

## HISTORY AND CULTURE OF MARWAT TRIBE IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*In recent past, the Subaltern Studies have been emerged as an interesting subject on the horizon of historical knowledge. This research paper, too, is focused on the subaltern history and culture of a Pakistani ethnic tribe known as Marwats. Majority of the Marwats' population is rural having an enriched intangible heritage of indigenous histories and cultures. This heritage is fading along with the death of older indigenous generations and their younger generations are not only ignorant of it but also less interested in it. They consider it as a backward and useless discourse of history. They feel shy of it whenever they come across it incidentally, despite the fact that their present is deeply rooted within their past. Hence, this research paper is an attempt to preserve the history and culture of Marwat tribe in the pages of history as precisely as possible for the forthcoming generations of Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** Culture, History, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Marwat, Tribe

### INTRODUCTION

Marwats are a dominant ethnic Pakhtun tribe in Lakki Marwat (Glancy, 1905), which is one of the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in Pakistan. Since 1861 till 1992, the present district Lakki Marwat was one of the tehsils of district Bannu which was made as a separate district in 1861 by its first Deputy Commissioner (DC) named Herbert Benjamin Edwards (1819-1868) (Thorburn, 1876). By then, it lied between north latitude 32° 10' and 33° 15' and east longitude 72° 0' and 70° 26' (Gazetteer, Gazetteer of Bannu District, 1883-4). In 1992, Tehsil Lakki Marwat was separated from District Bannu and it became a district of KP. Marwats are also living in chunks with in other southern districts of KP including District Dera Ismail Khan and District Tank. They are highly exposed to migration in search of their livelihoods; hence, they are also residing in other parts of Pakistan and across the globe. According to the Census Report of 1998, majority of the population in Lakki Marwat is rural (Census Report, 1998). It has enriched intangible heritage including its history, culture, oral traditions, folklore, festivities etc.

Change is inevitable within the universe. It plays a significant role in the course of history in terms of “ancient” and “modern”, both in positive as well as negative senses. The modern scientific and technological developments have changed the world into a global village and brought many good and bad things for humanity simultaneously. The overall improvement in human living standards through these developments may be a blessing for humanity but military and cultural invasions of the well-developed nations (being well-equipped with the weapons of mass-destruction and having monopoly over the international media) are a curse for the less-developed nations. The former are dominating the later not only politically and economically but, slowly and steadily, also replacing their centuries old indigenous histories and cultures with the concepts of globalization, despite the fact that indigenous histories and cultures worth as a valuable intangible heritage for their respective nations and its preservation, at least, within the pages of history is essential.

Any intangible heritage is eternal for its society. Sometimes, it governs the contemporary historical process and, other time; it becomes central theme of the historical writings. In both cases, it plays a vital role like a living entity. Same is the case of the historical and cultural heritage of Marwat tribe which is still alive among the typical Marwats living in far-flung rural areas of District Lakki Marwat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They have still preserved it due to their isolation from the “global village” having no access to scientific and technological developments. Their non-accessibility to the modern day’s print and electronic media is a blessing for their native history and culture which are still preserved among them. The British masters of the land also preserved and made this intangible heritage of Marwats as a central theme of their writings either for their administrative ends or for the satisfaction of their historical consciousness.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a plethora of sources about Marwats. The oral and written histories as narrated by locals and foreigners provide firsthand information about Marwats. Mostly, the available written histories about Marwats are based on their centuries’ old oral histories. Their British administrators provided well-documented information about them in the shape of reports, diaries, assessments, correspondences, gazetteers, and books etc. Among them, Major Herbert B. Edwardes was the first one who, in 1861, got control of the present days’ areas of Bannu and Lakki Marwat from the Sikhs and made them as part and parcel of the province of Punjab under British Raj. Later on, in 1861, he united these areas as a district Bannu of Punjab. He became its first Deputy Commissioner (DC). He wrote a book, *A Year on the Punjab Frontier, In 1848-1849.*, which has been published in two volumes. In chapter VII of the first volume of this book, the author has given detailed information about the land and people of Marwats. Narrating his encounter with some protesting Marwat women at village Gundee (present days’ village of Gandi Khan Khel located on the right side of main Indus Highway from Peshawar to Dera Ismail Khan, he is of the

view that women of Marwats were more brave and enlightened in contrast to other tribes of Pakhtuns. He narrates about the Marwats as under:

