

# Identity Construction through Cultural Heritage of Folklore

Ali Ammar<sup>1\*</sup>, Tayyaba Batoool Tahir<sup>2</sup>, and Abdul Razaque Channa<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

*The great diversity in Pakistani folklore is evident from the distinguished variety of cultural folk assets of each province of Pakistan. The current paper explores and analyses the most popular folklores, in the genres of both prose and poetry from the perspective of quest for identity. The paper tries to find out the answer to the question if Pakistani cultural heritage of oral tradition i.e., folklores have quest for identity or go beyond that. The paper also explores the motives behind the search for identity. The translated folklores are then analyzed qualitatively using interpretive method, particularly through the perspective of hermeneutic-interpretive research based on performance theory of folklores. Hermeneutic-interpretive research technique is chosen here because the folklores are based on the ideological and cultural traditions of a specific region, and the proper understanding requires the study in the specific relevant domain of hermeneutics. This research is important for the propagation, preservation and revival of Pakistani culture as presented through folklores. This research aims at developing the interest and draw the attention of researchers on cultures and traditions to revive and enliven the richness and fertility of varieties in Pakistani culture.*

**Keywords:** Folklore; Quest; Identity; Hermeneutic; Interpretive; Qualitative, Culture.

## 1. Cultural heritage of Folklores

Folklores and oral tradition occupy pivotal pace in cultural identity of any area (Shinwari, 2013). Sims and Stephen (2005) argue that folklore is the informal data about the world, its customs, traditions, beliefs, folkways, norms, taboos, and traditions expressed through language, music, dance, symbols, maxims, and signs. Folklores are simply what people share on a fundamental basis. Although the study of folklore has been greatly neglected due to colonization and capitalism (Daimai & Parhi, 2021). Therefore, the study of folklores becomes impertinent. Wilson (1988) states that the effort of man to find the actual basis of human existence leads him to explore folklores which are at the centre of „humanistic study“. Folklores comprise of what humans are. In order to understand the identities and ideologies of any area, the study of folklores provide the required basis by tracing genealogical, cultural and social developments of that society (Baan, 2021). Folklores are such unwritten and oral traditions which are acceptable by the society for generations and provide

<sup>1</sup> Government Gordon College, Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Anthropology, Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan.

\*)Corresponding Author.  
Email: [aracademy123@gmail.com](mailto:aracademy123@gmail.com)

a valuable solid platform for the people of that society to turn to in the matters of confusion and the unknown. Hufford (1991) states that folklife, being available in various forms, is very important for the development and enrichment of a nation as it is universal, manifold, and acceptable being available in various forms. Folklife springs out from the revival and propagation of folklores.

Toelken (1996) also states that folklores are at the same time dynamic and static that connects the past with the present of the group. The term „folklore“ was first used by the English scholar William John Thoms who used this very word to study Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales (Oring, 1986). However, the Germans were the first to use nationalistic approach in the study of folklores in order to develop a concept of shared identity among the Germans and to preserve the German cultural history (Sim & Stephen, 2005). Towards the end of 19th century, American intellectuals also started gathering data of unwritten stories and songs, till then termed as „popular antiquities“ but later proper explorations and studies were initiated to understand their significance and meanings for society (Newman, 2020). When it was realized that folklores have direct influence on the daily lives of the people, the term „folklores“ was being properly used in the academic and educational settings (Bronner, 1986). Solar Mythology theory also came forward in 19th century when the connections of the myths and mythological characters was being investigated and established with the beliefs of the people, the sun and the moon, and the day and the night. This theory was also applied to the non-European texts (Brunvand, 1998). It was originated by the German linguist Max Muller. Around the turn of 20th century, the explorations on folklores got new dimension focussing on the didactic and scholastic aspects. Bronner (1986) states that cultural relativism in the context of individuals and groups was also considered an integral part of the study of folklores. Cataloguing and collections of folklores was also done about the same time by like Aarne (1987) and Thompson (1955). Kapchan (1985) argues that with the development in the study of folklores, the understanding was taken to new levels of comprehension by taking a „more symbolic view of performance“, a „cultural enactment“ in which the ideologies and the identities of a specific cultural group were expressed. In the current paper, we take the discussion forward based on the performance approach in which identities are explored in the folklores, taking the example of Pakistani folklores at present.

