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THE REFORMATIVE ROLE OF PASHTO DRAMA IN REDRESSING  
PUKHTUNS' SOCIAL EVILS: A CRITIQUE OF PASHTO DRAMA,  
'SPEERA MARGAY' (THE UNFORTUNATE DEATH)

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**Farooq Shah, Sania Gul, Dr. Mahrukh Shakir, Sara Qazi, Ihsan Ullah, The Reformative Role of Pashto Drama in Redressing Pukhtuns' Social Evils: A Critique of Pashto Drama, 'Speera Margay' (The Unfortunate Death) -- Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 19(3), 1389-1402. ISSN 1567-214x.**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper focuses on the factors responsible for regression of Pukhtun society and the role of drama in highlighting those factors in a way to bring social reforms with reference to the drama Speera Margay (The Unfortunate death) by Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi. This research is qualitative. The analysis has been carried out by utilizing 'Reception Theory' which shows the perceiving and receiving level of the issues in the text by the researchers. As a whole, the negative impacts of those nominal values and customs practiced by Pukhtuns as a semblance of their identity and Pukhtunwali, and their true status in Islam have been brought to light. The study finds that the role of drama has been integral and instrumental in redressing the social evils committed in practice by the Pukhtun society. The study further points out that Pashto culture has been practicing their lives in antagonism to the basic doctrines and practice of Islam.

## INTRODUCTION

The universe, we are living in is a diversified form of Nature where numerous creatures are living and some have ceased to exist. The highest among them is man who also has been titled as 'The excelsior of all creatures'. All the humans living on crust are divided into different nations, bearing their own religions, cultures and languages etc. The only aim of this division is to identify them by their distinguished features. Same is the case with Pukhtun nation by having their own language, culture and geography, living along the Durand line with a history of thousands of years.

Pukhtun as a nation have been standing distinguished among rest of the nations because of their unique features, such as, hospitality, strong joint family system, high reverence for women, jarga (a traditional assembly of elders to sort out an issue by consensus), ashar (helping each other in social works like farming etc, without any wages), badraga (accompanying someone stranger or guest to his destination) and so on. All such peculiar characteristics of Pukhtuns can be encompassed in a single word called Pukhtunwali. It is an unwritten code of their lives based on customs and traditions which are being formed, reformed and followed for thousands of years. Pukhtunwali is a philosophy of life to live under its aura their endeavor. It is a sign inscribed on our minds (Khan, 2019).

Being a nation with stubbornness, inflexible and straightforward qualities, Pukhtuns have been facing a lot of challenges from their enemies. In colonialism by British, they had been kept suppressed and had no access to their basic rights. In that very moment, a social reformer and non-violent philosopher Abdul Ghafar Khan, Alias Bacha khan, emerged and started struggle for his nation to get them free of the chains of slavery and enabled them to identify the loopholes within themselves as well as the challenges from external enemies. For this noble reason, he first established an institution by the name of 'Azad School' in Utmanzo Charsadda in 1921 with the help of his companions. Its only aim was to educate the nation so that they would understand the real mission and intention of the British East India Company. This network of the schools spread out to the whole of Pukhtun belt. Besides this noble achievement, he started a reformatory movement by the name of Anjuman-Islah-Ul-Afghan, in the same year, the primary goal of which was to run this network of schools by contributing and collecting charities, and its secondary goal was to extricate Pukhtuns from their needless customs and traditions which were merely leading them to destruction and havoc. These 31 founding members of anjuman-islahulAfghan were preaching these pious teachings of Bacha khan to the root level as they were campaigning door to door of pukhtun society. (Ghafar, January, 2018)