“They are one of the finest races of the Trans- Indus — tall, muscular, fair, and often rosy cheeked; and in the evident purity of their Afghan blood, form a striking contrast to their mongrel neighbours the Bunnoochees. It is this, perhaps, which makes them personally proud and dignified; but they are frank and simple in their manners with strangers, and distinguished from all the Puthán tribes with which I am acquainted by a more generous treatment of their women. The dress of the Murwutees is the loose shirt common to all Afghanistan ; a voluminous trowser, whose folds are gathered together at the ancle in the same way as the shulwar of the Persians, but on a smaller scale, and of a dark striped cotton or silk ; and a chocolate -coloured turban. The hue of this latter article is quite a distinctive mark of a Murwut peasant” (Edwardes, 1851).

Edwardes aforementioned analysis about the local tribes of the then district Bannu reflects his colonial mind. His analysis may prove otherwise. It is subject to alteration in the context of individual to individual, time to time, and situation to situation etc. In his book, though, Edwardes has given a brief description of the land and people of Marwats, but, it does not give any detailed account of their history and culture.

Edwardes was followed by S. S. Thorburn, who was a British Civil Servant and ex-Settlement Officer of Bannu District in 1872. He gives detailed information about Marwats in his book *Bannú; Or Our Afghán Frontier* which was published in 1876. He tells about the genealogical tree, social life, and ballads of Marwats. But, like his predecessor (Edwardes), he has also not provided any specific and detailed information about the culture of Marwats (Thorburn, 1876).

*Gazetteer of the Bannu District 1883-4* was published by the British government, which is another source about Marwats. It provides details about the land, people, genealogical orders, and revenues etc., of tehsil Marwat in Bannu district. But, it too lacks any detailed information about the history and culture of Marwats (Gazetteer, 1883-4).

R.I.R. Glancy was also a Settlement Officer in district Bannu who's *Assessment Report on Marwat Tahsil in District Bannu* was published in 1905. Though, it gives a brief description Marwats and contains a detailed revenue record of tehsil Lakki Marwat in Bannu District. It also lacks any details about the culture of Marwats (Glancy, 1905).

*N.-W. F. Province Gazetteer Bannu District Part A.* was published by the British government in 1907. Though, like other British sources, it also gives some basic information about Marwats and does not provide any detailed information about them (Gazetteer, 1907).

Olaf Caroe's *The Pathans* is a rich source about history and culture of Pakhtuns. It has also given information about Marwats generally, but, not about their history and culture particularly.

Besides the British writings, there are also some indigenous sources about Marwats. *Hayat-i-Afghani* by Muhammad Hayat Khan also gives details about Marwats. But, as he was not a native writer, hence, he too has missed some important aspects of Marwats' culture (Khan M. H., 1867).

*Da Marwato Kasroona* edited by Abdur Rahim Majzoob is a collection of Marwats' epics. It reflects Marwats' history and culture in the form of a '*kasar*', which is a special kind of Pashto poetry mainly related to the history of wars of Marwats among themselves and with their other neighboring tribes. As this book highlights history and culture of Marwats in a poetic style, hence, its subject matter is based more on exaggerated legendary narration for the sake of amusement rather than any authentic facts and figures (Marwat A. M., 1959).

*1981 District Census Report of Bannu* and *1998 District Census Report of Lakki Marwat* provide quantitative data about district Lakki Marwat, but, they does not provide any detailed information about history and culture of Marwats (Census Report, 1981) & (Census Report, 1998).

*Taaruf* (Urdu) is a pamphlet published in 1982 by the Marwat Students Union, Peshawar University under the Chief Editorship of Fazal Rahim Khan Marwat (by then a PhD Scholar). This pamphlets contains a short history of Marwats but lacks any details about their culture (Marwat F. R., 1982).