Folklores have also different genres that can be broadly categorised. According to Sims and Stephen (2005), verbal folklores that comprise of poetry and prose forms; material folklores that consist of buildings and various tools of utilization or the paintings and ornaments; and customary lore that comprise of certain „repeated actions“ (p. 16). Furthermore, folklores are researched and interpreted in their historical contexts, since there is a risk of interpretations changing as the context changes (Sims & Stephen, 2005). However, for the current paper we have selected the verbal folklores from

different provinces of Pakistan to be analysed and explore in the backdrop of quest for identity.

Pakistan is a diverse and rich country. Its provinces have different cultural and its inhabitants speak various languages. For instance, Sindh province is the cradle for one of the oldest civilizations of the world i.e., Indus Valley Civilization, and a seat of various cultures including the locals and the invaders, has a massive cultural folk heritage to share with the world (Hanaway & Heston, 1996). The history of the present day Pakistan is evident to the fact that this rich and resourceful land had witnessed invasions, colonization, and economic collaborations by the Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks, Afghans, Mongols and the British, the folklores of this area contain the elements of all these cultures that have been added into the old versions from time to time (Kazmi, 2020). Therefore, some folk tales are shared like that of Shirin and Farhad shared by Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and the Middle East, that of Yusuf and Zulaikha shared by all the Muslim countries, and The Tale of four Dervishes shared by Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and so on. Yet, Hussain and Asif (2020) have tried to establish the antiquity of Pakistani cultural heritage through the motifs in the indigenous folklores. Language is the central tool that serves as the carrier of identities and ideologies, while construction of identity involves defining the position of the self and the other (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). "Identity is found in the language in clear mention of identity categories, describing the position of the self and the others, evaluating the current issues of identities, and using different linguistic tools and approaches" (Ammar, 2014, p. 36).

## **2. Cultural heritage of Folklores: Punjab, Sindh, Khaybar Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan**

Pakistan's provinces have abundant oral culture. Each province has its specific heritage. Shinwari (2013) states that there were some 3000 poets between 1900 to 1975, while the Pashto written history is 2500 years old in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. However, it was the poets related to Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik of Bacha Khan in early 20th century who wrote on various themes including the revival of Pakhtun cultural heritage, Sufism, love, humanity and peace (Shinwari, 2013). Pashto folklores comprise of qaisas, matal, aroona, landav, tapa, naarav, badala, loba, bagatai, neemakai and charbaita which are all different forms of folk tales and folk songs. This intangible folk asset exists both in written and unwritten form and is still enjoyed and propagated in informal and formal gatherings.

Sindh, the land of the „fakirs and dervishes“, „sadhus and saints“, „the sufi-sindh“, „the sunlit Sindh“, also abounds in folklores expressed through the words of great poets like Shah Latif Bhittai, Sa‘mi, Sachal, Bedil, Bekas and so on (Vaswani, 2008), and the legends like Lila-Chanesar, Nuri-Jam Timachi, Sasui-Punhun, Sorath-Rai Dyach, Umar-Marui, Suhini-Mehar, Moomal-Rana Mendhro, Watayo Faqir tales, Moriro Mirbahar and so on (Adwani, 2002). The themes of love, sacrifice, humanism, morality, Sufism, and class struggles

are predominant in the folklores of Sindh. Most of the folktales have been immortalised in the poetic form by the great poets of Sindh mentioned above. These folklores also have cultural elements of rich history of the region, culture, traditions, rituals and civilisation (Vaswani, 2008).

