

# COUNTRY STUDY

OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL GENDER AND  
(WHEAT-BASED) LIVELIHOOD LITERATURE

PAKISTAN

By Valentina Peveri and  
Kristie Druzca

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**CIMMYT**<sup>MR</sup>

International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center

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## Abstract

This review provides a synthesis of the literature on the links between gender and social relationships, livelihood choices, and wheat-based systems in Pakistan. The majority of the data presented is of an anthropological nature. Drawing from a rich tradition of anthropological research, this study outlines the socio-cultural, religious, and existential environments in which Pakistani men and women: participate in a variety of agricultural and non-agricultural activities to secure their livelihoods; struggle with, and challenge, cultural constraints and financial problems; perceive of their own needs and performances; and make decisions over material and immaterial resources.

The introduction highlights how the crop sector of the small-farm economy remains somewhat unexplored by economists and anthropologists alike. One standout issue is the involvement of women within these agricultural microcosms. Is it through crop production that women empower themselves? Is it via agriculture that women can struggle to increase their economic prosperity, and through prosperity overcome their confinement and seclusion? Do women like to take part in agricultural work? Do women find it emotionally interesting and rewarding? This literature review endorses the hypothesis that an exclusive focus on agricultural production results in women's involvement in agriculture fading away into invisibility/illegibility, and it therefore aims at providing alternative and more complex entry points into the lives, feelings, concerns, and unofficial and informal networks of rural Pakistani women.

Following the introduction is an annotated bibliography, which includes the sections: (a) Development, Livelihood Strategies, Vulnerabilities; (b) Gender Division of Labor; and (c) Domesticity and Agency Revisited.

The existing literature points to a meaningful relationship that links women's energies, goals, and interests with home gardens (harvesting vegetables), storage of cereals (post-harvest activities), natural resources management, and, especially, livestock tending and animal rearing. The reasons for these deep connections are illustrated and analyzed, along with observations of male dominancy (patriarchy) and other cultural mores that are generally regarded in the eyes of Western observers and developers as hindering women's agency. Despite the strict insistence of *purdah* (the code of honor and modesty, with the resulting seclusion of women) in public spaces, women and men's actual participation in such fora points to there being some flexibility in this code. The literature provides substantial evidence that the spheres of Pakistani men and women overlap much more than they are likely to admit.

Nevertheless, there remains a knowledge gap regarding the life histories, local experiences, and unofficial, unritualized, or informal networks of small farmers in general, and of poor and marginalized women in particular. Much information is available on urban, literate, middle- and upper-class women, on the ways they articulate notions of family, individuality, and sexual mores in rapidly changing social and economic milieu. This neglect of rural

subjects also results in a missed opportunity to learn and, consequently, to engage in improved program design that contributes to enhanced food security and resilience in rural communities. Case studies are presented to illustrate how existing development approaches may have overlooked localized, culturally determined concepts of empowerment.

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## 1. Introduction

The aim of this literature review is to investigate social relationships in wheat-growing regions of Pakistan. Key research questions being addressed are:

- How does the world look, and work, for males and females in wheat-growing households?
- What do we know about social relationships and mediating processes<sup>1</sup> that exist in the prime wheat-growing regions in Pakistan?
- How do gender relations shape livelihood choices, including nutrition, food security, and agriculture?

In order to deliver this study, a desk-based review of literature (both peer-reviewed and secondary/gray/unpublished) was conducted using Google Scholar, ProQuest, JSTOR, SAGE Journals, Taylor & Francis Online, and Wiley Online Library. The search terms used in combination with “Pakistan,” “gender,” and “wheat” were:

agency	lived experience	women in agriculture
agrosystem	livestock husbandry	workload
agronomic strategies	local ecology	
climate change	marginalization	
consumption	masculinity	
crop choice	natural resources	
crop diversity	nutrition	
cuisine	patriarchy	
decision-making	performance	
diversity	privilege	
division of labor	political ecology	
domestic sphere	postcolonial relations	
emotion	poverty	
empowerment	resistance	
environment	resilience	
equity	rural development	
family farms	rural women	
family politics	seasonality	
foodways	seclusion	
food preferences	small farmers	
food security	social hierarchy	
green revolution	social roles	
human capital	subsistence	
identity	sustainable development	
inequality	traditional farming	
landscape	traditional knowledge	
livelihood	women’s autonomy	

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<sup>1</sup> Mediating processes are “formal and informal organisations and institutions with regularised practices or patterns of behaviour that are structured by rules and norms of societies which have persistent use” (Scoones 1998, 12).