Sher Muhammad Mohmand has been posted in Lakki Marwat as Extra-Assistant Commissioner (EAC) and Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM). Being a civil servant, he interacted with Marwats very closely. In his book, *The Marwats*, he has thrown light not only on history of Marwats but also on their culture. However, he was not a native writer, hence; some aspects of Marwats' culture are missing in his book (Mohmand, 1999).

*Da Marwato Da Waada Dastoor* (Pashto) is written by Parvez Marwat. This book is mainly focused on the traditional practices of Marwats on a wedding ceremony. It does not cover other aspects of Marwats' culture (Marwat P. , 2003).

*Meri Thanha Parwaz* (Urdu) is an autobiography by late Begum Kulsum Saif Ullah Khan who is a detailed study about a prominent political family of Marwats known as "Saif Ullah Family". It also gives some details about Marwats but not about their history and culture specifically (Khan K. S., 2011).

*Walid-i-Mihtharam Awar Mai Kuch Aks* (Urdu) is a biography of Dil Jan Marwat (former Inspector General of Police) written by his son Akbar Jan Marwat. Though, it is mainly focused on Dil Jan Khan and his family but it has also some details about history of Marwats. Like other sources, it also lacks any information about culture of Marwats (Marwat A. J., 2016).

*Qom Marwat Tharikh Kay Aayeenay May* (Urdu) is written by Muhammad Sharif Khan Marwat. It is one of the rich sources about

history of Marwats. It gives minute details about them. But, it does not give any details about culture of Marwats (Marwat M. S., 2018).

*Bannu Awar Lakki Marwat Ka Jughrafiyaayi Farhang Awar Nasliyaathi Thafseel* (Urdu) is written by Sarwar Khan Marwat. He has extracted those parts of British sources which are related to Marwats. He has translated them into Urdu and got them published in 2021. Like other sources, it is also focused more on history of Marwats rather than their culture (Marwat S. K., 2021).

*Tharikh-o-Shajarah Nasab Qom Marwat* (Urdu) is written by Hakeem Khan Marwat. This book is mainly focused on genealogical orders of Marwats, their sub-tribes, clans and sub-clans etc. But, it does not provide any information about the culture of Marwats (Marwat H. K., 2020).

Apart from the aforementioned written history of Marwats, their oral history is also of much significance. Till recent past, oral history of Marwats, especially oral history of their genealogy, is as much scientific among them that an illiterate aged member of the society, having no idea of any genealogical chart in black and white, can remember and tell his pedigree on finger tips accurately. In doing so, he covers centuries old oral history starting from Qais Abdur Rasheed who was progenitor of all the Pakhtuns down the ladder to Marwat who was the progenitor of Marwat tribe. At the same time, he can also link himself with his progenitor Marwat accurately. Similarly, some of their alive elders can tell minute details about their fading indigenous culture.

The above sources about Marwats have research gaps about the history and culture of Marwats. The principal author of this research paper also belongs to the Marwat tribe. He has spent a lot of time among his native fellow beings. He is an eye-witness and observer of different cultural practices of Marwats. His knowledge and practice of Marwats' culture is a primary source for this research paper. Hence, this research aims to remove research gaps in history and culture of Marwats and portray it as accurate as possible.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this research both, primary and secondary, sources have been utilized. This research follows the historical and qualitative approach. The data was collected and arranged chronologically for history of Marwats and thematically for their culture. It was analyzed and utilized within the text of this paper by acknowledging it with reference to the context. American Psychological Association (APA) style and format has been followed in this research.

## **ORIGIN OF MARWATS**

At the moment, socially and politically, Marwats are divided but, genealogically, they are one. S.S. Thorburn tells that Marwats are descendants of pure origin (Thorburn, 1876). They are first cousins of Suri tribe, second cousins of Lodhi tribe, and third cousins of Niazi tribe of Pakhtuns who trace back their pedigree from Qais Abdur Rasheed through one of his three sons named Bitan Baba. They are also called as Matozi or Mati tribe of Pakhtuns because they are the

descendants of Bibi Mato who was daughter of Biatan Baba and married to Prince Shah Hussain of Ghor in Afghanistan (Marwat H. K., 2020).