Balochistan has also a very long tradition of folklores, even at the time of birth of a child, Baloch folk epics used to be sung for a few nights in the presence of the family members and close relatives (Badalkhan, 1992). It was symbolic of the incorporation of Baloch culture in the newborn. Every family occasion was celebrated with the singing of folklores (Badalkhan, 2000). The works of (Baluch, 1977; Dames, 1907; Mari, 1987; Badalkhan, 1992;2000; Shad, 2000) occupy central place on Baloch traditions and literature. The significant Baloch folklores include the stories of Hani and Shah Mureed Chakar, Shahdad and Mahnaz, Lallah and Granaz, Bebarq and Granaz, and Mast and Sammo. Tribal minstrels used to move from place to place in Blochistan, memorised the songs and could sing in front of anyone. However, the epics of Baloch became very significant when the upper social class started composing these stories in poetic form (Barker & Mengal, 1969; Nasir, 1979). Quite significant are the heroic poems of Balochis recording the heroic deeds of various rulers belonging to different times that are still cherished and are the part of folk traditions of Blochistan (Harrison, 1981; Khan, 1983; Mari, 1970; Shad, 2000; Nasir, 1976; Baluch, 1977). However, Blochi folklores offers an insight into the tribal heroic deeds, bravery, tribal histories, migration from one place to another, and love songs (Badalkhan, 2002). There is a long list of Baloch writers beginning from Mir Chakar Khan Rind (early sixteenth century), who expressed folklores in his writings.

Punjab, the most populated province of Pakistan, is also extremely rich in folklores. Most of these folklores are available in written expressions particularly in poetic form. Due to Punjabi Diaspora, the folklores have also spread worldwide. The legendary tales like Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnoo, Mirza Sahiba, Sassi Punnon, Such Singh Soorma, Pooran Bhagat, Dulla Bhatti, Manu Guggu, Dhol Sammi, and Jutt Parmz etc. when penned down by the great writers like Waris Shah, Peelu, Hashim Shah, Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah, Ghulam Farid, and Gobind Singh etc. have their specific captivating effect on the listeners and readers. Most of these are love tragedies that are caused when the protagonists stand against the norms of society and have to go through great sufferings. Yet the end is the salvation and union in hereafter (Mir, 2006).

### **3. Methodology**

In order to explore the quest for identity through folklore, we have collected, explored and analysed the five most popular verbal folklores of four provinces of Pakistan i.e., Punjab, Khyber Pakhtukhwa, Sindh, and Balochistan. Translated material has been gathered from various sources including the websites and library books. The analysis of folklores is conducted in the backdrop of hermeneutic interpretive techniques in which the data has been

studied minutely and analysed in culture specific context (Hunter, 2004). Hermeneutic interpretive phenomenology opines that the reality is subjective and focusses on the subjective experiences of individuals and groups. The technique of analysis in hermeneutics is to analyse the text from specific hermeneutic point of view for example if a religious text is considered to be sacred the interpretation of the text will also be conducted in likewise manner (Eliade, 1987). The relevant words, verses, sentences, signs and symbols have been enlisted. We also emphasize that culture specific hermeneutics to interpret such works is relevant and much needed as there are Biblical and Vedic hermeneutics etc. As in the case of Pakistan, almost all the folklores contain culture specific elements. The data has also been delimited to specific works focussing on the legendary epics, songs and folktales from every province of Pakistan in order to compare, contrast and make comprehensive exploration.

From Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province the folklores of Yousaf Khan and Sherbano, Adam Khan and Dur Khanai, Dalay and Shahai, folklore of Rehman Baba and Zarkhana Kakar; from Balochistan the folklores like Hani and Shah Mureed, shahzad's poems, Mast and Sammo, Doston and shirin, and the Song of Parat and Shirin; from Punjab the folklores of Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnoo, Mirza Sahiba, Ghulam Fareed Kafian, and Shah Hussain Kafian; and from Sindh, the folklores of Lila-Chanesar, Nuri-Jam Timachi, Sassui'i-Punhun, Sorath-Rai Dyach, Umar-Marui, Suhini-Mehar, Moomal-Rana Mendhro, traditional Watayo Faqir tales, Moriro, Sa'mi, and Bekas, have been selected for analysis and interpretation in the backdrop of quest for identity. In the selection, the element of popularity and antiquity has been taken into consideration.