Moreover, Bacha khan also realized the importance of writers and the literature they were generating to be used to educate the Pukhtuns by highlighting redundant practices. To achieve this landmark, he assembled the prominent contemporary writers and started publishing a genuine magazine named "Pukhtun" in 1930. This revolutionary magazine was the only literary platform for Pukhtun writers to portray the actual face of Pukhtuns to let them know their weakness that needed to be removed. All such revolutionary steps taken by Bacha khan were getting into British's nerves so they tried to stop such literature

to be conveyed to Pukhtuns. In this continuation, the British government confiscated some of the literature which could have brought revolutionary changes in Pukhtun society. We may have the examples of confiscated dramas by British government like "Dard" (Pain) by Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya, "Jongarra" (The Cottage) by Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, "Khoog Jwandoon" (The Sweet Life) by Abdul Khaliq Khaleeq etc. Many of such plays were taken to England before they were either published or staged, such as Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya's Dard was banned soon after being staged by Ahmad Kaka and Faseeh Bacha in Babarra. In 1932 it was founded out by Dr. Khalid Khan Khattak at London British Library Oriental Section and was published for a second time with the assistance of Dr. Fazal Rahim Marwat from Bacha Khan Research Centre Peshawar in 2012. (Hasrat, October 2014)

In the galaxy of such stars, shoulder to shoulder companions of Bacha Khan, a prolific writer also contributed not only with his efforts in field but also created a huge corpus to edify the public. This genius and ingenious figure was Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi. Fazl-e-Rahim was born in June, 1904 in Wardaga, Charsadda. (Bakhshali, 2018). In his book "Jwandoon", he writes about his early life that he started learning the religious knowledge from a pedagogue in mosque. He mastered writing in early age and also learned Urdu as a language up to fourth class. Having interest in study, he not only mastered his mother tongue but also got expertise in Persian and Arabic. He started poetry in 1928 and published two poetry collections under the titles of "Dak Jaam" and "Neem Jaam" respectively. He joined "Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek" (The Movement of Servants of God) in 1930 (Bakhshali, 2017).

Being a staunch supporter of non-violent philosophy, Saqi was jailed for years. His multidimensional dexterity in literature not only encapsulated poetry but also proved his iron in prose. His three stories have been compiled by Dr. Zubair Hasrat in a small booklet by the name of "Dree Qese" (three stories). This booklet contains a true story by the name of "Wada Washa" (To Be Married), and two dramas with the titles of "Speera Margay" (The Unfortunate Death) and "Said Akbar Shaheed" (Siad Akbar, the martyr). The researchers are to elucidate "Speera Margay" as a medium for social reformations and to highlight the factors causing the regression of Pukhtun society.

### *Storyline of Speera Margay (The Unfortunate Death)*

"Speera Margay" is the story of a lower middle class family, consists of eight scenes which revolve all around the needless norms and traditions of our society. Mashaal Khan wants to tie a nuptial of his son, Alam Gul, with Gul Andama who is the daughter of his elder brother Khushal Khan. After consulting his wife, Khushal Khan agrees on a condition of providing a huge amount of dower. Despite the fact that Mashaal Khan will not be able to manage such formality but he does not step back due to his words and honor. Commitment to the dower arrangement that proved beyond his affordability, Mashaal Khan dies of depression and his son, Alam Gul, follows all the unnecessary traditions of burying his father. He loses half of his property. He sells the rest of the property to fulfill his father's words and give dower to his in-laws. Soon After his daughter's marriage, Khushal Khan dies due to eating

excess of food. Taking the issue of dower, Alam Gul's mother Maroofa remains in consistent dispute with Gul Andama and at last Maroofa stones Gul Andama to death. No sooner did Noor Gul receive the death news of his sister, Gul Andama, than he rushed to the spot along with his mother Amirana and hit his aunt to death with the same stone. Learning the news of havoc, Alam Gul comes back home and looks at dead bodies of his mother and newly wedded wife. Losing his temper, he stabs Noor Gul to death. Alam Gul hands himself over to law and Amirana dies because of stress and depression at the end.

