### APPENDIX II

**Women officers in the American Folklore Society, 1888–1940**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>1880s</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Alice Fletcher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st Vice-President</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Zelia Nuttall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910s</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Elsie Clews Parsons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vice-President</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>President</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Louise Pound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secretary/Treasurer</td>
<td>Gladys Reichard</td>
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<td>1930s</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Martha Beckwith</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Elsie Clews Parsons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secret/Treasurer</td>
<td>Ruth Underhill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Reuss (1974: 30).

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Shalinsky, A C

*Ethnos* 1986

14:4

p 323-43

Islam in Tribal Societies

*From the Atlas to the Indus*

Ed. Akbar S. Ahmed + David M. Hant

1984

Routledge & Kegan Paul plc.
SUFFERING AS ESTHETIC AND ETHIC AMONG PASHTUN WOMEN

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Synopsis—Along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan, in the Pashtun society, pain and suffering are an emic criterion of honor among women. This aesthetic ethic is expressed outwardly in statements and narratives by women in everyday life, but especially when their sons or husbands die, get ill or are the victims of accidents. On these occasions, related and non-related women are under obligation to visit the mother (or wife) and bring condolence. The woman entertains her female guests with a performed detailed narrative account of the event, in which she portrays herself as the devastated woman. Aesthetics and ethics are here combined, as the audience judges a ‘beautiful story’ by the amount of suffering the woman performer expresses having endured.

Mothers must suffer over their sons in order to gain status and recognition, and a wounded or dead son presents an ideal occasion for a mother to attain this recognition by way of a narrative of the event, which acts as a vehicle through which she can publicly display her actions for the benefit of the community.

The same image of the devoted, self-sacrificing woman can be observed throughout popular culture. (e.g. films, chapbook romances, songs, folk poetry), which is created and performed by men.

This paper examines this ‘tragic aesthetic’ more closely, comparing one woman’s personal narrative performed for visitors on the occasion of her son’s shooting,2 with a chapbook romance which is very popular among Pashtuns because it is considered to illustrate a woman’s ideal behavior within the code of honor.3 In effect, her honor here results in her self-effacement and death. I compare women as bearers of folklore (the personal narrative) with women in folklore (the popular romance written by a male poet). and conclude by raising questions as to the identity and image of women as painted in each case.
knowing disaster is afoot, but not being told about it directly. Her concern and anxiety mount over a series of small events, culminating in a scene where we see her despairing over a cow getting into some vegetables she'd left lying on a bed. There is very little talk of her wounded son in all this, as the mother builds herself up to where she returns us to her initial discovery of the accident, this time from her own point of view. She is by now the sole subject of her narrative.

The fact that Pashto's channel for reporting speech is direct discourse, the narrator uses the present tense as a ground on which to add heightened mimetic speech in order to recreate the immediacy of the tragedy. She pauses to rock, weep and sigh before beginning what can almost be perceived as a new narrative. As she recounts how her niece first told her of the accident, however, she tells us the girl announced there had been a fight, as opposed to her earlier formidably detailed account of his accidentally shooting a loaded gun into his leg. But no one interrupts her on this contradiction, or seems surprised at the change in the story. For the subject is no longer the son or the accident, but the narrator herself in the role of mother. She is the subject or direct object of almost every utterance thereafter. Her voice becomes emotional, and she begins to stop and cry at intervals. She also begins to address my friend directly with regular interjections of 'you hear?', which should be understood as 'Do you realize what I went through?!' In other words, the call for attention to herself is far greater than any to her son.

'Where was he sitting?
Where was he shot?
You hear?'

Anyway
I started feeling ill.
Anyway I began vomiting.
I was vomiting.
And really I went through the worst.

And Khorshid told her
(t, "May God damn your house;
now what will we do with her?")
Well, the men were all standing around me,
Khandad and Mobajar
whether they were family or not,
I mean they were ALL around me.

Someone poured me a little water like that,
I drank the water; then I . . .
I didn't say anything to them
I just sat there in their midst
drinking the water.

I just looked at them
"What are you doing?"
(That), "We're going to hospital."
(That), "Okay, you wait
so I can go home
and go inside a minute."
(That), "Don't go inside,"
Khorshid told me.
(That), "No I must go in."
(That), "No, don't go in."

So it was
There were seven thousand rupees lying
in the communal savings
I took them up.

