري د مور او پلار دے

زفءه رضائي لره د مور او پلار کوم<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. Ibid. p. 405.



Zama ihktiyar da moor ao plar dy

Za ba raza yara da moor ao plar kaoma

*“My authority lies within the palms of my parents*

*I will comply with my parents’ wishes”*

Every Pashtun girl knows that the right of her marriage lies with her parents and the decision is always dominated by the men. She knows that she can never have her true love in her arms if he is not acceptable to her parents and therefore, she bows her head down and obeys in accordance with the wishes of her parents. She has no right to object nor can she object even if she wants to. If her parents have selected an aged man for her, she will marry him and will live with him. She will fulfil his wishes and produce children for him. It is beyond imagination that a girl would reject a man of her parents’ choice. The parents, in order to strengthen their bond with the family and sometimes, for monetary benefits, marry their daughters to the men twice or thrice of their age. The society expects her to remain silent and she, in order to preserve the respect and honour of his father and brothers, stays still and accepts her faith. The girls are often married to the guys because it is a common belief that a woman can organize a man’s life which is nothing more than a mere stereotype. In most cases, these men spoil life of women along with them and this blame too, has to be bore by the women as the society believes that they have failed to organize their husbands’ life. With all these difficulties in hand, the woman has to stay with her husband no matter what. After marriage, the doors of her father’s home are closed on her forever. Whenever she comes, she is treated as a guest, not as a family member. For all her life, she has to fulfil all these requirements with her head down and tongue silent. She is the epitome of Maya Angelou’s poem “Woman Work” as she writes:

*I've got the children to tend*

*The clothes to mend*

*The floor to mop*

*The food to shop*

*Then the chicken to fry*

*The baby to dry*

*I got company to feed*

*The garden to weed*

*I've got shirts to press*

*The tots to dress*

*The cane to be cut*

*I gotta clean up this hut*

*Then see about the sick*

*And the cotton to pick.*

*Shine on me, sunshine*

*Rain on me, rain*

*Fall softly, dewdrops*

*And cool my brow again.*

*Storm, blow me from here*

*With your fiercest wind*

*Let me float across the sky*

*'Til I can rest again.*

*Fall gently, snowflakes*

*Cover me with white*

*Cold icy kisses and*

*Let me rest tonight.*

*Sun, rain, curving sky*

*Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone*

*Star shine, moon glow*

*You're all that I can call my own.*<sup>52</sup>

### 5.2.3 Self-Respect and Honour

خاڼې په ډک دږياب لا هوکړم

لټم به خپل ژم چه م سق درپه چا وينه<sup>53</sup>

Zan ba pa dak daryab laaho karam

Halta ba khejam chi ye qadar pa cha weena

*"I will hand myself to the river*

*I ought to rise there where I am at value"*

This Tappa depicts the status of women in Pashtun society. The writer of this Tappa is expressing her wish that she wants to be treated as a valued human being. Honour and respect are the two most important characteristics associated with Pashtuns and Pashtun women are not free of these feelings. The women in Pashtun society have been treated as sub-human beings for centuries and they didn't have the right to speak and to interfere in any matter which is associated with men. However, the men had always had the right to interfere in every matter that are associated with men. The women couldn't do anything about their social status. Despite being loved and respected as mothers, daughters and sisters, they had pretty much no value in the society and the said value

<sup>52</sup> Angelou, Maya. *Woman Work*. Available at <https://allpoetry.com/Woman-Work>

<sup>53</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. Ibid. p. 202.

of being mother, sister and daughter is also set by the dominant male. She has always been treated as a commodity. Her self-respect is shattered everyday into pieces when she is denied of the right to move freely, to sit according to her will and to behave in a manner that is against the set traditions of the culture. Therefore, this Tappa is revolt against all these set traditions. The writer knows that she doesn't have the right to change the notion and behaviour of the whole tribal system but she knows that she doesn't want to live a life without being respected and being valued. Therefore, she is saying that she would jump in the river that might kill her and when her corpse would rise, she would be in the afterworld and there, she knows, that she will be valued. In other words, she knows that to acquire freedom with respect, she has to die because in this world she has no value of her own.