This research analyzes the social factors responsible for the regression of Pukhtun society referring to Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi's "The Unfortunate Death" and the use of the same genre as a medium for social reformations.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Pukhtuns, as a nation, deem that almost all of their values and ethos are totally synchronized with the teachings of Islam. Having claimed that, they exercise even some of those values which have nothing to do with Islam rather those have been forbidden in Islam. This research is to highlight some of those redundant but detrimental traditions referring to Speera Margay "The Unfortunate Death" by Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi. In addition to it, Pukhtu drama has rarely been used for social reformations as it rarely existed long before.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

- 1) To elucidate the needless values responsible for the regression of Pukhtun society referring to the drama 'Speera Margay (The Unfortunate Death) by Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi.
- 2) To discuss the role of drama in bringing social reforms in a society.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Q-1.** What are the factors causing regression of Pukhtun nation in Speera Margay (The Unfortunate Death)?

**Q-2.** What are the elements in the drama that assist in social reformations?

### ***Significance of the Study***

This study enlightens the readers to know the brutal effects of the unnecessary customs and traditions of Pukhtun society and their harsh consequences. This study also aims to dissuade the individuals to not only those un-needed customs but to discourage others who are exercising such activities in their domain. The English literary academia may also get help from the setting and the after-researched analysis of the drama in terms of the social impacts it has on the English society since this part of land remained subjugated under the British imperialism.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literature serves human and humanity irrespective of anything. It remains as fresh as a flower blossomed in dew in early morning after the decades of its creation. According to

Ezra Pound, it is something “news which always stay news” (Barry, 2002). Literature of any language does not lose its essence rather it conveys its message in a didactic way all the time.

Pukhtu literature has been written and published for hundreds of years. It has been said that poetry was the first genre created particularly referring to ‘Tappa’ (ballad) which is a folk genre of it. Unluckily, poetry was the field getting flourish in that time when writers paid no heed to prose. If some prose got created in ancient time that was highly influenced by Persian and Arabic language. (Afzal Raza, 2017)

### ***Pukhto Drama***

Drama was brought to Khyber Pukhtunkhwa by an Indian theatre company under the name of Alfred in 1904 which staged an Urdu drama Khwab-i-Hasti (The Dream World of Existence) written by Agha Hashar Kashmiri (1879-1935), who is commonly known as the Shakespeare of Urdu. Khwab-i-Hasti is an Urdu version of William Shakespeare’s Macbeth. This familiarized Pukhtuns to stage principles and drama and in this continuation, Syed Fazl Ali Shah opened another theatre in 1906. In 1911, another theatre was introduced in the name of “Dadabhai Mumbai Theatrical Company” in Peshawar which staged 15 plays before the audience in a single month. (Raza, 2017). According to M.M. Sharif (2017) perhaps, the vibrant tradition of storytelling was so strong in Pukhtun culture that it never felt an urge for modern drama and theatre tradition. But when they saw it in the form of these theater productions, Pukhtuns immediately recognized it and started writing their own dramas. Peshawar, the capital of KP, is famous for its folktales and storytelling, particularly the Qissa Khwani Bazar.

The theatre of “Dadabhai Mumbai Theatrical Company” not only paved the way for Pukhtu drama to be flourished but from “Anjuman-Islah-Ul-Afghan to Khudai khidmatgar Movement, they also started to stage plays along with Mushaira under the supervision of Bacha Khan in different annual ceremonies of Azad Schools. In this continuation, a very renowned playwright, poet and political orator Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar wrote the first drama “Tarboor” (Cousin) in 1926-27 and staged it. In 1937, Qazi Rahimullah Barq penned down a reformatory drama by the name of “Nawee Roshni” (The New Light) and Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya wrote “Dard” (Pain) in 1930 which was staged by Ahmad Kaka and Faseeh Bacha in Babarra. The government of British did not like this rendition and confiscated the drama and arrested the performers afterwards. This practice of banning dramas not only stopped there but after the division, a play by the title “Kaarwan Rawan Day” (Caravan is going) was also banned soon after its staging and those who acted out in them, were imprisoned by the government (Hasrat, October, 2014)

To consider the questions, whether the drama is a medium for social reformations or does it reflect the factors drawing back the pukhtuns to havoc, the researcher would have an eye on relevant literature put forwarded by different scholars. All of them have come with their own point of views and understandings.