#### **4. Identity Construction through folklores**

This paper is based on the hypothesis that Pakistani folklores begin with the quest for the identity, but towards the climax, go further beyond the question of identity. We argue here that identity is already provided to the characters, either in the form of writers and characters or in the form of ideals and ideologies provided by the specific culture. Broadly, the quest for identity in the folklores of Pakistan can be divided into two major categories i.e. those based on Sufi traditions and on regional cultural ideals.

In Pakistani folklores, the quest for identity as per Sufi tradition follows two major stages of Sufism. However, the centre of search is God in all respects. One stage as described by Sekhon and Duggal (1992) is that of following the guidelines of the Guide/Murshid, and the second stage is that of understanding the Truth and getting united with the Divine Reality. Their real quest is the Self, whose identity is achieved and inhaled by them completely. This happens both at literal as well as at symbolic level. One of the most popular verses may serve as the guiding principle of our discussion by Bulleh Shah (1680-1758) translated by Sekhon (1978),

Calling „Ranjha“ again and again,  
I have become Ranjha myself. (p. 71)

At surface level, it may mean that Heer has totally got transformed herself into the identity of Ranjha. She has become Ranjha herself. In love of Ranjha, she breathes Ranjha. But if analysed in the sufi-hermenutic tradition, the meanings are symbolic. In Sufi tradition, the love for the Ultimate Being, when becomes very strong, the individual is so inspired and engulfed by love that he becomes one with the Being. “The Sufis loved God as one would love one’s sweetheart. God for them is the husband and human being His wife” (Sekhon & Duggal, 1992, p. 65). This tradition is clearly manifested in the popular dialogue of the Saint Mansoor Halaj whose words “Anal Haq” (I am the Haq, the Ultimate Being). Hence, the identity of Ranjha is already inherent in Heer, the courtesy of the culture and of the experiences of love, the quest then remains to be one with Ranjha.

The pangs of love take Heer beyond identity where she seeks in the following line,

Love cannot be hidden howsoever I may try  
The affliction has taken roots  
Ranjha has become a Jogi  
And I am his Jogin  
Why has he abandoned me?  
Says Hussain, the faqir of God,  
I cling to His apron-strings (Sekhon, 1978, p. 67)

The sufferings of love drive Heer to the Divine Reality ultimately. The capital „H“ of his in the last verse indicates the Self, the centre of all the desires of Heer. The longings that Heer has. Whole of the epic is infested with such references all over. The identities and ideologies provided by the oriental religious and cultural traditions are not questioned at all in the folklores of Pakistan. The real quest is the effort for the achievement of the „Self“ whose identity is unquestionably accepted. Heer is ready to sacrifice everything for her Love. She calls herself „Jogin“, the one who is only for one sole purpose i.e. the attainment of the Will of her Jogi.

In another common folklore shared by Punjab and Sindh, Sohni Mahiwal or Sohni Mehar, written by a number of poets but most notably Sindh's Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, is also a tragic tale that culminates in the death of bodies and reunion with the Beloved. Towards the end of story, when Sohni was getting drowned due to unbaked pitcher, she asks herself what would happen if the life goes for the beloved. The reply, translated by Vaswani (2008, p. 51) thus goes, “O Allah! May You take Safety to their goal those who are destined to meet their Beloved!” The question of getting united with the „Devine Reality“ is raised at the climax of the story for that is the central vein of ideas throughout this legendary folktale. The answer thus comes in the affirmative. Here, this tale again stresses upon the very idea of

quest for the merger into the One, the Ultimate, and the reason for the torturous and painful journey of Love.