Another similar Tappa can also be seen in this regard which shows that the women are willing to get killed but are unable to bear the situation that is falling apart. The women are oppressed in every possible manner but the thing which hurts them the most is damaging their self-respect; especially in front of their children. A man in Pashtun society is free to use verbal abuses and it is considered a matter of daily routine. A woman has to listen to these abuses on daily basis in which she and her family is targetted often. Men deliberately use this sort of abuses in order to further torture her and to maintain her in her limits and maintain woman in her limits is one of the most common phrases used in a Pashtun house hold. Older Pashtun men, while talking to younger men, often tell them to maintain women in their limits so they might have strong hold both over their women and children. In order to maintain this hold, the men abuse women to remind her that they are the ones in power and the women, who have already familiar with all the abuses because of their fathers and brothers, silently accept their faith. Some of them express their feelings in Tappas as:

چلرہ رانجہ خان حلالکہ

د دلے ژون دنه ز فپه مرگ خوش حال هيم<sup>54</sup>

Chara rawakhla ma Halal ka

Da dase jund na za pa marg khushala yama

*“Take the knife and slaughter me*

*It is worth dying than living like this”*

It shows that the women are so sick and tired of being treated as a subordinate that they are willing to give their lives because they don't want to live a life without respect and honour. In Pashtun society, respect and honour are also associated with male dominance because the men had been devising its meaning for centuries. Respect and honour of a Pashtun man lies within the clothes of her mother, wife, daughter and sister and therefore, in order to protect his honour, he becomes strict to them and he treats them with humiliation so they might know their place that is beneath the men. This is also done so that they would protect and preserve the honour of both their father and their in-laws. However, the man is free of these bonds and his body doesn't come under such scrutiny. He keeps the women inside the house so he that could protect his honour and no one could lay hands on his honour and for this, he crosses the extremes by keeping the women away from education, health and other necessary facilities because these professions have men mostly. Therefore, the women of Pashtun society are raising their voices in revolt because they want to live either with their consent or to die.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p.206.

### 5.2.4 Slavery and Submissiveness

صورت زما واكهي دنورو

پ م ت ه والهي دمي وگ ه صورت نه<sup>55</sup>

Surat zama waak ye da nuro

Rabba ta wakhle da bewaaka suratuna

*“Body belongs to me and right on it rests with someone else*

*O God! I beg you. Take these frail pieces of limbs away”*

Despite all the religious guidelines and teachings, the Pashtun men take pride in marrying their daughters with their choice and the women had to accept their fate because it has been taught to them since the day they learn to speak. The women are told to obey two men the most: Their father and their husband because father has brought her into this world and husband is the one who is going to take her back to the heavens. Therefore, the women are compelled to obey these two and after marriage, she is only confined to the wishes of her husband. The husband treats her like a sub-human sex slave and he fulfills his desires with her without keeping in view her desires. She has to suffer pain during sexual intercourse to make her husband happy. The intercourse always happens only with the consent of men and no Pashtun man could claim that he has ever asked his wife about her consent before bedding her. The women has no right over her body. She is a slave who has to comply with the desires of her man even though she is feeling sick, fragile or suffering through any fatigue. If it is the wish of her husband, she has to present her body to her no matter what. Therefore, this Tappa elaborates the fact that Pashtun woman doesn't have right on her body

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<sup>55</sup> Shaheen, Dr.Salma. *The Pakhtu Tappay*, Op. cit. p. 38.

and therefore, she doesn't want to live in this world. She is tired of presenting her body to someone who doesn't respect her and cares about her but she belongs to him as she is married to him.

She is treated like a slave and the slave has no right to have the feeling of love, sorrow and anger. A slave is expected to obey the commands of the master and that is how the women are traditionally treated.