M.MSharif opines that Pukhto dramas were loaded with implicit and explicit messages for the people for the purpose of social reform and awareness of freedom: both from the British, and from the negative traditions present in the society, such as revenge practice. These dramas were a success notably because they presented familiar content, and that the audience could see the action on the stage and it spoke to the people of region in their own language. (M.M, Sharif, 2017) this statement glorifies the fact that Bacha Khan and his companions have very rightly perceived the way of portraying the actual solution to the problems Pukhtuns were facing. (Sharif, April, 2017)

According to Zubair Hasrat (2014) "Spera Margay" is a sad story related to our region whose characters are of a middle class family, as it (the story) goes to the end then results in the reformations of illegitimate values of Pukhtuns which were the major target of Khudai Khidmatgar Movement. (Saqi, July, 2013) Drama is an effective medium for conveying a social message because it gives the sugarcoated bitter pills, easy to swallow and remove the disease as well. Drama stages the actions and situations. When a person watches, imagines himself in those shoes and realizes because the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.

Saqi had not only indicated to the factors responsible for regression of Pukhtun Society in drama (Speera Margay) but has also discussed many a practice of Pukhtuns in his book. He was of the view that "Before the starting of KK movement, Pukhtuns" morals and manners were as below the belt as those of Arabs in the age of ignorance". He (Saqi) majorly refers to their tendency towards sodomy, snatching, drugs and feeling ashamed of education, trade and working on wages. (Saqi, 2012)

Moreover, Pukhtuns have been committing another heinous mistake of making relationship of the couples without their consents which is totally against the teachings of Islam. A reflection of such an issue can be witnessed in the mentioned play as Alam Gul and Gul Andama got betrothed without asking their opinions and they accepted the decision of their elders which was conceived a kind of irrevocable decision. Bacha Khan, in his autobiography, has penned down an incident of this nature.

"I was coming back home from the school and as soon as I reached Naaguhman, the river was flowing with high intensity as it was summer. During crossing the bridge, the people started shouting that a girl has jumped into the river. The sailors followed the drowning body and rescued her at a distance. She was alive but unconscious. No sooner did she come to her senses and saw the people around her than she started crying and said, "Why did not I die?" After investigations, it was found that her father wanted her to be married to a person, double of her age. She requested her father to let her to serve him all of her life but not to betroth her to the man which is contemporary of her father. Her father was in greed of money and was oblivious to the forthcoming life of his daughter. I (Bacha Khan) want such incidents to be prevented and a couple should be wedded with their consents as it is not the matter of a time but of lives." (Ghafar, January, 2018)

As mentioned above, many a researcher has discussed the role of drama in bringing about the social reforms in one way or the other way, and also pointed out the improper values and customs followed by Pukhtuns which results in devastation but nothing else. What the researcher is intending to find answer to is picking out of all such needless practices particularly referring to "Speera Margay" and how this drama consolidates the message of reformations in the audience to enable them to quit all such traditions.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theoretical framework is the wider understanding of a problem. This research is theory-driven so the problem has been analyzed by employing the 'Reception theory', which was put forwarded in 1960s. The proponent of the theory was Hans Robert Jauss whose essay 'Towards an Aesthetic of Reception' is the origin of this theory. It is a variant of the literary theory of "Reader Response Theory" that emphasizes the reception or perception of meaning by an individual from the literary text. Later on, this theory was inclined to Mass communication by a cultural theorist, Stuart Hall, in his essay "Encoding and decoding model of Communication" in 1973. It focuses on general public negotiation and opposition, as they receive the text interpreting on the basis of their respective cultural context and experiences of life. Hall's philosophy of encoding and decoding simply means that the message encoded by the writer is not necessarily the message that will be decoded by the audience. It is possible for the reader to change the meaning of a message in order to make it compatible with their social context. In this continuation, Hall also divided the readers/audiences into three categories; audiences will adopt one of these positions.