Another interesting element in the folklores in Sufi tradition is the turning of the lovers into ascetics or hermits. This happens with Mahiwal as well. He becomes ascetic in the land of Sohni after the marriage of Sohni with Dam. The land of Sohni is the shrine for Mahiwal. The symbolic interpretation leads to the same conclusion of being one with the One. The lovers have to undergo a process of purification for the Divine Unity. As Bhattai sings, „Take Warning! As current of love is extraordinarily swift and tempestuous!“ Vaswani (2008, p. 51). The same happens with the Sindhi folklore of Umar-Marui, when Marui is put behind bars by Umar for rejecting the offer of marriage. Marui, in love for Khetsen, had to undergo suffering for a very long time before being set free and getting united with her lover. She says, in the words of Bhattai,

...let it not be that I die here in prison My body shackled, and  
my eyes shedding tears Let me go home to Maleer, to die  
there! (Vaswani, 2008, p. 48)

The tale of Sassi and Punno is also immortalised by the words of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, where lovers pass through suffering and even death to meet each other. Death to them is not the end. Rather, it is the beginning of the new era of Union. Symbolically it is also referring to the Divine Reality. The words of Bhattai, put into the mouth of Sassi go like, “My feet may be swollen and bleeding, I may have to crawl on my knees – but never will I give up my journey to meet the Beloved” (Vaswani (2008, p. 39). This is the real and true spirit of the lover in the path of meeting his true embodiment of identity, the Divine Self. The voice of Sa‘mi, popularly known as the Kabir of Sindh, also resounds with the dedication of the embodiment of the Divine Reality. Sa‘mi says,

I hear Krishna playing on the flute;  
Two ears hear the music continually  
And yet they do not feel satiated;  
I only wish, I were in the timelessness of that melody! (Vaswani, 2008, p. 82)

Bekas, the village singer of Sindhi folklores, also has the same idea in his poetry when he says, “The arrow of His eyes hath smitten me!” (Vaswani, 2008, p. 85). Here the capital „His“ refers to the divine reality much sought after by the singers of these folklores.

From the pashtun folklores, the tale of Adam Khan and Dur-Khanai is also not an exception in this regard. When being denied the hand of Dur-Khanai, Adam Khan also undergoes the pain and troubles for purification before getting free from this world and becoming one with his Beloved. Shinwari (2013) relates,

O Sayyid Abu Ali Shah, the world is transitory.  
In a short time, this dwelling place is desolate. (p. 18)

And Adam Khan dies in the suffering of being alive without his beloved. Dur-Khanai also follows crying, „Lord, make me Adam Khan’s companion, don’t burn me alive in red fire anymore!“ (Shinwari, 2013, p. 19). The legend goes that for three times the grave of Adam Khan was opened and all the times they saw them lying embraced to each other. Their prayer was heard. And the lovers meet their final abode in union. Their pains and sufferings purified them in taking them to union, both at literal and symbolic level,

O Sayyid Abu Ali Shah, when lovers meet  
The sorrows of separation all vanish from them. (Shinwari, 2013, p. 14)

The Pashtun folklore of Dalay and Shahai also shares the same fate where Dalay is imprisoned by the King Akber in order to get a necklace for his beloved so that she becomes his completely. Dalay has to undergo prison and Shahai has to face through the pains of partition from Dalay. Their sufferings cause purgation and they meet each other.

The Balochi folklore of Mast and Sammo also share the same element of purgation and burning into fire of love. Mast Taukli becomes a hermit and Sufi after getting gripped by the love of Sammo, a mother of a child. Sammo is only a means for Mast to attain God and His acceptance. His own identity is nothing but that of God in him. He himself claims it as Marri (2008) states that Mast Taukli used to say that he was just an ordinary Marri but Sammo became the source of attaining the divine reality. But Mast had to undergo a lot of purgatory exercises to achieve that status as the story goes. The death song of Parat and Shirin also has the same tidings, only they meet in the hereafter. As Dames (1906) writes that they would see each other in the hereafter.