زما ده ميني واکمن بل دے

تارلي لاس يام حال مي يڅوکن پوښتنې<sup>56</sup>

Zama da meene waakman bal dy

Taarlay laas yam hal me hes sok na pukhtena

*“Someone else controls the feelings of my affection*

*My hands are tied together and no one dares asking why”*

It shows that she has nothing in her hand. She is tied to the customs and traditions of the society and even though she doesn't love someone, she has to spend the rest of her life with that person and more so, she has to bring forth children for him. Despite her submissiveness, no one has the right and power to challenge the tribal traditions. Every decision is imposed on her and there is no free will of the women that are always treated as slaves. Despite all her struggle, she remains hopeful that she might find respect in her in-laws although she knows that it is nearly impossible. Unlike other woman of advanced modern societies, Pashtun tribal women are unfamiliar with the world outside and she has no opportunity to connect to the world. She is fed with the stories of

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 114.



being a good wife and a good mother. Therefore, despite all the hardships, she still hopes that her husband might understand her and treat her as a fellow human being.

زلي اننگ ربلل دی اکہ

پلار مي ظالم دے مپہ اورکي اچھينہ<sup>57</sup>

Zalmia nang rabandi aoka

Plar me zalim dy ma aor ki achawena

*“O Young man! Come, honour upon my head*

*My Father is cruel, he is pushing me towards the burning fire.”*

The girl knows that her father is trying to burn her at the stake by forcing her to marry against her will but she is still asking for help and support of her husband to be. She is ready to accept the man as her honour but she is still not happy. This is a contrasting mixture of two persistent feelings: one, the girl is unhappy but tied to the customs and hence, cannot revolt physically as it might destroy her family's name and the other one is that she accepts her faith and only asks for honour in return. Only a few women could claim that they are honoured and treated as a fellow human being and not as a submissive sub-human species. Most of the women know that after marriage, their lives will become hell, depicted in Tappa as 'the burning fire' and in this burning fire, she will have to stay and live for the rest of her life. She has nowhere else to go and whether she finds respect or not, she will comply with the wishes and commands of her husband because for the society, this is what she is supposed to do.

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<sup>57</sup> Dawood, Dawar Khan. Op. Cit. p. 114.

### 5.2.5 Marriage with elderly for money

کيس مېشين گلان پر سره دی

مور مې هډه نه اوسپه زور مې خرڅون<sup>58</sup>

Qamees me sheen gulan pe sra de

Moor me mera da aos pa zorr me kharsewena

*“My green shirt has red flowers embellished on it*

*Still, my stepmother is selling me to an elderly person”*

The use of religion to acquire validity of the actions is a common feature of Pashtoon society and the people, in the name of religion, marry their daughters to elderly men in Pashtun society and give logic through the Islamic history. Another important aspect of Pashtun society is that a respected and well off man can easily marry with someone else with or without the consent of her wife and also defends it with the religious context. When both women have children, the mothers fight to acquire major chunk of property and land for her children. If a man, after the death of her wife, gets remarried and dies leaving her children with their step mother, the step mother often treats those kids with utmost hatred. The role of a step mother has been criticized in various cultures for centuries but in Pashtun society, the step mother is the one who, after the death of her husband, controls the faith of her step children in her hand. A step mother, in order to satisfy her ego and hatred against the innocent children, sometimes marries the little young girls to elderly men for the sake of wealth. The given Tappa depicts the described situation. The girl, who writes this Tappa, is saying that her clothes are of green colour with red flowers on it. It shows that the

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<sup>58</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. Op. Cit. p. 537.

girl is very young because in Pashtun tribal culture, very young girls are allowed to wear such kind of embellish dresses. Appropriate young girls are expected to wear rather subtle and sober dresses. The dress also shows that it is her age to be involved in playful activities with other girl children but her step mother, who wants to acquire money and has no respect for her step children, is selling her daughter to an aged man who merely wants to marry a young girl to satisfy his lust and to produce more children. The girls who are sold in Pashtun society, meet with fate worse than slaves. Their only purpose of life is to be available for bedding to her husband and to reproduce more and more children for him. It is believed among the Pashtuns that the woman who brings forth more children, is a warrior.