#### ***Dominant, or Preferred Readers***

In this category, the audience totally synchronizes with the message the producer wants to convey. Audience will go with the same narrative put forwarded by the producer because of few factors such same age, culture or background etc.

#### ***Oppositional Readers***

When the audience rejects the meaning of the text and creates their own meaning is said to be oppositional reading. This can happen due to different reasons like the media or text contains controversial themes that the audience member disagrees with or the audience's beliefs, age or culture will not match with that of the producer.

#### ***Negotiated Readers***

It means when the audience receives the message of the producer in the text partially. Some of the things will be compatible with background of the reader while some will not. It is a compromise between the dominant and oppositional readings. Many factors could affect the position of the readers that which among the above they adopt;

- Age
- Belief
- Culture
- Gender
- Life experience
- Mode at the time of viewing or reading

According to this theory, the readers will conceive the text at the present moment as it would have been analyzed and criticized by the previous readers. The readers of the present age will perceive the text in a different way and it would already have been shaped by other people.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The approach and design of the research is qualitative. This research is epistemological, since it is thought-based. It is not a survey research, interview analysis and natural science research. Accordingly, the researcher has attempted to analyze various ideas dialectically. The data is taken from the text of the drama randomly for the purpose of analysis. In addition, qualitative research solely relies on opinions, attitudes or behavior.

The data for this research is collected through critical reading of the text of the drama where the drama covers so many issues of the society and all such factors are thought to be important to discuss with reference to that text. The drama's text for this research is primary data. Similarly, secondary data is the interpretation and critical review of the relevant literature. The researchers took the secondary data from different books, Ph.D. dissertations and autobiographies of various scholars. Furthermore, the researchers did not just quote the secondary data rather paraphrased the citations, summarized it and then linked it to the researchers' own thoughts.

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

The factors that drag Pukhtuns to the abysmal depth of destruction and havoc are to be discussed in detail with reference to the drama "Speera Margay" by Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi.

#### ***Badal [Revenge]***

In Pukhtun society, Badal is something that is deemed as an honour since it is the satisfactory act for bereaved done by the heirs of the murdered or deceased. Doing Badal is a primitive feature of Pukhtuns. It is a double barreled phenomenon which has both the impacts of negativity and positivity in different dynamics. Sultan-i-Rome is of the view that 'Badal helps in maintaining and ensuring peace, order and respect of human life and honour in absence of organizing government and governmental machinery, law enforcing agencies and courts' (Sultan-I-Rome, 2006). Pukhtuns rarely consider this point while taking revenge on someone. In Islam, the same term has been taught by using the word "Qisaas".

"O believers! The law of retaliation is set for you in cases of murder—a free man for a free man, a slave for a slave, and a female for a female but if the

offender is pardoned by the victim's guardian, then blood-money should be decided fairly and payment should be made courteously. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. But whoever transgresses after that will suffer a painful punishment". (Al-Quran, chap 1, V.178)

The above cited Quranic verse directs to ask for the same thing the victim has been deprived of. As a matter of fact, Pukhtuns treat the term in a way that leads not to peace and harmony but ignites the hatred and hostility which lasts for centuries from generation to generation. According to Sultan-i-Rome, 'badal in case of revenge had very negative effects and impacts because it causes unending bloodshed, which might continue even for centuries, and in which the innocents lose lives and suffer in many ways (Sultan-i-Rome, 2006). In Pukhtun society, it has been witnessed almost in all the cases that we do not go for the offender to be killed but try to take our revenge on the main person of the murderer's family called the sar sarray (the main figure), so as to give greater loss to the offender's family.

In the current subject we see the death of Gul Andama by her mother-in-law, Maroofa. After knowing the strange or shocking news of his sister's death, Noor Gul goes to the spot along with his mother and takes revenge on Maroofa by stoning her to death. As Alam Gul comes home and sees his wife and mother smothered in blood, loses his temper and stabs Noor Gul to death. In addition to all such aspects of badal, Pukhtuns commit another heinous crime in term of revenge.