The majority of the data presented is of an anthropological nature. Articles that merely focus on wheat production and productivity with no reference to social equity or gender roles have not been included in the annotated bibliography. In keeping with the rich tradition of anthropological research (especially among mountain people), this literature review has privileged an analysis of the work, tasks, and roles associated with men and women. This analysis is in preference to a more technical, yet gender-insensitive, discussion of yields, management practices, income sources, land tenure, and technological interventions to enhance food security—topics that prevail, and are mostly dealt with, in economics, agricultural sciences, and development reviews. By contrast, this study provides an outline of the socio-cultural, religious, and existential environments in which Pakistani men and women, including more impoverished segments of society as well as wealthy families: participate in a variety of agricultural and non-agricultural activities to secure their livelihoods; struggle with, and challenge, cultural constraints and financial problems; perceive of their own needs and performances; and make decisions over material and immaterial resources.

The initial search around the basic key words “rural women,” “agriculture,” and “wheat” did not produce any significant output, identifying not so much a paucity of the current published literature pertaining to gender in wheat-producing regions, but rather a more fundamental and widespread inconsistency in the connection between women and grain crops. A more meaningful relationship seems to emerge from our analysis of the literature that links women’s energies, goals, and interests with home gardens (harvesting vegetables), storage of cereals (post-harvest activities), natural resources management, and, especially, livestock tending and animal rearing. The reasons for these deeper connections will be illustrated in what follows, along with observations of the male dominance (patriarchy) and other cultural mores that are generally regarded in the eyes of Western observers and developers as hindering women’s agency.

### **1.1. The Legibility<sup>2</sup> of Grain Crops**

Since Pakistan’s creation in 1947, the country has been a configuration of shifting alliances and competing political and social ideologies. One prominent feature of the state’s history has been the question of national integration of its many cultures and diverse linguistic groups. Urdu’s dominance of the cultural center has bred a sense of exclusion among other linguistic groups, leading to a proliferation of ethnic nationalism and the strengthening of regional identities, which further hinders the emergence of a national culture that democratically represents the diverse voices and languages that make up the Pakistani cultural spectrum (Ali 2004, 127–28). Within this context of cultural politics and ethnic polarization, certain areas of the country emerge as more visible and legible from an economic and demographic viewpoint, namely the irrigated plains of the Indus River basin. The results of the literature review reflect this divide between the irrigated plains and “the rest,” which consists of mountains, highlands, and deserts.

Over time, “the rest” has gained several layers of meaning, usually in the pejorative sense.

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<sup>2</sup> In *Seeing Like a State*, James Scott (1998) develops the central theme of “legibility,” which will be involved in our lines of analysis below. The concept refers to a state’s attempt to make society legible, that is, to arrange the population in ways that simplify the classic state functions of taxation, conscription, and prevention of rebellion. According to this perspective, a state attempts to maximize its appropriation of crops and labor, designing state space so as to guarantee the ruler a substantial and reliable surplus of humans and grain at least cost. This is achieved by geographical concentration of the population and the use of concentrated, high-value forms of cultivation in order to minimize the cost of governing the area as well as the transaction costs of labor and produce. Governable areas are mainly areas of high-density agricultural production. The greater the dispersal of crops, the more difficult they are to collect, in the same way that a dispersed population is more more difficult to govern.

According to Dove (1992, 238), the contemporary concept of *jangal* (forest) is very different from that of *jangala* (originally, savanna). As a result of intensified land-use patterns in response to demographic and political pressures, the culturally desirable *jangala* became transformed into the culturally undesirable *jangal* (forest wastes). Central governments tend to prefer concentrated populations, which foster intensive and sedentary patterns of land use. These patterns, in turn, facilitate centralized political and economic control. Successive central governments have directly supported the intensification of land use through the development of irrigation and intensive farming methods. Consequently, there has been a shift from farming that relies on the natural vegetation cover (grazing livestock on the mixed woodland and grassland) to land that has been cleared by humans for arable farming. The word *jangli* is now used in a pejorative sense to describe people and things that are dirty and, literally, “of the jungle,” in short, places at the margins of society (Besio 2006, 261–62).