The girls who are sold have no respect whatsoever in the society. Their lives don't matter. The world around them doesn't care about their emotions and feelings and the only purpose of their life is to obey their husbands. Still, these girls raise their concerns with the help of Tappas and tell the world how brutally they are treated by the society.

دېښمن وېده رواج ه

ګلاب زول يې به مې سپين ګير ۽ غي ګله اورم<sup>59</sup>

Da pakhto bada rewajha

Gulab zoani ba me speen gheeray gheeg la orama

*“Ah! The unscrupulous customs of the Pashtun society*

*I am about to spend my lovely youth in the lap of an old man”*

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<sup>59</sup> YH Official, Available at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

The men consider it as their right to buy a girl for marriage as the young girl could fulfil their sexual desires better. They showcase it as an action of pity that they have given the girl home, a husband, a family, food and a place to live and therefore demand that the girl must acknowledge all of them. The girl always acknowledges and the man and his family continuously reminds her of her place and how they have been kind enough to her that they have brought her into their home. This makes her more humbled. With no access to any economic resource and the fear of revolting against the tribal traditions protected by the religion force her to accept her fate. However, many women raise their concerns through tappa and they have told their generations that their foremothers are sold and treated as slaves.

### 5.2.6 Training and Lack of Education

چہ دودئی خورم داداق ایپری

چہ روپی شرن گکری دادا شرن لہ خن داشینہ<sup>60</sup>

Chi dodai okhram dada qareegi

Choi rupai sharang kare dada sheen la khanda sheena

*“Grandfather gets angry when I eat*

*When the sound of money comes, grandfather laughs openly”*

A Pashtun girl is trained in such a way that her voice always remains in the boundaries of her home along with her body. She is told how to talk, how to eat, how to laugh and even how to sit. She is told to cover her head even in the house in front of her father and brothers. If she eats in a manner that is unacceptable, she is humiliated and everyone makes fun of her. Her elders gets angry on

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<sup>60</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. Op. Cit. p. 38

her and curse her to eat in an appropriate manner that is acceptable in society. Her value is only associated with the money which comes to her family when they fix her marriage; particularly to some elderly one. When money comes, her family laughs while she cries cursing her fate. She is one who has been deprived of her education and she doesn't even know how to read in her native language as most of these women are taught only the Quran; the Holy book of the Muslims.

زما د غم نصري بښته

د غم ساعت د پاكلي فېبه بېلوم<sup>61</sup>

Zama da ilm naseeb nishta

Da gham sa'at dy pa takleef ba yay badloma

*"Knowledge (education) is not in my destiny*

*The time of sorrow is passing painfully"*

She knows that society controls her every attitude and therefore, the society has decided that she cannot have the formal education which she wants to get. And therefore, her time has become even more painful to spend. Besides the consent and will of girls, it is extremely flabbergasted to say that girls getting education is a mountainous task in Pashtun society as girl is considered liability and boy is profitability. Thus, such mindset has inculcated in Pashtun by and large which is the main feature of patriarchal structure.

Lack of education is the key to women submissiveness and therefore, the male use it as a necessary mean to maintain women under their control. However, the women knew that they have been

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<sup>61</sup> Shaheen, Dr. Salma. Op. Cit. p. 423.

oppressed and lack of education is the key in this regard and hence, some of them have raised their voices and concerns in the language of Tappa.

