Conceptions of "Masculinity" in Pashto Folklore: Contextualizing Antonio Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony

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Abstract:

This paper tends to investigate themes of masculinities in the preview of patriarchal structures of Pashtun society. The author has used a prism of the Italian-Marxist dissent and intellectual, Antonio Gramsci's (1891-1937) reckoned theory of Cultural Hegemony. This theory a post Marxist critique of the cultural hegemony of the ruling classes that are adopted by the oppressed social and political classes as natural, inevitable, and a matter of the common sense. While unpacking the indicators of this theory, and developing an analytical framework which contains some indicators, the author has directly plunged into the main course that is the depiction of the peculiar hegemonic masculinity in the Pashto folk genres. In this connection historical construction of hegemonic masculinities in the Pashtun society is explored, and the nexus of war, violence, exclusion and masculinity is established through literature review. Pashto folk poetry and proverbs are particularly analyzed to know the patterns inherently consist in the oral text performances uttered in the peculiar cultural milieu of Pashtunwali. The etymological roots of womanhood are probed in Pashtu language which like other languages of the world has peculiar gendered otherness of women. The study of Tappa, Kakari Ghari, Da Attan Narey and the bridal laments called "Angai" are particularly analyzed to unveil the structures that hold up the paranoia of men hegemony as naturally constructed phenomenon. Analysis of the poetic genres is carried out in the context of gender studies and critical discourse analysis, which strive to analyze discourse beyond the symptomatic levels.

Key words: Pashtunwali, Folk Poetics, Cultural Hegemony, Hegemonic masculinities, Patriarchy, Discourse Analysis**.**