In non-anthropological literature, primary empirical focus is on the mainstream irrigated plains, where agriculture is an important source of employment and income; by contrast, ethnographic research has mainly worked on the peripheries of the nation-state. Ethnographies of Pakistan have been subject to a certain amount of sociological ghettoization. Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa (formerly the North West Frontier Province), Balochistan, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) have been characterized as “tribal” cultures in which the people espouse fiercely egalitarian rhetoric and carry out cultural practices and discourses that overtly assert idealized notions of masculinity and honor. Ethnographies of Punjab and Sindh, in contrast, have characterized populations there as “peasant” cultures (Lyon 2012, 30). The plains areas of Punjab and Sindh account for over nine-tenths of the rural population of Pakistan, and an even greater proportion of food processing. The irrigated plains are also at the forefront of technological innovation and agricultural growth in the country. These regions, while relatively better off compared with the rest of the country in terms of infrastructure and average incomes, nevertheless account for much of Pakistan’s rural poverty and undernutrition (Balagamwala et al. 2015, 16).

Almost 67% of Pakistan’s population resides in rural areas, where the average farm size decreased from 13.1 acres in the early 1970s to 7.7 acres in 2000. After Pakistan’s independence in 1947, there were limited land reforms that led to less than half of the arable land being occupied by a majority of smallholders, while most of the land went to a minority of large landholders. These land arrangements have not changed since. In fact, there exists a large number of landless farmers, who labor on others’ lands for securing food and livelihoods (tenant farmers). Given this, Pakistan’s agricultural policy, which is largely influenced by large landholder lobby groups, is likely to continue to benefit the rich instead of the poor (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 55).

The most commonly grown crops across Pakistan are wheat and rice, which are also the common staple food. The priority of wheat in most areas is a relic from the days of hereditary rulers who demanded taxes in grain (Allan 1990, 407). Grain crops have long been integrated into the modern market system and are therefore legible to the state. This means that a percentage of crop production is extracted from farmers in a variety of ways, including rents, taxes, costs of milling and transporting, costs of irrigation, and market middlemen. This extraction has increased over the past several decades through Green Revolution development projects, which have introduced productive but costly packages of high-yielding seed varieties, fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. The legibility of crop farming and its transformation through commercialization and development make it vulnerable to a host of risks, including market busts and destructive pest cycles (Carpenter 2001, 14).

Pakistan has in fact been one of the stars of the Green Revolution (Lopez et al. 2012, 73). While in aggregate terms it is true that the Green Revolution has enabled Pakistan both to meet national

food requirements and fuel economic growth, in disaggregate terms it has nevertheless worsened the incidence of rural poverty and the maldistribution of rural incomes and assets. These inequalities were made worse by the innate bias of Green Revolution technologies, which favored commercial farmers, better-off peasants, and large landholders over poor peasants, simple commodity producers, subsistence smallholders, and landless tenants (Niazi 2004). The Punjab province of Pakistan is one of the first regions in the developing world in which farmers adopted semi dwarf wheats. Despite initial and subsequent success in improving yield potential, yield stability, maintenance of disease resistance, and other beneficial plant characteristics, the popularity of the “Green Revolution wheats” (i.e., semi dwarf wheats) has provoked criticism (Smale et al. 1998).

Only rarely these accounts of the life of grain crops (their raise, fall, productivity, and legibility) record the point of view of farmers, and especially of women farmers, on such issues as dietary preferences, the value and use of crop residues,<sup>3</sup> or the contrasting perceptions of local and new high-yielding practices.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, a focus on mainstream and well-documented agriculture is incapable of capturing the nuances of livelihood systems, where agriculture has always been involved with animal husbandry not only because crops were insufficient but (even more importantly) because manure was required as fertilizer for the fields. In high mountain areas, for example, communities were probably never really self-sufficient in terms of food. To some extent, local produce was supplemented by trade and, in some historical cases, also by raids; very often, people simply starved in winter and spring once stocks had run out and fresh food was not yet available (Sökefeld 2014, 9–10). Also, the strategy of planting multiple varieties of wheat, which is rarely accounted for in literature, is to avoid monoculture farming so that the risk of damage from pest and disease infestation is reduced. These risk-minimizing practices have been described for Baltistan, but they are characteristic of what has been called a “mixed mountain farming system,” within which much of the operative agroecosystem can be interpreted in terms of polyculture farming that is based upon a diversity of species (MacDonald 2010, 140).