### 5.2.7 Honour of the Family

زما لالا لہ زیرے ورکھے

پاکتو دسر شوہ زہ دے خاوری طیری کرم<sup>62</sup>

Zama lala la zeray warkaii

Pakhto de sar showa za dy khaoree ierey karma

*“Tell my elder brother (Lala)*

*Your promise (Pakhto) was fulfilled and I was ruined”*

The women in Pashtun society have been oppressed and every step is taken to quell their voices. However, their sacrifice for their families is still unmatched. The women have to sacrifice their lives for the honour of their families by accepting the sins and wrongdoing of their fathers and brothers. For instance, it is a very common practice among the Pashtuns to marry girl into the family whose member is killed by the girl’s brother. She is presented as a tribute, as a gift of peace and in most of the cases, she never sees her family again. The girl reaps for what is sowed by her father or brother(s). This girl has no value and she works and remains as a servant for the rest of her life while her brother, the actual culprit, enjoys freedom. The given tappa is actually the “bad’dua”, an execration, a girl is giving to her brother. He has become an anathema to her. She is cursing her brother that because of him, her life is ruined and now she has to pay the price of the sins she has not even thought of committing. She is being sent into the jail where she has no voice

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<sup>62</sup> YH Official, Available at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

and no respect. However, the girl says that she has helped her brother in keeping his promise which should be valued but unfortunately, her sacrifice is never valued and it is taken as the responsibility.

Pashtun women have always taken up these challenges and fulfilled these duties without any protest and served at the will of their family's pleasure. In every single matter, the women have sacrificed far more than men and still, the men, being creators of history, have deliberately put women out of the historical canvass and never recognized their efforts in true sense. The Pashtun women, with their tappas, have contributed a lot in the field of arts and culture and their tappas have helped in getting an idea of typical Pashtun society and how it has been functioning over the course of centuries. The women, however, needs recognition of their efforts, honour and a status in which they could be treated as a fellow human being. With the wave of modernization, many typical customs are changing if we consider urban parts. However, there is still a long way to go.

### **5.3 Application of theory**

As mentioned in Chapter 2, two different theories are being considered for this research in accordance with both of its dimensions: patriarchy and resistance. The six structures, as an indication of the presence of Patriarchy presented by Sylvia Welby, explains that there is very strong and strengthened patriarchy in Pashtun society if we put it on them. The six structures are:

1. Patriarchal mode of production is related to the house hold affairs between the Husband and the wife.
2. Patriarchal relations in paid work means that the women have been deliberately excluded from the skilled jobs.
3. Patriarchal relations in the state implies that the state has bias towards patriarchal structures.

4. Male violence is systematic and state refrains from interfering in it.
5. Compulsory heterosexuality is demanded from the women.
6. A structural representation of women through various institutions.

Pashtun society is typical in the first structure because the male has, generally, the financial control whereas the women works in the house under his subordination. The women are deliberately excluded from highly paid jobs because it would allow them the economic control which would lead to the weakening of male domination. The state and the laws protect the male hegemony because the affairs of the state and formation of laws both are done by the men. In Pashtun society, police refrains from interfering in these matters. There are various cases of honour killing incidents in which the women were killed but police didn't do any action against her family member who, mostly, are the killers. The women in Pashtun society have no structural representation as they are always kept away from participating in the elections. In many Pashtun dominated areas, the women are often discouraged to cast their votes. Therefore, it can be said that patriarchy in Pashtun society is present in its worst shape and form and male dominated culture and religion both are attempting to preserve it as it has kept their hegemony as well.

If we consider Sylvia Welby's idea of private and public patriarchy and the fact that she has described a shift or transition in patriarchal structure in which primary structure of household has transformed into employment. She suggests that household, being the primary structure, has transformed and still transforming while employment has become the new basic structure. If we put Pashtun society on these assumptions, we'll find that Pashtun society, as a whole, has not transformed yet. The structure of 19<sup>th</sup> century is still viable for the Pashtuns in 20<sup>th</sup> century (See Chapter two).