Here was a strange man with him,
he says (t) "Blood,
blood is dripping
Blood is dripping."

Oh Mother!

(sighs, cries silently, rocks—long pause)
By the time this scene is over, the narrator mitigates her agitation and takes hold of the situation. She becomes the determined mother, for whom no one can bar the way to her son. She takes the household savings, leaves the tribal village in a rented pick-up and goes to the Peshawar hospital. We see her in the story, as if she were alone to answer to the hospital guards, to argue, fight, and bribe her way in, and we see her, finally, proudly bring him back to the village, as she boasts having seen certain sites from a suzuki pick-up driven by a stranger, another fact she stresses with pride. Not once during all this does she make any mention of her husband or nephews and other male relatives who had accompanied her.

"I took that money Auntie and hired a special suzuki.

When we arrived everyone said (that), "Now we can't go in."

I told them (that), "By the Koran," (that), "I'm going in."

You hear?

I reminded them of your brother, how I'd gone in to see even him.

No one let me.

You hear?

With a world of policemen and guards standing around

I went in past them

How could I get to my son?

(That), "It's not allowed."

They stopped Zaher Shah, Khandaji's son.

(That), "Timur must not have come yet, you know? Firuz Shah is coming with him so then I can go in with them."

I can go in!"

I told them,

"But show me the way and which room he's in."

My dear! They said (that), "We don't allow anyone just like that."

But they sent a child with me (that), "He'll bring you."

In this entire final part of the story, the narrator presents herself as determined, her devotion making her capable of crossing all boundaries and breaking all rules, a notion to which I will return. Her son's accident offered her the opportunity to demonstrate publicly (in the form of her narrative) her Pashtunness, acting out the ideal behavior of a mother devoted to her son and empowered by her grief for him. This is not to disparage or doubt the sincerity of the grief, but to recognize that it also answers to the aesthetic and ethic of suffering expected of women. We must be able to evaluate this narrator's story in light of the way she has chosen to relate the experience and draw that portrait of herself in the public context of tapos. This particular narrative ends well, giving the genre-formulaic conclusion a positive note:

'Well, to me,

God forbid, nothing at all can happen.

Anyway, many other worries have pelted down on me

No other worries rain on me now.'

As was mentioned earlier, tragedy and suffering are an ethnic aesthetic criterion of honor for Pashtun women. Mothers must suffer over their sons in order to gain status and recognition by ways of a narrative of the event, and the narrative acts as a vehicle through which she can publicly display her actions for the benefit of the community. Hence, performing the narrative within a ritualized situation, for a large audience in the tapos context, becomes crucial. Once we understand the ethnic/aesthetic of pain and suffering in Pashtun society, it is easy to see why the tapos visit, particularly in the case of death and illness, becomes the ideal setting for this type of statement.

We can now return to the original case of my hostess in Peshawar and her performance. Although I was not yet aware of the intricacies of the tapos tradition, I was seeing it from the mother's point of view, rather than from the visitors', The guests were coming to congratulate her on her choice of a bride and her management of her son's wedding. And she was using the occasion to convert the joy over her son into an expression of her own suffering.

Some background information will help evaluate this behavior. She is an upper class urban woman from an extremely traditional old-family background, having intense difficulty in making the adjustment to her modern existence, in which she sees her sons educated, professional and living independently and away from home. She was faced with the prospect that she and her husband will live alone without her sons and daughters-in-law for company. By converting the focus of the story from one of joy to one of her own pain, she was manifesting this fact without having to express it directly, by resorting to a traditional frame.

I suggest that these narratives operate largely to uphold a woman's image of Pashtunness in her community. They are an index of female identity, a separate identity from that of anthropologists' usual discussions of Pashtun (male) identity presented in terms of segmentary lineage. Women do not necessarily have the same models as men, i.e. genealogies, for presenting themselves. In the case of the tapos narrative, a woman is showing herself through dramatization, to fit perfectly the norm of expected behavior. The same image of the devoted.
self-sacrificing woman can be observed throughout popular culture, e.g., films, chapbook romances, songs, folk poetry, ... to which we now turn our attention, in order to see how the image differs when presented by women for women as opposed to by men for male consumption.