### ***Forbiddance of Women Education***

Education has been an inevitable tool for all the humans since inception. It is a building block to survive with manners and dignity in the world. In our religion, it (knowledge) has been declared obligatory not only for men but for women too. Referring to Pukhtun society, women education is not seen well as in a scene in the drama, Noor Gul stops Gul Andama by saying "khore ! ta bastha kegda. Ta kho ye os Alam Gul lalala warkarri ye. Parun Mroofe chachi khaza ralegali wa chi zama ingor di nur sabaq na waye zaka chi mong pori khalaq khandi." (Sister! Keep the bag away. Now you have been betrothed to Alam Gul. Aunt Maroofa sent a message yesterday that her daughter-in-law should not study further because people make fun of them). This is the true depiction of our society and its people towards women's education. The response of Gul Andama is quite strange and valid which contains a number of questions regarding the tendency of Pukhtuns towards women's education. Despite the fact that Gul Andama is very obedient and typical Pukhtun girl as she showed no defiance even in case of her engagement without her consent but she compares her life without education with lifetime imprisonment. After such a harsh debate, Gul Andama catches her bag again and as soon as she steps towards door she confronts her father, Khushal Khan. Khushal Khan states "Lori! Ta pa satar shwee, rawagarza! Madrased ta ma za." (You will be at home from now onward, step back! Do not go to school). Gul Andama responded with such a logical statement that "Khamakha ba zam. Ya mi da ror hom rasara pa satar kra nu za ba hom pa satar sham." (I will surely go or if you limit my brother too to house's premises I will do the same). Now Khushal Khan's response is

worth acknowledgment as he forgets all her obedience and associates this attitude of hers, which is legal, with education at all. He states, "Dagha kho da sabaq hagma pasaath de chi stargi oshlavi" (It is the nuisance of education which makes one disrespectful).

In a nutshell, education is not an equipment which makes women defiant and disrespectful but it makes half of world's population enlightened, self-reliant and self-esteemed. By and large, women's education is considered a curse in Pukhtun society but it is the worst facet of their thinking which is imbedded in their mind. This negativity needs to be erased and ought to be replaced by empowering women which is a positive thinking.

### ***Stubbornness***

Stubbornness has been one of the devastating factors lodged in Pukhtuns' blood for centuries. It can be deemed as an integral part of their identity. Being a promising nation, they stick to the words whatever their consequences could be, which is obviously something stupid to be done. There must be a relaxation and flexibility in one's attitude to match with the situations accordingly. In the drama "Speera Margay" it is witnessed that Mashaal Khan loses his life as he has given words to his elder brother, Khushal Khan, in the presence of Jirga to fulfill all his demands. He says "da Alam Gul mor ratamudai shwa chi awal ba di khabara na yadawali aw chi yada di krra nu os pa shaa kega ma. Akhir pukhtu da khalaq ba sa waye." (Either you should not have given him words or if you have done so then do not break your words. After all, it is a matter of Pukhtu, 'what people will say').

To consider the very celebrated but devastating line "Khalaq ba sa waye?" is the actual tragedy of Pukhtun society as one does the job beyond one's affordability and ability which either results in loss of the existing resources or even life.

### ***Dower and Dowry***

Dower (mahar) and dowry (jaheez) are two terms usually considered as same by the masses in our society. Literate individuals rarely and illiterate individuals frequently do not comprehend the difference between these two terminologies. It should be kept in mind that both dower and dowry are permitted in Islam. Islam has given both these rights to a woman to live with dignity at husband's home. Dower is something given to a girl by her parents as a sign of her right at the time of her wedding. Islam allows it to be exercised.

