

The Status of women in Baluchi epics

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Received: April 2019; Accepted: May 2019; Published: June 1, 2019.

Citation: Abdolsamad Hamidi far, Habib Jadid-ol-eslami Ghale no. The Status of women in Baluchi epics. World Family Medicine. 2019; 17(6): 37-41. DOI: 10.5742MEWFM.2019.93659

Abstract

The formation of the most famous Baluch epics like "Bānaly and Dehli conquer", "Rend and Lashār", "Kambar", "bālāč", "Lallā", and "Adinag" are on the basis of the ethnic and regional values and maintaining these values has led to devastating and debilitating wars between nations and women in these epics have always had an essential role as agent or stimulus.

Introduction and status of women in each of these epics, which are especially popular, has been analyzed. The aim of the author of this study was introducing Baluchi literature and culture and also, the most famous women in the Baluchi epics for researchers and lovers of literature of Baluch.

Many books have been written about verse literature of Baluch but no significant work has been written independently in the field of Baluchi women's epics recognition. Certainly, this is the first independent study of this field and the author, in this paper, focuses on the compilation using literary review method.

Key words: Epic, Baluch, Woman, Bānaly, Gawhar, the mother of Kambar

Introduction

“Epic, is the adjectival form of poems that (are) based on describing the ethnic or individual heroic and masculine actions which include various aspects of their lives” (Safa 1378: 24).

Epic, history and romance poetry have been quoted for centuries from generations from the farthest parts of Baluchistan, despite the extent of the territory and today have come to the new generations.

“Baluchi epic poetry” like other epic poems in the world is a mix of combat and feasting. Epic battles, praise of heroes, ‘Cites’, ethnic beliefs, different battles, migrations and the Baluchi’s wars with foreigners are the topics of these poems” (Baluch, 1391: 15).

Poetry, which is called “Shaire” in Baluch, is the song which is the theme of the epic or romance stories, historical and social events, information etc.

The poet is the person who runs the Shaire, with an instrument and singing which is also called Pahlavān (1). Pahlavān is a combination of two words “Pahlaw” and “Van”. Pahlaw is derived from the root of Pahlavi language and means brave, brave and powerful and Van means singer. “Vānag” in Baluchi is the meaning of singing so Pahlavān can be interpreted as singer, courage and heroism provider. Baluchi Pahlavān not only presents the historical realities of Baluchistan and maintains them for other generations, but can change the course of historical events (Masoudie, 1364:9).

The most important Baluchi poem collections are:

- 1- Epic collections:** Rend and Lashār, Mir kambar, Salār and shahsavār, and Hammal.
- 2- Historical collections:** Dādshāh.
- 3- Romantic collections:** Ezzat and Mayrok, šaymorid and Hāni, Jalal khan, Sassy and Ponno, Shirin and Dōstēn, Shahdād and Mahnāz, and Samanbar and Heidar.

Because of the diversity of ethnic, geographic, climate, governmental, economic and cultural aspects, different parts of Baluchistan have various accents, proverbs and stories of their own which are for the sake of living, the government, and other factors of life.

The background of Baluchi literature research is recognised by the recent centuries, firstly for foreign researchers. The most famous of them was M. Longworth dreams .

In addition to foreign scholars, Baluch researchers in Baluchistān of Pakistān such as Seyed Zohour Hāshemi, Faghir shād, Golkhān Nasir, and Karim Dashty are presented. Baluch researchers in Baluchistan of Iran have also partly completed research in the field of literature and culture of Baluch. Though researchers of Baluchistān in

(1) *Paladin*

Pakistān were more fortunate because they had access to more resources and published works. From Baluch researchers of Iran’s Baluchistān we can refer to Mousa Mahmoud Zahi the author of “Celebrities of Baluchistān”, “Beliefs, regulations and culture of Baluchistān”, “The art of Baluchistān” and Abdolhossein Yadegari, the author of “Baluch people epics”, Azim Shahbakhsh the author of “the story of Dādshāh, in research of Contemporary History of Baluchistān”, Abdolsamad Hamidifar the author of a master thesis entitled “Morphology of šaymorid and Hāni” and ‘Manuscript collections of Shaikh and Rendān and Hāni’, by Abdolvāhed Borhāni.

But no significant independent research has been written on the recognition of the epic women and their status.

Epics that have been proposed in this paper, are recorded as a poem in the book “Miras (2)” by Faghir Shād, and these stories are common orally with different versions among the Baluch people.