My prior work on the Pashtun chapbook romances has been to illustrate the difficulty of translating an aesthetic utterly bizarre and even shocking, if not outrageously grotesque and inadmissible or, at best, simply ludicrous in our own language and society. Our own romances, often written by women (Radway, 1984) are of a very different sensibility from the Pashtun romances written, sung, and put into popular films by men. The pain and suffering of women remain the essential aesthetic ingredient for a romance story, but in these male-made forms the use of that pain to empower a woman to break the boundaries of social rules is never visible, as in the personal narrative given by women themselves. Structurally, this is the major point of difference in comparing women as bearers of folklore in the personal narrative, with women in folklore, as in the popular romances written by male poets.

Chapbook and cassette romances are immensely popular within the Pashtun culture. One of the best known and most often cited of the romances among Pashtuns is the story of Sher Alam and Memuney for it seems to embody for them many of the essential cultural criteria of what it means to be Pashtun. I have chosen a particular passage of this romance because it is the nucleus of the story, and I examine how and why it is so important. and has found its into other folklore genres so that a mere reference to certain key words suffices to conjure up the entire scene and story.

The commercialized romance is most often taken from its usual oral cant-e-fable form and then written, using the Persian narrative verse (mahnavi), meanwhile keeping a repeated stress pattern characteristic of ordinary Pashtun speech. On the lexical and syntactical levels, the language used is simple and each line ideally receives twelve syllables. The chapbooks are handwritten, lithographed on cheap paper, and sold for approximately ten cents in open cheap bazaar book stalls rather than in bookstores throughout the NWFP. They are bought to be read aloud, but have a decreasing readership for two reasons: first, educated Pashtuns read and write Urdu, not Pashto; and if they do read Pashto, they do not read these romances, nor do they consider their authors poets; secondly, the cassette industry also now accommodates romance consumers, who are largely illiterate.

Popular singers today use the written version as support material to sing the tale, accompanied by the usual back-up of any combination of harmonium (floor accordion), rabab (bowed string instrument), and tabla (drum). The cassette industry is extremely important; in any bazaar of Pakistan’s NWFP, one can hear cassette recorders played from shop to shop, tea house to tea house, competing with each other for volume, even into the late hours of the night. Here in the male-dominated environment of the bazaar, are broadcast the stories of women who suffer and die over their men. There is a reason why these romances do not dominate in the women's domestic sphere.

In the next few pages appears a translated example of this aesthetic as fabricated and consumed by men. It is the story of Sher Alam and Memuney taken from the cassette sung by Wahed Gol, who bases his performance on the chapbook written by the folk poet Jamal of Sangar.

The story begins with the romance and marriage of Sher Alam and his cousin, Ajiba. With time, Ajiba bears him no children, and Sher Alam begins looking elsewhere. He falls in love with Memuney, has妃父 arrange their marriage. Memuney proceeds quickly to produce a son and becomes the favored of the two wives. Sher Alam owns a small store and one day must leave to get supplies. It is to be a long journey, during which time he leaves his wives behind to keep the house and store. One day, a stranger comes to buy tobacco. The poet gives almost three lines to show how Memuney hid her self behind the door so that only her hand showed when she passed the tobacco to the customer. But here is what follows:

'Ajiba was following close behind. 13 Opportunity fell right into her hands.
She saw Memuney and Shekh in the store.
She let out one cry and a second.

She said, "Oh, house and village, be informed! I came upon the two lovers alone.
I surprised Memuney Bibi and Shekh.
I tell the truth, no more no less."

At that cry the entire village was alerted.
Large and small gathered from every corner.
With the cry, Shekh fled.
Memuney remained frozen to the spot.

The whole village berated her.
Bibi Memuney was belittled to God.

Her sweet mouth could make no sound.
Moisture dripped from her eyes onto her collar.

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13 The lines here are those of the poet in his written version. The translation is mine, and the segmentation into stanzas is the work of Dell Hymes, whom I thank for his revision of this material.
Her mother and father also began to weep with her.
The rest of the village returned at once.
Her mother tells Memuney apart:
"We cannot save you from Sher Alam."

Memuney said, "May there be an oath by God all-pure
I shall only leave this house dead.
I shall not leave this house alive.
Let my head be cut to pieces by the sword:
Before I disgrace the name of my ancestors.

If you throw me into the river at sunrise.
I'll make my white breast a shield against death.
I will never earn the name of a woman who elopes."

Everyone began to weep with her.
At dawn when the mullahs called to prayer
And day chased away night and grew clear.
Her mother stands by, striking her face over Memuney.

