



RESEARCH PAPER

Folk Tales, Sufism and Spiritualism in Balochistan: A Case Study of Mast Tawakali

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ABSTRACT

Folklore and its literature are the representatives of a nation's culture and civilization. This research article is an effort to understand Sufism and its development in Balochistan with special reference to the great Sufi poet Mast Tawkali, focusing on the folk tales of Mast Tawkali and Sammo. The land of Balochistan is full of unknown Sufis who have never gotten the attention of academia and researchers. Mast Tawakali had special attributes and character that transformed him into a Sufi, and the poems of Mast are still part of the Balochi literature, which was learned by the people of his time and transformed from generation to generation. Now these poems are also available in written form, from which the folk tale of Mast Tawakali and Sammo is shaped and presented. This article provides a new insight into the Sufi poet Mast Tawakali by presenting the folk tale in its original form with reference to the poems of Mast Tawakali. The methodological approach in this research study involves qualitative research techniques and the formal analysis of historical approaches. This article concludes that the folk tale of Mast Tawakali is a presentation of the Baloch society, which was based on traditional society, but love was also one of the factors in the society that cannot be ignored.

KEYWORDS Balochistan, Folk tales, Sammo, Sufiism, Tawakali

Introduction

Baloch traditional stories and folktales, which are derived from folktales that are pertinent in various parts of Balochistan, have significantly contributed to the development of the people's mentalities and cultural attire. One of them continued to be the traditional love stories, which are highly valued and have had a significant influence on Baloch society. Baloch folklore is a collection of customs that have developed over many years in Balochistan. Baloch preserves these folktales, which primarily deal with themes of tragic love, resistance, and struggle. Among the many such unselfish souls that survived those times and continue to exist now is Mast Tawakali. Sufism knows no boundaries. It is a natural phenomenon that can occur in any region of the world. (Sajid & Sadiq, 2016). The Baloch Society was greatly influenced by the teachings of the Baloch Sufis. Because Sufi teachings have a spiritual value, Baloch areas continue to be rich. Sufi poetry and writings have fostered religious virtue and humanitarianism that have helped Baloch tribal society. Numerous well-known Sufi and Shuyookh shrines can be found in Balochistan, and these shrines have played a significant role in improving Baloch society on a social level. The poetry and teachings of the Sufis have had a significant impact on South Asian politics and culture. Regarding the function that Sufis fulfill in every given culture, viewpoints vary. They continue to concentrate on their spiritual pursuits at times, and at other times they actively assist in the maintenance of society (Mast, 1986).

The Islamic mystic is widely regarded as a Sufi. The word Sufism comes from the Arabic word suf, which means wool (Muzaffar, & Rafique, 2020). In the eighteenth-century CE, they were given this name because they dressed in wool. The Sufis are often identified as one of the following: Salik, a spiritual traveler; Zahid, an ascetic; Abid—a slave or devotee; Faqeer or Darwesh—poverty; Arif—endowed with spiritual wisdom and/or ashiq—lover. They have also been referred to as peers, sheikhs, and murshids. They are also referred to

as Walis, or Allah's friends. In the case of Mast Tawakali, it was seen that Mast was not a learned man and never had attained any worldly or religious knowledge any time. All his attributes and miracles were considered as God gifted. It was essential that the for understanding the naturalistic Sufi patterns followed by the Mast Tawakali and more importantly he was never claimed to be a part of any of the Sufi sects of which were introduced in South Asia in different period. From the clothing and outfit, he was more a Fakir and according to some sources Tawakali was arrested in Dehli because of his outfit and wearing later the administration leave him by considering him mad and unable to focus on things. This article is multi-faceted, tracing out the folk tale of Mast Tawakali and the transformation of Mast into a Sufi in an artistic way. This also includes the folk tale, which was developed in a mythological way as a Balochi oral tradition, and now it is available in written form with different interpretations (Zuberi, 2002).