Baluchi glossary by Seyed Zohor shaāh hāshemi is used in most cases to translate the vocabularies. Many of the poets of the poems are unknown and the stories are ancient, about Iran’s Safavids era. In some parts of the paper, Baluchi poetry is mentioned with transliteration and translation, for example are Taken from the book “Epic in Baluchistān by “Abdulghafour Jahāndideh”. Literary review method was used.

The author has tried to analyze a number of women who have a role in the epics of the Baluch like “Bānaly and Delhi conquer”, “Rend and Lashār”, “Kambar”, “bālāč”, “Lallā” and “Adinag” and their roles as an agent or stimulus.

Baluch epic is about women’s destiny which has made Baluch history. Many of these women are representative of the society and culture where the woman is not just lowly , but sometimes even higher than men’s status and obviously such a woman is raised from Baluchistan.

Women in Baluch culture are respected as a taboo, and an affront to their character is not an offense that can easily be devoid of consequences.

It seems that some of the women’s freedom and power and exceptional bravery in Baluchi poems demonstrate respect and dignity of women among people who have promoted the narratives and stories. In these poems the most prominent women are from big families and large ethnic groups. These epic characters are unique and living women.

Women also have a special place in one of the most prestigious Baluch Alliances and her portrayal is that of a refuge . For someone who wants to be free of oppression and puts himself under the protection of another powerful person, it is sufficient to say: “I’m “Mayār” of your wife’s wearing (hijab)” and then that person supports and protects

(2) *Legacy*

him forever. The anonymity of the Baluchi language and literature in Iran and the lack of resources required the writing of this article to be partly analytical.

“Bānaly and Delhi conquer” epic

Bānaly or Bānary compared to the rest of Baluch women has more courage and bravery and she was manifest as the perfect woman.

Bānaly is Čākar’s sister and mirān’s mother, and wears combat clothes and participates alongside Baluch men in a war called “Dehli war”.

In Dehli war, about one hundred and thirty thousand men of Baluch including “Čākar» and «Mirān” were present. Gwahrām, is made aware of the King of Delhi and says:

šah tayār baw laškar o pawgā That the Shah (king), with your army (be) alert [to fight]

The Shah of Delhi was fully prepared to fight with the Baluch people. Baluch people had a fierce battle with Delhi’s King. Čākar was ordered to retreat hobson either by policy, however, midway noticed that Bānaly and some of the riders were absent. Given Mirān’s long-standing hatred of Delhi’s Shah, he returned to the palace. He found Bānaly and Shah fighting. Mirān shouts angrily at Shah: “the one who fights with you is a woman”. Shah says to Bānaly: “So you’re a woman, get out of the way”. Bānaly Responded to King:

Ag ganēnē yān tai gan e hazmān if I’m a woman, I’m not like other women, and I am even better than your wife.

Gan hamā gant ke mētagān nendant Woman would say to someone who sits at home.
Panno mozwāko mahparān randant
Gōn wati mardān dazgolā?āš ant

Women are made for their husbands.

Man ganēna pa magles a naylān I don’t like such woman and I won’t accompany them. (pages 279-280)

Bānaly, who was a skilled fencer, with her son Mirān, prevailed on the Shah of Dehli.

Bānaly’s persistence and courage caused a Baluch victory in the war with the King of Dehli. Bānaly’s warfare, reminds us how Gord was afraid to fight against Sohrab in Shahnameh. Although in this the war, there were many Baluch tribes and also great commanders such as Čākar. But this epic with Bānaly’s name became well known and her name now has a deep root in the ancient culture of Baluch.

Epic of Rend and Lashār

Gawhar, Radow’s daughter was a widow with abundant wealth. The remnant poetry contains this upbeat passage that after the returning of Lashār’s army from the Delhi

battle, gwahrām the Lashāri and the Nohāni commander remembers that no tax from Gawhar, a wealthy woman who sponsored him, was not received. He sends some persons of Lashāri and Nohāni tribes to Gawhar in order to talk and collect taxes. When Gawhar hears the words of the messenger of gwahrām she answers that: “If God has endowed me wealth, Gwahrām must not to be greedy about that. Is he teased me because I live on his estate? If it is so, I cannot leave here and go elsewhere.