### **EARLY HABITATS OF MARWATS**

According to oral traditions, the area of *Ghor* in present day Afghanistan was the primitive habitat of Marwats where they led a nomadic life for centuries. With the passage of time, like other nomadic Pashtoon tribes known as *Pawandan* (Ibbetson, 1916) in local language, they also migrated from one place to another. Besides their nomadic life, one of the main reasons behind their migration was their warfare with the locals which compelled them, first, from *Ghor* to *Katawaz* (south of *Ghazni*). It is said that, in *Katawaz*, their adobe was composed of some twenty semi-nomadic villages which was called as *Marwat Garhai*. After that some time, they moved to present day Makin and Wana in South Waziristan where the *Marwatai Ghar* (a mountain in Marwats' name) still exists. From South Waziristan, they came to district Tank of KP and, finally, they settled permanently in the present day district Lakki Marwat of KP. It was during Mughal rule in India when Marwats shifted from pastoral nomads to agricultural settlers. In other words, they entered into Neolithic Age from Mesolithic Age. Since that time till today, Marwat tribe is under slow but steady evolutionary historical process shifting from traditionalism to modernism (Mohmand, 1999).

### **GUNDBAZI OR TRIBAL FACTIONALISM AMONG MARWATS**

In the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century a violent tribal factionalism arose among Marwats which divided them into two main groups named *Spin Gund* means White Party and *Tor Gund* means Black Party. *Gund* is a word of local Pashto language which means a faction, group or party. *Spin* and *Tor* are also words of local Pashto language which mean White and Black respectively. This tribal division of Marwats has its own oral tradition. It is said that there were two tribal chiefs among Marwats. One named as Nawaz Khan and other as Abizar Khan who were distant *Tarburns* or cousins. They had conventional rivalry based on *Tarburnwali* which is a sort of social evil prevailing within most of the Pashtoon tribes. *Tarburnwali* means conventional enmity among *Tarburns* or cousins within the same family. Some clans of Marwats supported Nawaz Khan and others lent their support to Abizar Khan. Nawaz Khan and his supporters were called *Spin Gund* or White Party and Abizar Khan and his supporters were named as *Tor Gund* or Black Party. In old days, this tribal enmity became an unending active war between the two tribal groups which was called as *Gundbazi* in local Pashto language. They earned the names of *Spin Gund* or White Party and *Tor Gund* or Black Party due to white and black colours of their respective flags and camps in the battle-field. During the second half of nineteenth century, *Gundbazi* among Marwats was so intensified that S.S. Thorburn was rightly compelled to say, "God is One but Marwats are two" (Thorburn, 1876).

With the passage of time, this active war shifted into a cold war with the same intensity. The battle-field turned into electoral arena where the conventional *Gundbazi* still plays a significant role in defining turn-out of the candidates within their respective electoral constituencies. Now-a-days, political alliances between the two *Gunds* are need of the hour. However, the political actors exploit the common Marwats in the name of their conventional *Gundbazi* for their own political ends. Some of the simple and illiterate Marwats are still ready to be exploited in this way.

### **MARWATS' DRESS**

It is said that a man is known by his dress or address. The traditional dress of Marwats includes turban, a *qameez* or loose shirt with length under knees, a waist-coat with traditional embroidery, a *lang* or unstitched sheet of cloth to be tied up above navel as a loose trouser around the hips and legs, and traditional shoes. A typical Marwat also keeps a *chadar* or an unstitched sheet of cloth on his one or other shoulder which is used for multi-purposes. Some Marwats also decorate their turbans with some beautiful hamlets or fresh flowers to attain public looks (Edwardes, 1851).