Literature Review

Balochi folktales are part of Baloch society and literature which is being produced from eighteenth century. A number of commentaries and articles have been written on the folklore and folktales in Balochi and other languages. Some of the peer reviewed articles are reviewed to understand the case of Sammo and Mast Tawakali. Naeem Dilpul while comparing the literary works of Bulh Shah and Mast Tawakali has mentioned that when addressing individuals who have exacerbated social or religious tensions and divisions within society or religion, Bulhe seems a little irate. He speaks in terms that are viewed as harsh and inflexible by society. In contrast, Mast Twakkali emphasizes softer expressiveness while bringing nature to life and sharing some of his thoughts and unique discourse (Dilpul, 2016). In the same way, Muhammad Suleman Ejaz while impacts of Mast Tawakali on Baloch society has presented that the literature makes clear how Sufis have influenced society. Sufis' teachings have also had an impact on contemporary civilizations. Sufis have long been a component of the social structure, functioning as an institution to control specific social functions in an effort to propagate Islam and foster harmony among people. Sufism contributed to the formation of a civilization that was predicated on the merging of ties in this way. The socio-cultural dynamics of the Baloch tribal society are revealed in Mast Tawakli's poetry. It questions and denounces damaging customs pertaining to Baloch women's social standing and role. In particular, he has highlighted the Baloch society's emphasis on women's empowerment. Tawakli's associations, affiliations, and belongings with Baloch land, culture, language, and society are also reflected in his poetry narratives. He praised the tribal judicial system and mentioned how it helped the less fortunate tribe members. In terms of Marris's bravery and that of the other Baloch tribesmen, it can be said that Mast poetry accurately portrays the Baloch society. (Ijaz, Chaudhry & Shah, 2020).

Material and Methods

A type of qualitative study in human studies known as "arts-based research" makes use of the ideas, methods, and values of the arts. It is identified by the aesthetic features (or design components) that are present in the study text as well as the inquiry method (Banach & Ryan, 2009). As a result, traditional research methods connected to the social sciences diverge greatly from arts-based research in many aspects. In this research the some of the art work is presented related to the folk tales of Balochistan and the art work is analyzed in a thematic approach. This article is art-based research which include a broad spectrum of artistic disciplines, such as literary arts (poetry, narrative), performing arts and visual arts (painting, sculpture, and photography). Every mode represents events, perceptions, and emotions in a different way and provides interesting vantage points. Within the context of arts-based research (ABR), multimodal inquiry is a sophisticated methodology that uses a range of creative and sensory modalities for study conduct and communication. These modalities can include a wide range of expressions, such as tactile, spatial, linguistic and visual (Hannula, Suoranta & Vadén, 2014).

Folklore, Folk Tales and Balochistan

Folk tales and folklore have been an essential part of human culture throughout the ages, even before the advent of civilization, and later on, folk tales were made part of civilization, which was different with respect to the people, groups, and nations. Folklore, as it is mentioned in "*Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art*," includes all the cultural patterns and approaches that are the representatives of a nation and the region. An estimate states that the emergence of folklore and ancient men coincided with the arrival of humans (White & McCormick, 2011). Every country and group have its own mythology and myths, which are told in unique ways. These brief tales allow us to make assumptions about the instruments and customs they follow. While stories might be long or short, legends are frequently lengthy. The only distinction between contemporary and historical legends is that the former were only spoken orally, whereas the latter are recorded in written form. These myths and legends are ingrained in human civilization and its advancement, and they place a high value on certain circumstances, people, and events (Ammar, Tahir & Channa, 2021).

The folklores attached with the emotions of the people which they transform to the next generation in different forms but the main process through which the folk tales remained intact with the people is the oral tradition. The oral tradition folk tales in Balochi language are part of the Baloch society which are had been initiated to be part of the written historical approaches from the early 20th century. Baloch folk epics used to be sung for a few nights in front of family members and close relatives during the birth of a child, as part of the long heritage of folklore in Balochistan. It represented the infant's assimilation into Baloch culture. Every family gathering was marked by the singing of folk songs. They play a major role in Baloch literature and rituals. (Dilpul, 2016).