The second theoretical aspect is of resistance and as demonstrated in chapter two, James C. Scott is of the idea that original and actual feelings and emotions of a subordinate class is hiding behind ‘The hidden Transcript’ rather than ‘The public transcript’. In his opinion, the subaltern classes have recorded their protests through various means; one among them is poetry. These subaltern classes have used these means to convey their hidden transcript in a way that is accepted widely as a public transcript (for details see chapter two).

If we consider women as subaltern class because, as empirical evidence suggests, they did not have any prominent voice and they had always been suppressed by the dominant male on the virtue of its physical power and control of economic resources, we will find out that these women have tried to convey their message through a widely accepted medium among the Pashtuns; the Tappas. The women have conveyed their ‘hidden message’ through ‘public message’ that is Tappa. The women have sung tappas in order to showcase their true feelings and emotions without being afraid of being questioned. Therefore, the women have taken the paths of Tappas and showcase their concerns against the norms and traditions and also, tell us the actual history of women submissiveness. She has touched every aspect of Pashtun culture and still wants recognition desperately. She has touched every aspect of Pashtun culture and still wants recognition desperately. She is ready for revolting against the norms and traditions of the society that are imposed on her.

يو خولپښت وبل خوا چل ان دے

پښت وپړي گدم نه چل ان غچي له زمه<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

Yao khuwa pakhto bal khua janan dy

Pakhtu pridam da janan gheege la zama

*“On one side is Pakhto and on the other side is beloved*

*Leaving Pakhto I am going into my beloved’s arms”*

This tappa clearly indicates the sentiments of a young Pashtun girl who is ready to sacrifice everything for her lover. ‘Pakhtu’ is another word used for the code of Pashtunwali which covers every aspect of a Pashtun’s life. This tappa indicates a dilemma in front of that young girl who just wants to be with her lover. The code of Pashtun wali controls her life. Going against this code would indicate her open rebellion against the code which might result in her loss of life. However, she is determined to commit this act of rebellion because the society doesn’t allow her to be married to the person she is in love with. Rebellion against this code means committing a sin; going against the wishes and honour of her father, her brothers and even her family but she is willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of this freedom of loving someone and bearing his children while being in a sacred relationship of matrimony.

## **Conclusion and Findings**

At the end of the thesis, following conclusions can be drawn:

- Tappa is widely accepted in male dominated Pashtun society merely because of the simple language and the sweetness and innocence behind its creation. The men love to sing tappas even if they are related to challenge their hegemony. It is because the words don't pose so much threat as an actual act of revolt by the women and therefore, the Pashtuns never worry about their women being revolting against their position in Pashtun society.
- The women want to change their fate and Pashto tappa is filled with the examples where women have cursed their fate. However, the women don't have any grudge against the God. They don't curse the God because of religiousness. They criticize their fathers and brothers and even complains about their attitude and behaviour, but no tappa could ever contain any blasphemous content because it would be unapproved in a Muslim society.
- Tappa is the true depiction of women's resistance against patriarchy. While considering the empirical evidence, it can be said that the Pashtun women are the original feminists and their version of feminism has been going on for centuries. In spite of having any formal education, Pashtun women are well aware of their condition and the reasons of their condition.
- Religion is the key to women submissiveness. Male clerics who want to preserve women submissiveness, interpret religion in such a way that it seems the actual religion to the people and as it serves their interest, they affiliate themselves with it. The same situation has happened in Pashtun society where men have taken cover of religion to oppress women and the women, out of fear of being declared an infidel, cannot even challenge the

interpretation that is being taken as the law of the religion Islam. Therefore, the women say tappas so they might be able to voice their concerns in an acceptable manner.