When the sun's rays entered the village at morning.
Ajiba announced her gratifying news to kith and kin.
Memuney's friends come;
Some weep with her, some berate her.
May such disgrace befall no one.
As came last night when my life was destroyed.
Memuney dropped her head onto her knees.
From shame, she lifted her eyes to no one.
A flood had swept Sher Alam's home.
The shrine of his honor had been entirely destroyed.

There was a bustle, tumult, a noisy brawl.
Memuney was wounded by calumny.
Memuney gained infamy because of Shekh.
Shekh fled to Daka at once.

Time came for Sher Alam to return.
Four days were left to count.

If you should buy this cassette.
They're all in Sherbaz Khan's shop.
When you get to Kabari Bazar
His shop is the third one. Jabar Khan will be there.14

So it is, in brief, that he came home.
He arrived tired, so tired he fell without restraint.
He says to Memuney, "Your lashes are lifeless today.
Like a rose that is wilted from thirst."

Great tears came from the young girl's eyes.
She did not raise her head from her veil.
No matter how much Sher Alam questioned.
Memuney remained without reply.

Suspicion rose in Sher Alam's heart. Oh wise ones.
He went to inform himself about it.
Sher Alam Khan found out discretely what he could.
He thought, "I am swept by the current of the sea."

Pale, horrified, he came home.
Ajiba came before him like a dog.
Bringing her hand to her chest before Sher Alam Khan
She said, "Highness, I am your sacrifice.
"Memuney was in the shop with Shekh.
"Infer the rest from the book of your wit."

When Ajiba told him this news.
She turned Sher Alam's heart into kabab.

In his own house the sword's blow got him.
Tortured, he approached his beloved.

Oh Jamal, he stood facing Memuney.
He told her, "Remove your veil, let the light fall on your face."

Sher Alam said to Memuney.
"You did not keep the promises you made me.
"My being was swept out to sea.
"When I began to trust in women.

"You said, 'My rights and power are yours.'
"You said it again and again at the wedding.

"You are always loving to my face.
"What did you do when my back was turned?

"My name was like a mountain.
"You have made it a feather for the wind to carry."

Memuney said, "Oh, Sher Alam.
"I am not guilty. I swear to God.
"I remained faithful to my vows.
"I'll parade the Koran on my head for you.

"Whatever anyone says is counted true.
"Spots have stained my white dress.

14 It is typical for the singer at some point in the tale, to insert such propaganda, in thanks to the shop owner sponsoring him and making the recordings. The lines are sung in the same melody and rhythm, using the same rhyme scheme and number of syllables as the other lines.
"My life and head are yours.  
"My eyes accept whatever you will.  

"Your name is light because of me.  
"It will restore its weight if you kill me."

"I have no courage to think of slaughter,  
"When I see the brightness of your face."

"Don't ruin your father's and forefathers' name.  
"Slaughter me that Pukhto may be done."

"The name of all Pukhtuns hangs on this.  
"I am Pukhtun, I turn my neck to death.  
"Be quick! Take up your sharpened sword,  
"That the image of Pukhtun stand erect."

Sher Alam said, "It must be.  
"The Pukhtuns are my people; for them I must turn you to smoke,  
"Though you are dearer to men than life and wealth.

"A horrible, horrible thing has happened."

"You have no right to let things be.  
"I have much observed the Book of Pukhto.  
"Death is better than a life like this,  
"Where big and small eternally dishonor me.  
"Life was that life which has passed,  
"When the entire village would come to greet me.  
"A spot has stained my clean shirt front.  
"The spot will not leave my clean shirt front.  
"Even if plunged in acid a hundred times."

Sher Alam could endure no more.  
He seizes the knife and slaughters Memuney.  
Memuney stares with wide wide eyes  
As Sher Alam thrusts the knife into her throat.

He draws the knife out of Memuney.  
A jetty of blood spurts onto the wall.

Memuney's throat let out a gasp.

Sher Alam was left standing in red blood.

Sher Alam's pukhto was now complete.  
He cups his hand in Memuney's blood.  
Her spirit vanished in red blood.  
Both of them, oh Jamal, had accomplished pukhto.

For honor he had killed Memuney.  
Sher Alam had laid his wealth before her.  
He said, "I swear you were dearest to me."  
For her he would have sacrificed wealth and life.

But the duty of pukhto fell upon him,  
And he slaughtered Memuney at once."