The tales of Hani and Shah Mureed, Shahdad and Mahnaz, Lallah and Granaz, Bebag and Granaz, and Mast and Sammo are among the important Baloch folklore. Tribal minstrels used to go throughout Balochistan, learning their tunes so they could play them for any size crowd. However, the Baloch epics gained immense significance when the upper classes started to write these stories in poetry. Still cherished as a component of Balochistan's traditional traditions, the heroic poetry of Balochis chronicles the heroic deeds of multiple monarchs from different ages. However, Balochi folklore sheds light on the people's valor, valiant actions, tribal history, migration, and love ballads (Dames, 1902).

The folk tales and the folklores in Baloch society are important and almost known to every Baloch as cultural outfits. Balochi folk tales related to love, land, daily life and heroism are numerous and when the saying of folk tale initiated in Balochistan is not known to the members of the society. Not only was Mast Tawakali a symbol of hope during his lifetime in Balochistan, but his work as an inspiration and promoter of moral standards is still considered incredibly calming and powerful. This makes him stand out. Furthermore, Mast Tawakali's poetic quality is too ingrained to be ignored. His poetry has a particularly special feature in that he gave the weak and oppressed women in his society a path to recovery. This quality makes Mast Tawakali more respected than other poets (Buzdar, 2018).

Mast Tawakali was a great poet in the Balochi language and a well-known Sufi during his day. Sammo's affection marked the beginning of Mast's path toward spiritual purity and a deeper connection with God. According to Sufism, everything possesses a divine presence, which Mast found in Sammo. "I am an ordinary Marri of Kahan, not to talk of my standing; Sammo was merely a means to an end," he says in a lyric. "Nindo'n Kahan a Bitago'n Kahaani Marri; Wa Raza Beet o Bahaanag Sammo e Kuth ey" (was with the marri's of mountains, went himself and give the excuses of Sammo). Mast's poetry is still a source of inspiration for people who are suffering (Yates, 1894).

Mast Tawakali Folk Tale

Tawakali was born in the Mandek Band region, close to Kahan, around 1825. Mast was a member of the Mari tribe's Loharani (Shirani) branch. Lal Han or Lal Khan (Lal Khan) was the name of his father. Tawakali's father died when he was just 14 years old, and his mother died when he was only a baby. Peeruk was the name of his brother. Due to a namesake relationship with a tribal chief's family, Tawakali's original name, Sohrab Khan, was altered to Tawakali. Following the passing of his father, Tawakali travelled to Maawand, where he was raised by Baloch Khan. From an early age Mast was different from his brother in opinion and thinking, he was more naturalistic. Mast mostly used to wander in his area with his friends and used to think deeply about all the natural things. In a similar vein, Mast was out and about in the Rastarani area with his close buddy Bahar Khan when they got caught in a storm and sought refuge in a haven-tent, eventually finding it in Sammo's. The terrible weather persisted in revealing the tent. Sammo, a recent bride, was sprinting from one end of her tent to the other, securing it and covering her household goods (Dar, 2010).



Figure:1 Figure 1. Mast Tawakali and Sammo 2×2 Acrylic on Canvas

Thunder rumbled, lightning continued to flare, and the stunned Tawakali stared at the beautiful emblem. At night, Sammo's family got together. In accordance with custom, they amused their visitors. However, Tawakali skipped meals and slept the entire night. When his friend Bahar Khan questioned him about what was wrong with Tawakali, the latter was dumbfounded and unable to respond. In the morning, Bahar Khan noted his dire circumstances and inquired again, "Have you been bitten by any snakes?" "The housewife has captured my heart; I am of no use anymore," Mast retorted on an impulse (Mitha, 2022).

Sammo was a member of the Kalowani clan of the Marri tribe. One of Sammo's brothers was named Dilmurad, and her father's name was Bashkia. Sammo's husband was Biwargh (Bibargh), a Rahmkani branch member of the Marri tribe. Sammo had one son who died at an early age and two daughters. Sammo passed away in 1880 during the month of Ramadan and was buried in the Makhmaar area. Sammo was not Tawakali's typical idealized woman. But as love knows no bounds, Tawakali fell in love with the humble married woman. Tawakali never tried to approach his beloved Sammo or assumed he would gain her love.