### **IMPACT OF GUNDBAZI OR TRIBAL FACTIONALISM ON TRADITIONAL DRESS OF MARWATS**

The *Gundbazi* or tribal factionalism has deep impacts on Marwats' traditional dresses. For example, the colour of the turban and shoes of a traditional Marwat is either white or black which is subject to colour of the *Gund* or faction to whom he belongs. Even today, it is common in practice that *Spin Gund* or White Party wears turbans and shoes of white colour. Contrary to them, Marwats who belong to *Tor Gund* or Black Party use to wear turbans and shoes of black colour. On the basis of their shoes' colour, they are also identified as "*Speen Chapli*" (of white shoes) and "*Tor Chapli*" (of black shoes) (the principal author of this research paper belongs to the Marwats' *Spin Gund* or *Spin Chapli*).

### **WEAPONIZATION OF MARWATS**

**Earlier**, Marwats were less violent and armed in comparison to other neighboring Pakhtun tribes (Khan M. H., 1867). But, with the passage of time, they got tribal feuds with other neighboring tribes like Ghoris, Suleiman Khel, Niazis, Khattaks, Wazirs, Banuchis, and Gandapurs etc., and emergence of *Gundbazi* within themselves. Hence, they were compelled to be armed either for minimum deterrence or revengeful purposes. Keeping an arm per head of male members of the family was essential whether they use it for any purpose or not. They were of the view that it might be needed at any time either for self-defense or an offence upon his enemy. If a Marwat did not own an arm it was considered as a matter of dishonour within the tribe. This tradition turned Marwats into an armed Pakhtun tribe (Marwat A. M., 1959).

## **KUZDA OR BETROTHAL AND WAADA OR MARRIAGE CEREMONIES OF MATWATS**

There was no room for love affairs within a traditional Marwats' society. If someone dared to do so the ultimate result was honour-killing. Marriages were arranged by elders within own family. In most of the cases, even today, Marwats' society is based on a joint family system, therefore, their marriages are mostly based on *Badloon* or exchange among male and female cousins. The basic aim is to avoid *Tarburwali* or enmity among cousins and keep their joint family intact. If some one dares to violate the tradition of marriage within own family it is quite enough for opening an unending *Tarburwali* or enmity among cousins for generations which proves to be an intensive blow to the joint family and tribal unity. To avoid such like situation, the elders of the family declare *Kuzda* or betrothal of male and female cousins even at the time of their birth. *Kuzda* is nothing but a ceremonial declaration of a girl's engagement to a boy and is a necessary preceding step to marriage. Although, it is just a ceremonial declaration but according to Marwats' traditions it is so strong that it costs precious lives whenever someone dares to violate it. Slowly and steadily, the Marwats' traditions are changing and the young members are getting an opportunity to marry outside their family and, sometimes, even outside of their tribe. Some Marwats used to sell out their daughters outside of their family or tribe. The reasons behind this social evil were ignorance and extreme poverty. With introduction of education and provision of some economic opportunities within Marwats' society, now a day, the curse of daughters' selling is considered as an abuse among them (Mohmand, 1999).

### **KUZDA OR BETROTHAL CEREMONY AMONG MARWATS**

Generally, among Marwats, the process of *Kuzda* or betrothal or engagement is initiated by the parents of a boy. They pay a visit to the family of a girl of their choice and match. They propose to the parents of the girl to engage her for their son. The girl's parents take time ranging from one week to a month to think over the proposal. If the girl's parents are willing to entertain the proposal they express their willingness by paying a visit to the boy's family. To materialize the proposal, the boy's father pays a second visit to the girl's family to settle all the important issues and conditions. By this time a custom is to be observed. The girl's parents ask the boy's father to pass a thread through a small needle. If he succeeds to do so it is considered as a good omen for the proposed relationship. Now the girl's father put *nekreezi* or *mehindi*, which is a mixture of water and crushed leaves of the myrtle plant in powder form, on the right palm of the hand of the boy's father. The boy's father brings back the needle along with the thread, and his palm coloured as red with *nekreezi* or *mehindi* and show it to his family members. This is considered as a proof or token of agreement for the proposed relationship. A date is fixed with mutual consent of the two families for betrothal. Prior to the date of betrothal, *Khishai* or a sum of money in cash, or certain quantity of grain, or some sheep is handed over by boy's family to girl's family to arrange a feast on the day of betrothal. On the day of betrothal a procession