Even though Pakistan’s environmental policy is relatively well developed, none of the strategies

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<sup>3</sup> An exception are the notes of geographer Nigel J.R. Allan on the household food supply of a mountain community in northern Pakistan: “A flat wheat bread, *chapatti*, is also an important dietary preference. In fact, if a meal in Hunza does not include a chapatti, it is regarded only as a snack. Although productivity is mediocre, wheat continues to be the preferred basic foodstuff. Wheat varieties are of the local type, because the straw is better than that from new high-yielding varieties; furthermore, the new varieties show no increase in yield compared with indigenous strains” (Allan 1990, 407–8). And again: “Seven kinds of bread were eaten, and different varieties of grains were customarily mixed and eaten in conjunction with fruits or vegetables. If a certain grain was not available for a specific dish, then a substitute could not be used. For example, if wheat was not available for the breakfast dish *bataring-i-daodo*, a soup of wheat noodles and softened dried apricots, that meal was forgone. Having all the ingredients for a dish was essential for adequate traditional dietary habits” (ibid., 409). An equally anecdotal note refers to the multifunctionality of wheat in rural areas of Sialkot District: “The wheat plant had various uses for the local women, besides its dietary input. It was used in making traditional handicrafts (such as baskets and mats), and was used as a raw material in local construction. Its by-products were used in preparing fodder for the cattle. In addition, women reported that mixing leftover wheat-bread in fodder increased the milk yield of the cattle. Women of Jajopur and Madhopur Vaince reported that mixing cotton seeds or by-products of mustard plant in the fodder increased both the yield and the cream content of the milk” (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 74).

<sup>4</sup> In research conducted in rural Punjab (Sialkot District) the author recorded the following evidence:

All the women interviewed unanimously agreed that the local soil fertility had declined over the years. Most attributed this decline to a switch to artificial fertilizers (which, the women felt, had ironically increased crop yields). ... Women estimated that with an artificial fertilizer a crop area remained productive for 6 months in average. With traditional organic compost, the same cropland would remain productive for 1–6 years, according to different estimates. ... Despite this, few locals used traditionally prepared manure on their crops today. The prime reason for this was the long duration it took for the manure to mature. ... Interestingly, the locals interviewed felt that the artificial fertilisers were the root-cause of illness and sickness in villages today. (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 72)

explicitly recognize the role and contribution of traditional knowledge systems in sustainable development (Nyborg 2002). There has been no known government-funded research on the linkage between traditional knowledge systems and sustainability (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 39). More generally, the legibility of grain crops does not make smallholders and small family farms more legible. Smallholders traditionally do not exist for state agriculture agencies because those institutions traditionally do not want to have to deal with them (Dove 1994, 345). The idea that wealthy farmers tend to be progressive farmers (and vice versa) is an integral part of the institutional belief system of many government agencies, not only in Pakistan but elsewhere as well (ibid., 338–39). As a result, indigenous solutions and local innovations for achieving sustainable development and food security are rarely recorded and portrayed.<sup>5</sup> There are also knowledge gaps with respect to the organization of agricultural work in Pakistan, particularly from the point of view of gendered aspects of work and income. The understanding of how choices with respect to work, care, and consumption are made, by whom, and even the extent to which these are choices, is limited to anecdotal accounts (Balagamwala et al. 2015, 16).

The crop sector of the small-farm economy remains somewhat unexplored by economists and anthropologists alike. One standout issue is the involvement of women within these agricultural microcosms. Is it through crop production that women empower themselves? Is it via agriculture that women can struggle to increase their economic prosperity, and through prosperity overcome their confinement and seclusion? Do women like to take part in agricultural work? Do women find it emotionally interesting and rewarding? This literature review endorses the hypothesis that an exclusive focus on agricultural production results in women’s involvement in agriculture fading away into invisibility/illegibility, and it therefore aims at providing alternative and more complex entry points into the lives, feelings, concerns, and unofficial and informal networks of rural Pakistani women.