Dower is something fixed by the consensus of a couple at the occasion of their nikah. This might be in the form of cash or gold or any other land property etc. This ought to be handed over to the bride personally. Now what the researcher intends to find is the misconceiving and misusing of the term dower referring to the study concerned. In the drama, we see the demands of Khushal Khan from Mashaal Khan to manage a huge amount of dower such as gold, silver, furniture and two thousand rupees as cash, so that he may wed his daughter, Gul Andama, to Mashaal Khan's son, Alam gul. Khushal Khan is so much filled with greed

that he connives at two major points; he does not consider the status of his brother to accomplish such huge amount of dower and he also violates the basic precept of Islam. Islam has given the authority to a couple to fix the dower with negotiated consensus. Parents have nothing to do with this action.

In addition to it, we witness that in tribal areas of Pukhtuns the parents of a bride suppose a groom and his family to pay millions of rupees as a dower to them in return of marrying their daughter. This concept is neither compatible with Islam nor with our culture and Pukhtunwali. As cited above dower should be fixed by the consensus of the couple but we do not do this and the families get indulged in it, which is a wrong doing. They fix a good deal of dower which might be unaffordable for other party to provide. Consequently, the family of bridegroom either quit the bonding or do certain things to keep the bond intact that results in dissension. As we have the example of Alam Gul who sold out the entire land property, the only source of their income, and fulfilled all of Gul Andama's family demands. Alam Gul states, "Kaka! Da gwato wato khabari ma kawa. Akhir pukhtun yam. Sa chi ghwarri hagma ba darta pora kom hala ba dolai porta kom"(Uncle! Do not talk of quitting the bond. After all, I am a Pukhtun and I will give you all what you are asking for before taking the bride).

### ***Newaka/Choosing***

Newaka is one of the devastating factors responsible for regression of Pukhtun society. It is something when parents of a little boy opt for a girl in his childhood without his consent. Usually, this practice is very common and many a Pukhtun guardian/parents. More often than not, people of our society conceive it as an affinity between families but in reality it is a taboo. Islam does not allow us to go against someone's personal longings. There is an eye-catching epitome when our Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) asked her daughter, Hazrat Fatima (RA), about her marrying to Hazrat Ali (R.A) so she (R.A) remained silent which was a sign of consent to be betrothed to the desired person. This reference of Muhammad (SAW) educates us to make an individual free to choose his/her life partner. Islam drifts us to follow the same guidelines as it has. This practice of newaka (Choosing) is nothing more than to coerce our children to a blind alley which heads to nothing except lifetime ordeals like domestic violence, misunderstandings etc. Both the boy and girl do not decipher each other's whims accordingly. At the end, it [Newaka] brings nothing but self-reproach.

### ***Misconception and Misinterpretation of Religion***

Our religion Islam has given a very blunt and crystal clear opinion about all the issues a Muslim confronts with. It [Islam] has been contaminated by amalgamating with our so called ways of handling issues with Pukhtunwali. In this heading we may encompass various issues, discussed in the play, which not only contradict Islam but have been honoured and exercised with reference to Pukhtu and Pukhtunwali.

### *Alms /Khairat*

Mostly, alms are the stuffs like clothes, money and food given to the poor. It is something given to the poor by the heirs of a deceased person for his/her redemption. Islam does not allow us to give alms beyond our affordability. As we witness in our society that people spend too much on alms and charities. In the drama, we notice the scene of Mashal Khan's death when Maroofa directs her son, Alam Gul, "Kha khairat warpasi okra. Drond marray day, sa qaraz daar kawa bya ba warkawo".(Arrange a good deal of alms for him. It is a huge loss, borrow some cash afterwards we will pay). This statement of Maroofa depicts the true mentality of Pukhtun society which shows their aberrance from the true path. Islam does not permit us to cook many a caldron stuffed with rice and beef using borrowed money in honor of our deceased relatives. The bereaved are not even allowed to lit fire for three days in their home or premises which can be justified by referring to a statement of the Holy Prophet (SAW) on martyrdom of his cousin, Hazrat Jaafar(RA). He (SAW) ordered to prepare the food for Jaafar's (RA) family for three days. The above statement was an epitome for the coming generation to follow. Moreover, in the drama we also see the anxious attitude of Alam Gul when he repays the borrowed money taken for alms by selling half of his land property which was the only source of their income. To cut short, we should discontinue this ostentatious act in the name of Pukhtu and Pukhtunwali.