The legendary and the most popular Balochi folklore, Hani and Shah Mureed, has also the same element of purgation of the characters, when Shah Mureed, in order to abide by his words, had to part from Hani on their wedding day. After giving Hani to Mir Chakar, Mureed also becomes a hermit. He even spends 30 years in the land of Arabia (Badalkhan, 2004). To come back to the worldly affairs, Shah Mureed is advised by his father. The dialogue is very important as it contains the urge and dedication of Mureed towards his love,

My Shai Mubarak says,  
O Mureed leave your aloofness,  
Aloofness without purpose direction(purpose),  
For Chakars beautiful wife,  
In the assemblies you are not amongst your friends,  
You are like a walking corpse,  
Hani's love has blinded you,  
How will you carry on in this way,  
I replied,  
I advised my elderly father,  
.....  
If you were in my place likewise,



You would have left all your friends,  
 And stopped going to assemblies and noble gatherings,  
 You would have lost your mind,  
 And not be aware of how you dressed,  
 You would have clapped your hands,  
 On your lap and be,  
 In your own world,  
 At least I am sometimes with it  
 And sometimes not with it. (Dames, 1906, p. 54)

The pangs and lures of love drive Mureed away from worldly matters. The care is neither for the dress, nor friends, nor for any other thing which are traditional virtues of Bloch. The seed of love has flourished to such a great extent that the journey of sufferings has begun to attain the „Self“ whose identity runs supreme in the veins of Mureed.

However, after long yearnings and sufferings, Shah Mureed and Hani are united and they disappear in the unknown world. At the surface level the lovers find each other. And, at symbolic level, the going of the lovers to the unknown world with each other shows the attainment of the Divine Reality after sufferings and hard labour. Hence, again in this tale, the Divine Reality is the actual object of quest whose identity is achieved and followed from the beginning of the tale. Thus, following the immortal tradition of Love, Mureed has “become the immortal saint of the Baloch” (Badalkhan, 2004, p. 264).

Besides these tales, there are also folk ballads by various Sufi poets who express the same desire and passion to meet Divine Reality in all odds and troubles. The poems of Shahzad and Mast Tawakli echo with the yearnings and joys of meeting with the Beloved, the Divine Reality in Balochi folklores (Dames, 1906). Mast states very clearly that he knows his identity. Yet, his yearning is that for his Beloved (the symbolic name of Sammo in his poetry which is just a means to the end according to Mari (2008),

I remember Allah and 'All, and I recognize the  
 difference between friend and foe as well. Where is  
 my beloved friend Sammo? (Dames, 1906, p. 147)

In Punjabi folklores, the poetry of Shah Hussain, Sultan Baho, Bulleh Shah and Ghulam Fareed follow the same spirit. Sultan Baho’s (1631-1691) following lines summarize the idea of union with the Divine Reality in a very concise way. Sultan Baho says,

Says Baho without union with God  
 Everything else is false. (Sekhon & Duggal, 1992, p. 69)

Nothing else is sought after in the folklores written in Sufi tradition than the communion with the Ultimate Reality. The basic doctrine followed by him in his folklore can be summarised thus,

The heart is burning in the fire of separation  
 In which alone can God be seen  
 It neither lives nor die. (Sekhon & Duggal, 1992, p. 69)

The identity thus achieved turns into the quest for the self. In the heart there is none other than God. Separation from Him is the real suffering which would end by being one with Him. It is not the identity being pursued; in concrete terms it is the „Self“ that is the focus here.