## 1.2. Veiled Work

The population of Pakistan is predominantly Muslim, with a strong Islamic influence (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 52). *Purdah* means “curtain” and in its literal sense is understood as the veiling of women’s faces and bodies underneath a cloak (*burqa*). *Purdah* divides village life into two domains—a public male one and a private female one—and decrees everything that occurs within the female domain be literally unseen by men in the public domain. The male public domain is exemplified by the market and includes roads and public transport. Because markets are male realms, *purdah* prevents almost all women from entering them. And in most of Pakistan, it prevents male traders from visiting women in their courtyards. The female domain is exemplified by the four walls of the courtyard, but this does not mean that rural women cannot work outside of it: at certain times of the day or when traveling in groups, women go to their own fields, the village wells, uncultivated grasslands on the outskirts of the village, and to the forest. Most importantly, *purdah* makes women and their work invisible to men from outside the village. It institutionalizes the separation between women and the government officials that might be expected to be interested in their activities—census takers, tax collectors, foresters, agricultural extension agents, veterinarians, etc.—because these officers are all men, and all come from outside the village. *Purdah* also prevents urban women from joining these male-dominated bureaucracies

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<sup>5</sup> A notable exception is represented by the study of indigenous environmental knowledge in the rain-fed tracts of Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province (Dove 2003). In the course of this study, the author discovered a widespread, coherent, indigenous constellation of beliefs and practices regarding *sayab* (tree shade) and its management within the context of tree-crop interactions on farmland. These beliefs diverged greatly from Western scientific concepts of shade and, of most importance, directly contradicted the accepted wisdom of Pakistan’s government foresters that farmers were not interested in trees and knew nothing about them.

or from working in rural areas. All household dealings with the world outside the village must go through men, and all information about the household collected by the state must come from men. This situation is further complicated by the fact that it is possible for one man to offend another by asking questions about the women in his household. When purdah is involved, women and what they do are matters of family honor and of Islam, and the ultimate punishment for failing to respect purdah is death (Carpenter 2001; Grünenfelder 2013; Ibraiz 1993; Mumtaz and Salway 2005; Nyborg 2002).

Pakistan is seen by most Western scholars as being strongly influenced by the fact that it is almost entirely an Islamic society and is therefore viewed as a monolithic community. This assumption tends to lead to the homogeneous treatment of Pakistani women as powerless entities, unable to exercise their own life decisions and reproductive rights. The situation is indeed much more complex (Sathar and Kazi 2000a, 90).

The control of women's mobility and their exclusion from public space is perhaps the most salient feature of purdah in Pakistani society. And it is equally true that gender is one of the most powerful social relations that shapes the everyday lives of Pakistani people, reflecting the social and political constructions that differentiate how women and men function/exist in society. However, how strictly gender hierarchies are adhered to depends on socio-economic class. While it is important to be aware of the extensive degree to which women's interests have been neglected in various social sectors, understanding gender relations in Pakistan requires more than a study of national statistics or quantitative surveys.

In general, much information is available on urban, literate, middle- and upper-class women, on the ways they articulate notions of family, individuality, and sexual mores in rapidly changing social and economic milieu (Ali 2004; Ali et al. 2011; Sathar and Kazi 2000a; Sathar and Kazi 2000b). To some extent purdah, veiling, and women's lack of involvement in economic activities can be viewed as luxuries only the financially affluent can afford. These luxuries then become cultural ideals that men aspire to for their women because such ideals reflect positively on their image as good earners and, hence, on their masculinity (Ibraiz 1993, 120).

Certain approaches in development thinking associate increased economic prosperity with increased empowerment of women. However, the evidence collected in rural areas of Sialkot District (in Punjab) reveals that women became more confined to their homes as the economic prosperity of their households increased; and women in such households reported a greater perception of insecurity and social isolation as compared to the past. Despite having the potential to better access amenities, facilities, and markets due to their improved education, health, and wealth, from contemporary development perspectives, it appears that women have become less empowered. Part of the reason may lie in women's decreased mobility (in relation to increased prosperity) which decreases opportunities for socialization. Thus, women's confinement to the home could be interpreted as an indirect consequence of what is perceived to be better circumstances, which in turn can give way to social segregation. In other words, as women and their traditional knowledge base become spatially restricted following the shift away from subsistence farming, household gender roles become more specialized as women transition to solely "inside" work and men to solely "outside" work. Women may feel and assert that they are better off than before economically and socially, even though their social mobility has decreased (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 79).