After hearing her taunts Gwahrām’s special messenger arises without objection but Nohānis was not satisfied and did not leave; they gave away the properties inside the tents and then left. After that, Gawhar moved from there without delay and goes to the Čākar and tells him:

Gwar taw atkaḡān bāhōti for protection, I come to you
Čihēn o bečār gangāhē consider a place for me and prepare it now (p 171)

Gwahrām found that Gawhar moved and sent some of his men to bring her back to kaččārō. They attacked her camp and looted all her assets. They even killed her cattle and camels and returned to Lashār.

This blatant violation of the privacy of a woman, who was a refugee of a proud man like Čākar, obviously started the Thirty Years’ War between Rand and Lashār.

Gwahrām, who attacked nightly and was lucky to get away, was ready to stand against a wounded leopard of Rend. But Čākar had seen the cowardly betrayal of Gwahrām and mindless and with the onslaught of emotions, only with a number of troops and weapons left to pursue the attackers. Gwahrām with forethought deployed his corps and waited for Čākar’s army. The corps was defeated in the war and lost one of their skilled fighters (mirān. In the later war, the twenty-fifth war. Gwahrām went to “Send” in order to provide crops and hired warriors from “Samme” and “Botto” tribes. Čākar went to Herat’s King Arghun for help. He won in the final battle.

Gawhar was the main cause of the ruinous war between Gwahrām and Čākar.

This invasion of Gawhar’s privacy was in fact an invasion to Čākar’s, and he felt damaged himself.

Epic of “Kambar”

A large army led by Mehrāb, Osman and Mazar from the East of Baluchistan on the pretext of getting taxes moved to the south and in any area where they arrived, looted their properties and captured men, girls and women. This army arrived in Malōrān, Bent and Dahān. The herds of the Malōrān were looted and killed; also many men and women were captured. One of the soldiers went to Bent and let Kambar know this. Kambar was upset to hear this because he was the guardian of property and dignity of the people and people were protected by him.

Kambar firstly went to his mother and said:

Māti mani māt makkahēn Mother, my dear mother;
Hakkān pahel kan ke rawān forgive me, now I'm
going (page 557)

The mother of Kambar answers:

Šir et pahell ent bač mani I forgive you my son

Man pa tai rōdēnag o Bāz kašš etag gawr o gapā
I've suffered so much for your growing

Then she continues: When you go to war and release captives, and return triumphant, then friends, will talk about your masculine fighting. If you were killed, even if I was old I will be young and sing the song of happiness. Your body will go to the cemetery with lyrics and song, I'll rejoice sennight, and I'll remarry and will breed another child instead of you. Mir kambar said good bye to his mother and called his wife. His wife came out with ornaments and makeup and told him: We are newlywed; it's just a week we are married. Kambar gave her three Gold coins and said: dear wife, this is your divorce and Mehrieh, you have now freedom to remarry because I might get killed in war. Kambar went to battle with his army; many of the looters were killed in this war and all the prisoners were released, but Kambar was killed. His mother buried his body with happiness.

Kambar's mother was the only one who encouraged Kambar to go to war. She was a brave woman for whom name and shame was more important than all else, for her although the name and shame was at the expense of losing her son. Her courage reminds us of the mother of "Hasanak Vazir" in "Beyhaghi history" or perhaps "Golmohammad's" mother in "Kelidar's" novel by Dolat ābādi, perhaps above them.

Epic of bālāč

Sammi was a Wealthy widow and lived in Dōdā neighborhood. Someone called "Bibagr" who was one of the rulers, attacked her house and plundered all her property including the cattle herd. Sammi brings the news to Lālēn (Dōdā's mother).

Lālēn goes immediately to the Dōdā's house and says:

ā mard ke mayārān gall ant The man who takes
refuge

n Nēmrō čān a nawapsant kollān Do not sleep in
the middle of the day in a room

Dōst o šarsarēn grānmollān with his beautiful wife

Dōdā, hearing taunts of his mother Lālēn, arises, and prepared to return the cattle of Sammi. First he divorced his wife so that he was not her dependent on the battlefield or if he was killed in the war; his wife wasn't a widow and could marry another man.

Lālēn encourages her son to fight with enemies and says:

Nāzēn et mani baččig a Praise my son
Bačči ča dowa yakkē kant My son will do one of two
things:
Hayši čōtawān bāzēn it or loses his precious hair
(will be killed)
Gōkān sargamig a kārīt or all the cows, [those
looted] will be returned.

Dōdā moves with his comrades and with his little brother Bālāč who at that time was very young following him, but Dōdā stopped him. Dōdā said: "You stay at home, if we die, take revenge on the enemy".