As they say, "The first sight of love is the last of wisdom." The naive Tawakali became Mast instead of Tawakali with which people call him Mast Tawakali, or Mast-en-Tawakali, which means frenzied Tawakali. He lived the life of a vagabond, going from place to place. He was hanging out with Sufis, poets, and saints during the day. His residences served as shrines after thinking about the love of Sammo, his thinking changed and he never thought to contact directly with Sammo which transformed her love towards the love for Allah and towards Sufism. (Mitha, 2022).

For his love, Mast Tawakali used to lay down on a stone near by the hut of Sammo for several days which was not considered according to the Baloch traditions a good act. The family of Sammo, later complaints about Tawakali's behavior was done to the relatives and his brothers. Tawalaki's brothers came to take him, they were stunned to sea him in this condition but they persuaded him to go with them. This was not the end of the Tawakali's story as he returned back after some time and sit at the same place and stared towards Sammo's Hut. Later the family of Sammo complaint to Sardar Gazen who was informed that Tawakali has gone mad in love of Sammo. Later Tawakali started a journey towards the mountains and roamed in jungles and with the passage of time his condition improved. It was the same period Tawakali start saying poems which become popular among the people at large most of the poems were related to the beauty of Sammo which embraced the Sammo and her family. Even the family members of Sammo planned to kill him and Tawakali was thrown from the top of the mountain but nothing happen to him. After this incident people thought he is a Majzoob. This was his first step towards the Sufism.

This tale ending has different interpretation from authors and story tellers. As it is mentioned by some of the authors that Tawakali stayed in Makka during his last days of like but Jameel Zuberi has mentioned that he died near Kholu area and buried there, people use to visit his grave and pay homage to him as a Sufi (Mitha, 2022).



Figure: 2 Mast Tawakali Transformation as a Sufi 2×2 Acrylic on Canvas Source.

Mast Tawakali poetry and transformation to Sufism

Most of the Sufi's in South Asia remained to poets and their idea and thinking were drawn from the poems of the Sufis. Along with the Mast Tawakali folk tale, the main thing which make it alive are the poems of Mast Tawakali. Mast's poetry soon began to travel from person to person and from heart to heart, as Plato once said, "at the touch of love everyone becomes a poet." He was frequently spotted at temples. Mast became well-known as a saint among the public, who came to him in search of his favor and prayers due to his purportedly amazing workings and extraordinary exploits. Many supernatural occurrences were credited to Mast. When Sardar Jamal Khan Leghari intended to perform the hajj, he brought Mast with him. Mr. Leghari has a practice of putting Mast's miraculous healings to the test. As directed by the Sardar, Mast was thrown into the water during the expedition but nothing

happened to him. These supernatural blessings were part of most of the Sufis. As the most well-known and significant Sufi saints of South Asia include Baba Fareed, Lal Shahbaz Qalander, Sachal Sarmast, Baba Bulleh Shah, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Abdullah Shah Gazi and Bari Imam. These all the Sufi had influenced the people with their poetry and miraculous activities. Sufi's surpassed ceremonies and are now sanctified humanists across the universe. Speaking metaphorically, the holy "resides within the body," which sums up the diversity these saints have embraced. Sufi poetry addressed issues that the common person encounters, and it is evident that the poetry of these saints is still relevant today since people can still identify with and relate to the subjects these great poets wrote about. The poetic expressions of Mast Tawakali can be divided into two phases from his early poems on Sammo to become a Sufi and poems in the name of Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) (Ali, 2019).

First Phase of Tawakali's Poetry

The early poems of Mast Tawakali were related to the Sammo and praise her beauty and love. In the same manner the poems of Mast Tawakali were also effective which can be taken into different contexts. Some of the poems of Mast Tawakali are analyzed here to understand his transformation from a lover of Sammo to a Sufi.