- Control over economic resources has provided males with the opportunity to further strengthen their rule over women. Therefore, the jobs and skills for women in urbanized societies have also been defined by the men so they may preserve their hegemonic status. Teaching and being medical professional (whether a nurse or a doctor) are the only professions that are respected and treated as acceptable. Besides them, no other profession is acceptable for the women even in urbanized societies. Among these professions, being a doctor is the only profession in which a woman earns a reasonable amount of money. However, in many private institutes, it has been observed that the women earn less than the men doctors. Therefore, pay disparity has been created in order to preserve male dominance. The tappas show that the women are aware of their situation which is because of their lesser reach and limited skills which make them dependent upon men.
- The women are forced to sit at home and in many tribes, female education is still banned. This is because after getting a reasonable amount of education, the women will raise questions regarding their condition which is unacceptable to the dominant male class and this thing has also been presented in Pashto tappa.
- Patriarchy exists in Pashtun society in its worst form. The world has advanced into the 21<sup>st</sup> century; however, the Pashtun women are still living in the obsolete system of patriarchy. The women have no right to speak or to ask questions and therefore, the women take the path of tappa.
- The women are always expected to give her life for the sake of her brother or her father. Traditional Pashtun woman does it and receives wishes from her family members.

However, the men are free of such impositions and compulsions and therefore, they enjoy life the way they want to while Pashtun women are kept inside the houses.

- Pashtun society is still under the ‘Private Sphere’ of Sylvia Welby’s theory. The public sphere is not acceptable to the case of Pashtuns because their women are not allowed to do jobs in the private sector. Only a few reach to the colleges and universities where there is male domination is present because of natural numerical reasons.
- Pashtuns are reluctant not because they felt that the women are beneath them; the Pashtuns feel that it is their obligation to secure their honour by keeping women safe and to keep women safe, they have to keep them inside the houses. The women, who were nourished on such pattern had believed that this was what they were born to do. Some of these women had never complained but wish of freedom to maneuver and move around without any fear and restriction might have been the key reason why women opted to resist against the Tappas through their voice.
- The women must have felt that this culture of patriarchy is doing more wrong to them than good and therefore, they opted to resist. The women must have felt that it was their religious obligation to raise voice because according to the description of the Hadith of the Holy Prophet of the Muslims, it is the duty of the Muslims, if one has strong faith, to stop the wrong doing with the power of ones hands; if not, one must stop it verbally and if one couldn’t even do that, one must feel it wrong inside ones heart. Therefore, the women, in order to show their strong faith, became vocal, in hidden text, to show their resilience against patriarchy.

- A little aspect of psychology must be discussed here. A young female child, till the age of 7, is free to roam around. However, when she grows up, restrictions are imposed on it at once which definitely impact her thinking in which she remembers her days of freedom.
- Pashto Tappas are the stories which depict the true face of women's position and their status in Pashtun society. The women only became respectful once she becomes old and have young children. Still, her respect is limited only to the village or the neighbourhood whereas a man's reputation could go beyond that. Pashto Tappa is the key for women to acquire further fame; however, the names of the authors of Pashto Tappas are always forgotten because they were mainly written by the women. It also shows that the men in Pashtun society couldn't even bear the names of their women along with cultural artifacts.

### **Suggestions:**

- Pashtun society needs to be modified as it is the need of time. The modernization is impacting the mindset of the people and set norms are being destroyed in urban areas of Pashtun society. The urban-rural gap is getting prominent and therefore, some norms of women subjugation need to be changed to women empowerment.
- The most important way of women empowerment is through education. Women can do wonders if given opportunity of education as they can opt any profession they want. With their empowerment, the patriarchal norms will be broken and women will play their part in the progress of the country.
- With the breaking of patriarchal norms, the women will be able to stand for their rights both in accordance with the religion and law of the country. The women will be able to ask for their share in the property which is their legal as well as religious right but the Pashtun society, often, refrains from exercising this practice.

- With better access to the opportunities, better access to health facilities also come. The Pashtun women who die because of lack of health facilities might be able to save their lives with better educational opportunities.
- The tribal setup, if modernized, might change the fate of Pashtun society as a whole because it would encourage people to take up jobs and work for their families as well as their country.
- With better facilities, people will become better associated with the religion that might break the nexus of religion and patriarchy. The clergy would then be on the back footing and the women would be able to rise and shine.

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