It is hard to restrain one's outrage over this last passage, as one must endure, line by line, to see an innocent woman bow to death in order to preserve her husband's honor. It is not surprising that Memuney is a heroine among Pashtun men, but rarely among women. Many women I asked about this romance waved it off claiming it was a story told by professionals, not by them. It had no real place among them. This fact leads us to question how women really feel concerning the great show of honor, which has until now been presented as belonging to the Pashtun culture at large. How much of it do they feel a part and how do they locate their own identity? In seeing ethic and esthetic joined in performance situations, one questions whose ethic, whose esthetic?

What I have tried to imply—and it is no new argument—is simply that it is time we stop assuming women's values and senses of identity as packaged in along with the men's. Folklore supplies us with a good tool for those values, however, by examining expressive genres of behavior; not the usual genres assumed universal—because clearly they are not—but those particular to women. Women's concerns are different, and are expressed differently through channels we still need to locate. But the difference will emerge most clearly when we can compare the concerns, channels and values used by men and women. Women's self image is made more perceivable when considered alongside the image and preserved by men in more 'standard' forms that we have for so long taken to be the only one.

REFERENCES


FOLK MEDICINE PRACTICES:
WOMEN AS KEEPERS AND CARRIERS OF KNOWLEDGE

SHARON A. SHARP
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Synopsis—Historically, women have played crucial roles in the care of sick family members. and this pattern continues today. Women's involvement in folk medicine is particularly noteworthy, yet there has been very little study of this topic. Discussions of folk medicine frequently overlook and/or downplay women's contributions. Only recently have researchers focused on women and examined the complexity and extensiveness of female healers' knowledge and practices. Studies of three areas in the United States where folk medicine has flourished—the Ozarks, Appalachia, and the South—provide valuable insights about the major roles women have played as midwives, herbalists and spiritual healers. Intergenerational networking by women, especially within kin groups, has proven to be the most important mechanism for transmission of folk healing knowledge and beliefs in these locales. Information from studies in the U.S. highlights both the limitations and the horizons existing in the exploration of women's roles as keepers and carriers of folk medicine traditions.

INTRODUCTION

Reliance on folk medicine seems an anachronism in a world filled with sophisticated medical technologies and highly structured systems of medical care, yet in many parts of the world, near and far, even in the centers of bustling cities, folk medicine is a living art and a normal way of life for millions of people (Morton, 1974: 13). In the United States this is especially true in three areas: (1) the Ozarks, a mountainous area in the central U.S. in portions of Arkansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Missouri; (2) Appalachia, a mountainous region ranging from southcentral New York to central Alabama; and (3) other non-Appalachian areas of the South. Folk medicine's endurance in these areas has been documented extensively (Aikman, 1977; Bolyard, 1981; Morton, 1974; Oakleaf, 1984; Randolph, 1947; Solomon & Solomon, 1979; Watson, ed., 1984). Evidence from these areas, therefore, provides valuable insights about women's roles as key practitioners of folk medicine. It is these crucial but much-overlooked roles that are the focus of this paper.

Interestingly, recent studies of familial health have repeatedly shown the wife—mother to be the most influential person as far as health attitudes and behaviors, e.g. Litman (1974); Pratt (1976). Some scholars have even noted that in many areas of health-related research the word “parent” seems to be synonymous with the word “mother” (McNeil & Chabassol, 1984: 119). Despite such strong evidence of women's involvement in informal health care systems, there has been little focus in studies of folk medicine on the role of women.

FOLK MEDICINE—DEFINITIONS AND TRADITIONS

The study of folk medicine has evolved as an area of study in anthropology, sociology, and folklore studies. The primary sources for the current investigation are the latter, since the folklore framework provides unique insights into traditional customs and beliefs of a given group of people. Nevertheless, 'folk medicine and its practitioners have never really found a comfortable or consistent place in the generic organizational scheme that has characterized folklore scholarship since its inception. Most often in American folklore studies folk medicine has been considered a subdivision of the "minor genre" called superstition' (Hufford, 1983: 306). Studies of folk medicine, furthermore, have been limited by the approaches of researchers. "The study of folk healing began with the collection and listing of cures and "beliefs" (ibid.: 306), and the cataloguing approach still abounds. Seriously lacking are studies of folk medicine as an element in the social fabric and health system of an area (ibid.: 307).

Various traditional approaches to categorization in the study of folk medicine have proven useful but