ہا گد گورے یک ء ما گورے یک

ہا سدا انت نہ جوانیء سر بردو

Translation

One side are we and another side is Donkey

Both in young age are not straight forward

In this poem the main agenda of Mast was tell that the man is like a donkey in nature both are not straight or good during their young age. This shows the human nature that it has several ideas during the young age which are of different style and contrary to ideas accepted by the general public (Buzdar, 1970).

دروشمء تہی سمو پولی ء سندھ گولی

بیت نہ پیداک نشان تہی سمو ء پولگ

Translation

Roaming in Sindh, Search Sammo your presence

With search Sammo your sign can not be developed

As the early poems of Mast were mostly related to the beauty of Sammo but later on the subject matter of the poems transformed towards Allah Almighty. In this poem, when Mast was wondering in the areas of Sindh said "Mast wondering in Sindh and search the Sammo presence, with searching Sammo prints cannot be seen". This poem of Tawakali shows that Sammo was something different from other girls and have a different nature which could not be found in others or the attributes of Sammo cannot be found in other places or in another human.

شراونی شیشائے یک سمو

انارانی پلے سر یک سمو

تلارنی سروائے یک سمو

تھارانی ڈیوائے یک سمو

رغامانی اے بوٹی یاچڈی

Translation:

Sammo is a bottle of wine

Sammo is a red flower of Pomegranates

Sammo is a peak of Mountain

Sammo is a light for darkness

Or a part of clouds and early rains.

In this poem Mast purely praise Sammo and give Sammo relevance to different natural things of the world that Sammo is wine, flower, peak of mountain, light and best part of the clouds. These were the natural and common poetic expressions at that time which most of the poets used to praise their lovers. These poetic expressions shows that the pomes of Mast were more naturalistic rather than worldly.

ٹوکاں ء کنگدگ وشیں تہی سمو

ٹوکاں ء کنگدگ دلکشیں ء وش

انت درنج ء ساہگ چماں تہی سمو

ماگنجیں ماہ رپتا باتوک ء

انت رنج مردماں چا نستا دور

انت رنگ گوشے رنگناتی ہزار سد

Translation:

Sammo your fine laughter and talks

Fine and charmful laughter and talks

Sammo in your eyes, a Shadow is hanging

The dearest has gone like the moon in abundance

Sitting far, and disappointed with the people

Look like hundreds of colors.

This poem is one of the famous poems of Mast Tawakali which was at first sung by great Baloch legend folklore singer Mureed Buledai. This song is listened in all the parts of the Baloch population in the world without caring about the dialectical problem of Solemani, Rakshani and Makrani.

Second Phase of Mast Tawakali poetry and transformation towards Sufism

رواں دربار ء سرور ء ننیلاں زبیر تہی

عاشقاں نیستن دربار ء منہ سرور ء

Translation

Your (Sammo) missing not allow, will go to Palace of Muhmmad

At the Palace of Muhmmad, Lovers are not prohibited

There is a great difference between a learned Ulema and a Sufi, as most of the Sufis of Islam had believe to have direct contact with God and become mad in the search and love of God. Similarly, Mast Tawakali never thought himself to be a Ulema or a Sufi but his attributes transformed him into a Sufi. As in the above poem, he has said "Your remembrance compels me, will go to Muhammad Palace, in Muhammad place, lovers are not forbidden. In the later poems of Mast, Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) are mentioned several times which shows that his love was not only a world love but for the supernatural being- Allah.

کوشتی وٹاء ویه ورث کسغ بر
گندی کھیا وتھی بیٹ وٹاء یہ
چادرغونو خاں نورانی دوستغ
گندے نظر نیخ مہراں گوں
ٹالے گناہ باز تھ پاکغ و یکھ
تالے ہمو وستندے قرتاں
سیالے بے و بڑز کہ بے بادشا
حال منی کارئے وواند وارث

Translation

Everyone kills himself
Or be himself and can see others
For friends a new tent to be arranged
Can see the love with good intention
One is pure and you have many sins
Did everything with the luck
A King which is up everything
Relative and the owner will bring my news

This poem of Mast Tawakali shows how Mast was transformed from a lover of Sammo to a Sufi, "in the above poem Mast has mentioned the personal disputes of the people and sins people have committed and the light or the Noor which god has provided to this world in different shapes and forms. Saints continue to have a direct relationship with God; this idea had a significant impact on their followers, which is mainly the reason why devotees of saints go to their shrines and offer prayers. Tawakali was transformed into a saint by Sammo's devotion (Bano, 2023).