The culture specific hermeneutic analysis of the selected folklores also tends to support this hypothesis from a different perspective. There are many Pakistani folklores that bear the regional and culturally specific elements like Punjabi Dulla Bhatti and Raja Rasalu, Pashtun Yousaf Khan and Sherbano, Sindhi Lila-chanesar and Nuri Jam Tamachi, and Blochi Ballad of Genealogies, the Horse-race, The Slaughter of Gohar's Camels and Chakur's Revenge, and War of the Rinds and Lashars. All these folklores delve into the specific themes of bravery, revenge, heroism, sacrifices, moral values and so on. However, all these are towards the end overshadowed by the culture specific concept of belief. For example, Dulla Bhatti of Punjab readily meets his end without bowing to the Mughal emperor Akbar. The meeting of death signifies the belief of Dulla Bhatti on being on the right and the hope to be rightly rewarded by the creator. The objects of identity are the heroic qualities that are either inspired through the culture or by the regional traditions as in the case of Balochi folklores of bravery where dying for the honour is considered a great reward. In that case culture is put on the higher pedestal to be idealized and identified. As the ends justify the means, all these ideals are happily accepted and sacrifices are made for these with the unshattering belief in the ideals and the Creator. Hence the identity of the characters is associated with their Creator.

There are many examples in folklores where the subject is some cultural issue but the perspective of looking at the subject is peculiar to that of religious hermeneutics. For example, the Ballad of Genealogies, a popular folklore of Balochistan, traces the historical accounts of various tribes, their wars and migration. But the beginning shows the overall cultural dominance,

I return thanks and praise to God, himself the Lord Of  
 the land; when the rest of the world becomes dust And  
 clay, He will remain serene of heart  
 We are followers of 'Allah, I firm in faith and honour  
 Through the grace of the holy Prophet, Lord of the Earth. (Dames, 1906, p. 1)

Although the poem talks of Rinds, Lasharis, Drishaks, Hots, and Mazaris etc. (various tribes of Balochistan), yet the belief, the overarching emphasis is that on the faith, the Divine Reality. Tribes are many, but the identity is one. And the pursuit of the „Self“ having identity is same for all the tribes. In this case, it is not the search for identity. Rather, identity already

exists; the task is to fulfill the demands of the identity in order to be successful in this world and in the hereafter. The quest for identity goes beyond identity.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper explores and investigates the hypothesis that Pakistani folklores begin with the quest for identity and towards their climax go towards the very „Self“ whose identity is being sought after by the characters involved in the folklores. The folklores from the provinces have been selected, explored and interpreted in culture specific hermeneutics. The popular folklores of each province seem to point to the very ideal of achieving a union with the Divine Reality after passing through various stages of realisation and purgation. The union happens in this world as well as after death. Both types of examples have been found. However, the scheme of events points to the fact that specific cultural identity is realised and that realisation is not enough for the character unless they are united and become one „self“. Their identities, in most of the cases, come from the self. All worldly elements are just means to the end of merging with the Divine Reality. During the course of this research work, we have also felt the urgent need for the all the folklores of Pakistan to be collected in original form and translated in various languages for the preservation and propagation of Pakistan’s rich cultural heritage.

## References

- Aarne, A. (1987). *The types of the folktale: A classification and bibliography*. Stith Thompson (Trans.). 2nd Revised Edition. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
- Adwani, K. (Ed.) (2002). *Shah Jo Risalo*. Jamshoro: Sindhi Adabi Board.
- Ammar, A. (2014). *National day speeches: Representation of identities and ideologies*. [Unpublished M.phil. dissertation]. Air University Islamabad.
- Baan, A. (2021). Folklore in literature learning as a model for developing cultural characters and students’ personality. *ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature, Art, and Culture*, 5(1), 83-93.
- Badalkhan, S. (2004). Lord of the iron bow: The return pattern motif in the fifteenth-century Baloch epic hero sey Murad. *Oral Tradition*, 19(2), 253-298.
- Barker, M. A. R. & Mengal, A. K. (1969). *A course in Baluchi*. Montreal: McGill University Press.
- Baluch, M. S. K. (1977). *A literary history of the Baluchis*. Quetta: Baluchi Academy.
- Botkin, B. (1938). About folklore: What is folklore? *American Folklore Society*. Retrieved from [www.afsnet.org/aboutfolklore/aboutFL.cfm](http://www.afsnet.org/aboutfolklore/aboutFL.cfm)
- Bronner, S. (1986). *American folklore studies: An intellectual history*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