### *Women's Superstitious Belief*

It has also been one of our societal calamities that our women have blind readiness to believe in black magic and necromancy. Usually, they pay heed to such claptraps. In the drama, when Khushal Khan consults the proposal for his daughter with his wife, Amirana, we perceive the blunt reply of Amirana saying "Kha kha! Za poha shom chi ta ye raza karray ye. Haghwe deer kodgar jadogar di. Da korarata modayee jorr shawe ye" (Well! I got that you have been persuaded by them. They are sorcerers. You are talking on their behalf). Generally, women relate every matter of their own to sorcery which may generate squabbles in their domestic matters. To overcome such myths, they visit various nominal sorcerers (Pers) which is not only the wastage of money and time but also strengthens their beliefs in such irrational practices.

The researchers are also bound to shed light on the role of drama in bringing about social reformations. To minimize the wideness of discussion and conceive the question easily, the definition of drama is inevitable to be understood. This genre of literature aroused in Greece to enact the actions on stage before the audience. These actions were the depiction of the masses before them in such a didactic way that would not only entertain them by the addition of some comic relief or music like chorus etc., but would inculcate them to fix their loopholes. As Cicero states that, "Drama is a copy of life, a mirror of custom and a reflection of truth". (Raza, 2017) Drama reflects people's ways of life before them so that they may judge themselves to flourish their good actions and to reform their bad habits. Drama is not something to bring a massive revolution in the society but on a small scale it can make people aware of their weaknesses to overcome.

Referring to the social role of Pukhtu drama, Bacha Khan's social acumen was worth praising as he did not limit his struggle to politics but also foresaw the major role of drama in conveying his message to the public. The strength of this practice can be assumed from the closure and confiscation of those dramas soon after their staging and publishing. The dramas were not nukes at all which would erode the British colony but the British were well aware of the fact that this practice of enacting the social issues before the masses will enable them to reform their loopholes which were the only threat to their power.

To subdue the public, British's only tactic was to keep the people ignorant of their true values and ways. For this reason, they had hired local agents or mullahs to keep them suppressed and misguide them in this regard. As the factors cited above in this chapter are few of those which were leading Pukhtuns to the abysmal depth of ruination. All such menaces were highlighted by Pukhtun writers in their corpuses but the most enchanting role was played by the drama.

To simply state, drama was and is a perfect medium for conveying a social message as many people like and enjoy drama. People do not go for other things like religious or moral books or lectures or any other medium to get lessons from but try to have an easy and entertaining way to sort out their problems. As we also read many a report in newspapers daily which encapsulate the true facets of society but the readers do not take interest in reading them as the people love to have visual versions along with some diversion and relief.

### **CONCLUSION**

Speera Margay (The unfortunate death) is an enchanting piece of art - penned down by Fazl-e-Rahim Saqi, a close companion of the non-violent philosopher, Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan, Bacha Khan - which leaves a spellbinding effect on the readers from the very first dialogue till the last poem in the play. Considering the drama, this research aimed to identify the factors responsible for the regression of pukhtun society and the role of drama in bringing about social reforms by portraying all such issues Pukhtuns have been exercising as a matter of their so called values and customs. Projecting out such calamities, drama has been playing a pivotal role which not only let the public know their loopholes in an indirect way but also can be a source of entertainment for them. These self-created needless values have neither been part of our culture and identity nor does our religion, Islam, permit us to practice them. As a society, we must reconsider and reform our way of life by reading the lifestyle of advanced nations, knowing the lessons of history and wash out the stigmas taken for granted in the name of pukhtu and pukhtunwali.

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