including boy's parents, family members, relatives, and friends, goes to the girl's family and the betrothal is formally declared. Mostly, heavy aerial firing is a token of this formal declaration. At the girl's house, the guests are served with a cup of tea along with roasted chickens or a sheep. During the period between betrothal and marriage, the bride and bridegroom are strictly prohibited to meet or even contact each other. If some one dares to do so it is considered as matter of great dishonour for both the families (Mohmand, 1999).

### **WAADA OR MARRIAGE CEREMONY AMONG MARWATS**

After *kuzda* or betrothal, the next step is *waada* or marriage. The period, between *kuzda* and *waada*, ranges three months to one year and sometime more depending upon the mutual convenience of both the concerned families. Two consecutive dates are fixed for marriage ceremonies to be performed at bride's and bridegroom's houses respectively. The first day is fixed for marriage ceremonies to be performed at the bride's house. Traditionally, that day is called as *Thalai* day of the which is marked with presentation of a single-dish lunch traditionally named as *Thalai* to the male and female invitees. *Thalai* is a plural word in Pashto language which means flat plats filled with a special sweet item called as *Gurhobai* which is a thin pudding composed of *Gurh* or locally made raw sugar and wheat flour. After finishing their single-item lunch, the guest returns the *Thalai* or plats to the bride's family. It is also a tradition that the guests must not return empty *Thalai* but put some money in it as a token of good-will for the bride. Whole day, the bride is dressed in her common clothes without any formal beautification and like other female members of the family she too serves the female guests (Mohmand, 1999).

In the evening of that day, the bridegroom's family performs the ceremony of *Khathy Warhal*. Under this ceremony the bridegroom's family carries the dowry material to bride's house. This dowry material includes clothes, shoes, shawls, jewelry, *nekreezi*, and other items necessary for the enhancement of the bride's beauty. On this occasion, the females of bridegroom's family exhibit the dowry material to the females of bride's family and rest of the female guests who pass remarks according to the quality and price of the dowry material, most often with a view to please the females of the bridegroom's family. Failure to perform the ceremony of *Khathy Warhal* well in time leads to misunderstanding and causes complaints lodged before the bridegroom's parents by the bride's parents. Sometimes, the issue becomes so serious that it ultimately results in breakage of the marriage as a whole. Therefore, the bridegroom's parents are very conscious towards this sensitive tradition (Marwat P. , 2003).

At the bride's house, the forthcoming night is celebrated as *nekreezi shpa* or night of beautification of the bride with *nekreezi* and other cosmetics brought for her by the bridegroom's family in the evening.

Next day is fixed for marriage ceremonies to be performed at the bridegroom's house. In the morning of that day, *wara* or marriage procession, including bridegroom's parents, family members, relatives, and friends, goes to the bride's house to bring the bride to the bridegroom's house. At the bride's house, like the occasion of *Kuzda*,

this time too, the guests are served with a cup of tea along with roasted chickens or a sheep. The bridegroom remains at home in his own village and is not allowed to accompany the *wara* or wedding procession.

In old days, Marwats used to get marriages in their own family or native village or a nearby village. Therefore, wedding processions used to go to the bridal's house by foot and brought the bride in *kajawa* (a beautifully decorated wooden cage balanced and fixed on a camel's back. The camel's back was mostly decorated with a beautiful wooden cabin known as *kajawa* in local language. In modern days, the camel has been replaced with a car (beautifully decorated) for bringing the bride from her father's house to the bridegroom's house. On return of *wara* or wedding procession to bridegroom's house, wheat grains and currency coins are thrown over the bride's head as a good omen that she and her bridegroom may in future be blessed with male progeny and plenty of riches. A male baby is placed in her lap with the idea of bringing her good fortune in the shape a male issue. In order to ensure plenty of male offspring and riches, she is also made to dip her right hand into the pot of *soocha ghwarhi* or natural oil extracted from cow's milk. These are nothing but superstitious traditions prevailing among the traditional Marwats even today. The main reason behind the whole phenomenon is that Marwats consider woman as a source of good or bad fortune and their outmost struggle is to ensure her good fortune since very beginning. For this purpose, they do not hesitate to try even their superstitious traditions. Marwats are much aware of the fact that they have no other option but to live with their women-folk for once and ever either they are of good fortune or not. The chance and the choice of divorce are very rare among them. A divorce without any solid reason mostly results in an unending feud between the families of bride and bridegroom (Mohmand, 1999).