- Brunvand, J. H. (1998). *The study of American folklore: An introduction*, New York: W. W. Norton.
- Bucholtz, M. & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and Interaction: A Sociocultural Linguistic approach, *Discourse Studies*, 7(4-5), 585-614.
- Dames, L. (1906). *Popular poetry of the Baloches*. Glasgow: Glasgow University Press.
- Daimai, K., & Parhi, A. R. (2021). The Folklore of Liangmai: An Analysis of Its Cultural Significance. *Asian Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies*, 4(3), 13-21.
- Eliade, M. (1987). *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, translated by Willard R. Trask. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
- Fishman, J. (1973). *Language and nationalism: Two integrative essays*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Hanaway, W. L., & Heston, W. L. (1996). *Studies in Pakistani popular culture*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications.
- Harrison, S. S. (1981). *In Afghanistan's shadow: Baluch nationalism and Soviet temptations*. Washington, D.C: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Hufford, M. (1991). *American Folklife: A Commonwealth of cultures*. Library of Congress, American Folklife Center. Retrieved from [www.loc.gov/folklife/cwc/cwc.html](http://www.loc.gov/folklife/cwc/cwc.html).
- Hunter, C. (2004). *Hermeneutics and phenomenology in research*. John Mark Ministries.
- Hussain, Z., & Asif, S. I. (2020). Tracing Motifs through a Linguistic Analysis of the Pakistani Indigenous Tales. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS)*, 40(2), 1173-1181.
- Jenkins, R. (1996). *Social Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Joseph, E. J. (2004). *Language and identity*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan
- Kapchan, D. (1995). Performance. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 108(403), 479-508.
- Kazmi, Hasnain S. S. (2020). Jugni, Dhola and Mahiya: Comparing three Genres of Punjabi Folklore. *Pakistan Perspectives*, 25(2), 1-22.
- Mari, H. (1987). *Garen gawhar [Lost Pearls]*. Quetta: Baluchi Academy.
- Marri, S. M. (2008). *Mast Taukali: Sakhsiat aur Fun*. Lahore: Takhliqat Publishers
- Mir, F. (2006). Genre and Devotion in Punjabi Popular Narratives: Rethinking Cultural and Religious Syncretism. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 48(3), 727-758.
- Nasir, G. K. (1976). *Balochistan k kahan lairokey zaban [The Poetry of Balochistan from the Tongues of Poets]*. Quetta: Baluchi Academy.
- Newman, J. (2020). Folklore, Fakelore, and the History of the Dream: James McBride's Song Yet Sung. In *21st Century US Historical Fiction* (pp. 17-32). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

- Oring, E. (Ed.) (1986). *Folk groups and folklore genres*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Sekhon, S. S. & Duggal, K. S. (1992). *A History of Panjabi Literature*. Sahitya Akademy.
- Shad, F. (2000). *Miraq* [Patrimony]. Quetta: Balochi Adab Juhdkar.
- Shah, W. (1996). Heer Ranjha. Sant Singh Sekhon (Trans.) in *A History of Punjabi Literature*. Patiala: Publication Bureau Punjabi University.
- Shinwari, S. A. (2013). *Oral traditions of Pakhtoon*. [Report]. Islamabad: UNESCO.
- Sims, C. M & Stephens, M. (2005). *Living Folklife*. Utah: State University Press.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. (1985). The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour. In S. Worchel and W. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Toelken, B. (1996). *Dynamics of folklore*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Vaswani, J. P. (2008). *I am a Sindhi*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- Wendt, A. (1994). Collective identity formation and the international state. *American Political Science Review*, 88(2), 384-894.
- Wilson, W. A. (1988). The deeper necessity: Folklore and the humanities. *Journal of American Folklore*, 101(400), 156-167.
- Wodak, R. (Ed.) (1989). *Language, power and ideology*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.