گراں نامغ خدائی ستاریں بردمے
پڑکواں پیرگوں یاتنوں نے محمد نام
بندغاں کھوریں پہ کھنت سیلا او رب
یرباں کھاں سولا تھ صذغ بکاں من

Translation

From every side I will say the name of God

Remember the name of Muhammad with peer of reading

God will be the mediator between the blind humans

According to others, Sammo served just as a starting point for the journey from Ishq-e-Mejazi, or the love of God's creation, to Ishq-e-Haqiqi, or the love of truth. He eventually became a Sufi, despite the fact that it was a very tough trek from Tawakali to Mast (Saint). A Sufi understood the existence of both the inner and outside worlds. Mast Tawakali became a national hero after he was credited with a number of supernatural occurrences. Mast Tawakali was once invited by Sardar Jamal Khan Leghari to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Testing Tawakali's saintly abilities was one of Sardar Jamal's regular practices. In the middle of their journey, he gave his minions the command to cast Tawakali into the sea. Tawakali had arrived in Mecca ahead of them as well. Tawakali warned Sardar Jamal that he would die upon his return and that the trees in his hamlet would soon wither away. Sardar Jamal did pass away upon his return to his hometown. He also demonstrated his supernatural and saintly abilities by dragging a large stone. (Jahandideh, 2022).

Since Sufism's foundations are spiritualism and mysticism, Tawakali was endowed with these attributes. Tawakali's poetry reveals that he devoted his life to seeking Allah and that he always prayed to Him. Lovers still visit his tomb in prayer today. There is a popular notion that all prayers offered at his shrine or tomb are answered. Every year, his shrine/tomb celebrates a number of festivities. Sufi poets use their personal experiences to connect their poetry to issues facing culture. Sufi poetry is a salve for an oppressed, disgruntled, and frustrated population. Studying the history of Balochistan and the Baloch people makes it clear that social oppression has always existed in Baloch society. Tribals have always faced barriers to success due to the feudal system and tribalism.⁴⁴ Poor tribesmen used to be treated as slaves by Sardars and feudal lords. Women were mistreated by the patriarchal government that governed Baloch society. Mast Tawakali brought attention to the negative aspects of Baloch society in a revolutionary manner. Through his poetry, he exposed the brutality of feudal society and denounced it. He also wrote against the oppression of women in Baloch society (Sabir, 1993).

Conclusion

Hence, it is concluded from this research article that Baloch society has developed a number of folk tales and Balochi literature is reaching in the form of poetic expression. A country's culture and civilization are embodied in its folklore and literature. By concentrating on the folktales of Mast Tawakali and Sammo, this research piece aims to comprehend Sufism and its evolution in Balochistan, with particular reference to the renowned Sufi poet Mast Tawakali. There are many unidentified Sufis in Balochistan who have escaped the notice of scholars and academics. Mast Tawakali's unique qualities and disposition turned him into a Sufi, and his poetry continues to be included in Balochi literature, which was absorbed by the populace and passed down through the generations. Baloch folktales and traditional stories have greatly influenced the development of the people's cultural dress and mentalities. They are derived from folktales that are relevant in different sections of Balochistan. The traditional love stories, which are widely prized and have a big impact on Baloch society, remained one of them. The collection of traditions that have grown over many years in Balochistan is known as Baloch folklore. These folktales, which mostly center on themes of tragic love, resistance, and struggle, are preserved by Baloch. Mast Tawakali is one of the several selfless people who endured those times and are still alive today. Sufism is a natural phenomenon that can arise anywhere in the globe and has no geographical limitations.

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