While females are performing these ceremonies within the house, the males are serving the guests with sumptuous *wara marhai* or wedding lunch in *hujra* or traditional community center.

In the evening of that day, the bride and bridegroom is formally bond together through *nikakh* or religious ceremony in which both of them accept each other according to the procedure as laid down by Quran and Sunnah. Mostly, even today, *Nikakh nama* or written legal proof of marriage is not recorded among Marwats. Mutual verbal acceptance by bride and bridegroom and presence of family members as witnesses is considered as enough for all future concerns.

All these ceremonies are performed in the shadow of heavy aerial firing, beating drums, and *athanrh* or traditional dance in a huge circle.

The last but not least ceremonies related to marriage are *drima* (third) and *wama* (seventh) which means the ceremonies to be performed on third and seventh days of the wedding respectively. On third day of the wedding, the bride returns to her parent's house where she remains until seventh day of her marriage. Her female friends, female relatives, and female villagers pay visits to her. In the morning of the seventh day of the marriage, the bridegroom comes to his in-laws to carry his bride back to his home. As this is his first visit to his in-laws since the day of his *kuzda*, he is entertained lavishly. He stays

there whole day and comes back his own home along with his bride in the evening (Marwat P. , 2003).

### **DEATH CEREMONIES OF MARWATS**

Death ceremonies of Marwats are very simple and religious in nature. After declaration of some one's death, the male villagers gather in *hujra* (a common place of villagers for social gathering) to plan for the *Janazi Lamunj* or funeral prayer and burial of the deceased one. The elder female villagers also pay visit to the deceased's house.

After the burial of the dead body, the family members of the deceased one and other villagers use to sit in *hujra* for three consecutive days for *fathiha* or condolence. They pray before Allah Almighty for the soul of the deceased one to be blessed with eternal peace in heaven. During those three days, according to Marwat traditions, it is the responsibility of the villagers to feed not only the guests coming for *fathiha* but even the family of the deceased one (Mohmand, 1999).

### **KHULAY VESH OR ORAL DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AMONG MARWATS**

In old days, Marwats distributed their lands among themselves orally. The official record was not developed properly. The verbal distribution and possession of land was enough for ownership of the land. No one was allowed to claim ownership of other's land. If someone dared to do so it was considered as a matter of dishonour and could give birth to an unending tribal feud. Later on, official land record was maintained by British administrators of the land, mostly, on the same basis (Thorburn, 1876).

### **DAILY PRACTICES, PROFESSIONS AND FOODS**

Majority of the traditional Marwats are practicing Muslims. Each village has its own mosque (s) where they pray for five times daily. Both, the mosque and the *hujra*, are mostly built side by side in the village. In each mosque, there is a *mullah*. The only qualification to become a *mullah* is keeping a beard and wearing a traditional dress attributed to Muslim clergymen. He says *azan* (call for prayer) and lead the five times' prayer in the mosque daily. He is also responsible for *nazira* (recitation of Quran) in the mosque daily to the small children of the village after *fajar* (morning) and *asar* (evening) prayers respectively. In return, he got payment in cash or in the form of food grains and other fringe benefits from the villagers collectively. On each Friday, he is on weekly holiday. Within a traditional Marwats' society, a *mullah* was to be a non-Pakhtun ethnically. He enjoyed sanctity in religious affairs but, in social affairs, he was sub-servant to the tribal traditions and tribal elders. In other words, among traditional Marwats, a *mullah* was boss of the mosque while *hujra* was a citadel of a tribal elders' power. The main reason was that he was dependent on the villagers financially and, being a non-Pakhtun *kammi* (belonging to a low caste of the society), he was not considered of equal social status. Hence, a traditional Marwat felt ashamed to be a *mullah* professionally or establish any social and matrimonial relations with him. However, among modern days' Marwats, the social trends have been reversed. The combination of religion and politics has