Bālāč returns home. In the "Garmap" area Dōdā arrives at Bibagr's crops. Bibagr, who was ambushed, attacked Dōdā's army and killed him and his colleagues in a hard battle.

Their blood will not be overwhelmed. Bālāč and Nakibou became allies to take his revenge. Years, Bālāč was lurking with Bibagr. Until one day he sees Bibagr from afar and kills him immediately.

Sammi is the main cause of this war. Bibagr had unfairly invaded her privacy and it was in fact invading Dōdā's because Sammi was his refugee. Lālēn is aware of refuting. She ordered Dōdā to take back Sammi's looted properties. Lālēn even encouraged Bālāč to revenge. She reminds us of the mother of Kambar.

Epic of Lallā

Granāz was Lallā's wife and Mirbaran's daughter. Mirbarān who was Chieftain with his sons and son in law (Lallā) went to battlefield. Mirbarān and his sons and brothers were killed in war and Lallā was severely injured and one of his comrades was taken out of the arena. Others reported his survival to his wife, in other words: "He fled from the battlefield". Granāz who lost her father, brothers and uncles became very angry and messaged to her husband: "I wish I heard your death news instead of your escape. Then I spoke with pride about you and praised your courage".

Granāz didn't welcome him at home and Lallā went to his mother's house to have his wounds treated. He answered his wife: "I've not escaped from war, I am hurt and my companion brought me out of the field, When my wounds are treated I'll return to the battlefield to take revenge.

Finally he recovered and took revenge and went back home.

Granāz in this war encouraged her husband to fight, with sarcasm and she wished if her wife died or took revenge.

Epic of ādinag

One day, "Čākar ku lovahi" and his men passedby. Along the way, they saw "āli" ride slowly, a female animal. One of the Čākar's men called him and said: Ride faster. Āli answered: The animal is incapable and cannot go fast.

The man said ridiculously and impolitely: then you have to mate with her to cure her disability. Āli became angry and answered: do it with Čākar's mother because she is a strumpet.

Čākar's men took Āli and tied his hands and legs like animals and put grass out for him. When they arrived home he said to his daughter: we tied an old man in the pampas, go and take care of his food and water. Fatimah guessed that old man was her father.

She asked her husband (Adam) immediately to go that place. He found Āli but Āli didn't want to come back home and said: how do I return home while people tease me? Adam answered: my uncle I promise to revenge otherwise I'll never go to bed with my wife. Ādinag, an old son of Āli said: I promise to revenge otherwise I'll never speak to anyone. Waždi, the other son of Āli said I'll never take my shoes off until I have revenge.

After these covenants one day early Adam was washing his body, people saw him and gossiped that Adam was not committed to his promise. He went to bed with his wife last night and took ritual in the morning. Of course, people either did not know or pretended to ignore that Adam was washed because of his autoerotism during the night. Rumors reached Fatimah and made her angry .she said then:

Ali tai čārēn bač mabitēn ant Āli, I wish you had not
four children

Ali tai čārēn bač ganēn etān Āli, I wish your sons
were born daughters

Dāštagēn zāmāt et darēn etān and your son in law
wasn't in your family

And then you weren't teased. Adam answered: You know that I have not broken the covenant.

Fatimah said: Why you do not take revenge?

Fatimah's words made her husband more determined.

Adam attacked Čākar's palace with Ali's sons. Čākar was lucky in this war. Some of Ali's men were killed. Ādinag, Ali's older son ordered retreat. Later in another opportunity Čākar who was moving to his farm, was killed by Ādinag.

In this war Fatimah's sarcasm causes Adam to be more determined to take revenge.

Conclusion

Factors that led to the formation of these epics were due to adherence to these values:

1- Mayārgalli: asylum is one of the most valuable traits of Baluch heroes. (Gawhar found refuge of Čākar and Sammi found refuge to Dōdā).

2- Bēr: what made Čākar, Kambar, Dōdā, Bālač, Lallā, Adinag and Bānaly popular, was masculinity and feeling of vendetta. They are historical remnants and portray enmity and hatred from these characters against their enemies portrays the ideals of the Baluch nation which defended the rights of the oppressed.

Women who have been raised in these epics, in fact, had a key role as a stimulant or a cause of the war.

Footnotes:

- 1- Accepting asylum and refugee support.
- 2- Revenge and avenger of the enemy.

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