changed the traditional societal fabric of Marwats. Now a day, a *mullah* may be a Marwat and vice versa because religion has become one of the influential driving force within Marwats' society, specially, in the context of power politics.

Professionally, the Marwats' society is agrarian. Their main professions are farming, cattle-grazing, dairy-farming, poultry-farming, and agro-based industrialization etc. At the moment, they are also linked to the professions of trade and commerce, communications, and services etc. They are also in a large number in overseas employments.

Traditionally, Marwats take very simple, healthy, and balanced food. They take black tea mixed with milk and *gurh* twice a day, once soon after *fajar* (morning) prayer and then soon after *zuhar* (mid-day) prayer. Mostly, they don't take breakfast rather they take their lunch early before noon and their dinner before *maghrib* (evening) prayer. They avoid synthetic food items and prefer to take their own home-made foods like simple bread made of barley, maize, or wheat etc., along with pure milk, yogurt, cheese or *ghwarhi* or *desi ghee* (pure organic oil extracted from cow's milk) etc. They also use fresh vegetables and fruits of their own farms.

Like other Pakhtun tribes, Marwats are also famous for their hospitality. They serve their guests lavishly. Traditionally, *painda* [small pieces of *naghan* (a thick and soft bread cooked on clay-griddle out of wheat flour) soaked in curry of *desi ghee* and *desi* chicken) are served to the guests in a huge bowl]. A lamb cooked in *dampukht* style (cooked slowly by steaming on a light fire) is also presented to them.

Marwats follow majority traits of *Pakhtunwali*. Some of them, like social solidarity and hospitality etc., are their positive traits while some of them, like *Tarburwali* (enmity among *Tarburs* or cousins) and *Badal* (revenge), are their negative traits (Khan A. , 2017).

## **FESTIVITIES AND SPORTS OF MARWATS**

The traditional festivities and sports among the Marwats include the *Eid* celebrations, birth celebrations of male issue, *majlis* or folk songs program, *qisai* or story-telling program, *ainda*, lance-pegging, race between the dog and the hare, and *karhakay* or shooting arrows etc., (Mohmand, 1999).

## **CONCLUSION**

It is concluded from above discussion that Marwats are an ethnic Pakhtun tribe of Pakistan having a rich historical and cultural heritage. Their origin, the process of their migration from Afghanistan to Pakistan, and their socio-cultural characteristics are the central themes of the oral history of Marwats which they remember on finger tips. It has kept this heritage alive and in practice among Marwats. But, unfortunately, now a day it is under severe external cultural invasions and needs to be protected or at least to be preserved in the pages of history.

Before the colonial period, we have scattered and passing references about Marwats with in written histories about Pakhtuns and Afghanistan. The oral history of Marwats was memorized by their elders but, by now, they are dying and their younger generation is least interested in it. Hence, till the colonial period, neither the aforementioned scattered and passing references about Marwats nor oral history of Marwats has been compiled as their single documented

history. When British came to this part of the world, they paid due attention to keep on record the history and culture of Marwats. They were followed by indigenous scholars who wrote on Marwats' history and culture, mainly, depending on documents maintained by British writers.

In a nutshell, Marwats are one of a prominent Pakhtun tribe. Majority of them are currently living in district Lakki Marwat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Their land, history, and culture have been subject to alteration through ages. They started their journey from Afghanistan towards Pakistan covering a distance of hundreds of kilometers and years. As a result of this long journey, their societal fabric has been evolved from a nomadic one to a settled one and from tribal one to a pluralistic one.

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