In rural areas, the practice of secluding women within the home is more common among women from large land-owning families than among poorer groups where women are forced by economic necessity to leave the home for work (Mumtaz and Salway 2005, 1752). For example, in Pind

(pseudonym for a village in Punjab), women's mobility is a complex and contested issue (as it is elsewhere in Pakistan). Cultural norms glorify restricted mobility and seclusion, for this epitomizes women's sexual chastity and upholds family honor. However, for the large majority of women, the practical needs of survival oblige them to travel outside the home. The resultant tension between these two opposing forces and the manner in which it is handled exemplifies the fluid nature of gender norms. Reported and observed activities were found to diverge sharply.<sup>6</sup> Despite what they said, women were observed to be quite mobile, and a woman walking alone in a distant field was not an unusual sight in Pind. Women visited each other's houses, making *roti*<sup>7</sup> in one *tandoor*<sup>8</sup> and collecting water from one well. They washed clothes and bathed in the nearby stream. The poor women looked after livestock, which included herding cattle and collecting fodder from family cultivated fields, sometimes involving one- to two-hour walks in lonely fields. A drought during the fieldwork period meant these women had to travel even greater distances. Similarly, women travelled to and from the *dhokes*,<sup>9</sup> alone or in groups, some of which were located at distances of 30 to 45 minutes' walk from the main village, with no clearly defined paths. One explanation for the variance between women's stated and observed mobility is the emic construction of space and movement. Pakistani women's construction of space is not determined by physical geography but rather by social geography. The identity of the people who share a space at a particular moment in time determines whether the space is classified as *baar* (outside) or *ander* (inside) space. Presence of *biradari*<sup>10</sup> members, both women and men, creates a socially acceptable "inside" space, while the presence of a non-biradari man, or even a woman, creates an "outside" space. There is little correlation between the social boundaries and physical village geography. Women could visit a relative's house that involved a lonely 45-minute walk in the fields but would not visit a non-biradari house five minutes' walk away. Since most of the biradari houses were located in close proximity, constituting a *mohalla* (neighborhood), women of the biradari move from home to home as if each home was an extension of their own. Even the *ghalian* (village lanes) are a socially acceptable space to linger around and chat (Mumtaz and Salway 2005, 1758).

Thus, it is important to recognize that seclusion has never been absolute, and that observed mobility outside the home cannot simply be equated with some Westernized notion of "freedom of movement" (Mumtaz and Salway 2005, 1752). The realities of daily life (or work) results in most women exercising as much freedom of movement (or, enjoying as much mobility) as men. Despite this mobility and increased exposure to "outside" (*baar*), women's authority and participation in decision-making in the village is still constrained (Sathar and Kazi 2000b, 899). It should also be pointed out that it is not entirely clear how much mobility is related to greater status in households.

Yet, for the sake of simplicity, it can be provisionally stated that women in rural areas seem to enjoy much more freedom of movement, and veiling is less strict, compared with women in urban areas. This greater freedom and mobility is positively correlated with more working hours, inside and outside the households. Women's participation in work on their own farm in rain-fed villages is significantly greater than that found in irrigated villages. Thus, although caring for newborns and

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<sup>6</sup> A statement every woman made as a matter of routine is *mai kидde nai jandi* ("I never go anywhere"). Further probing usually elicited an admission of traveling outside, but only to attend *nya ya maatam* ("weddings or funerals"). Such mobility was represented as an unavoidable *majboori* ("necessity"). However, there was some variation, with the richer women emphasizing their restricted mobility, while a few very poor women admitted it is a luxury they can ill afford. Without exception, all women subscribed to the notion that women should not travel out (Mumtaz and Salway 2005, 1758).

<sup>7</sup> *Roti* (also known as *chappati*) is a flat bread originating from the Indian subcontinent, made from stoneground wholemeal flour, traditionally known as *atta*.

<sup>8</sup> The term refers to a variety of ovens, the most common being a cylindrical clay or metal oven used in cooking and baking.

<sup>9</sup> An isolated farmhouse, sometimes two, located in the surrounding fields away from the main settlement.

<sup>10</sup> A group of households related by blood.

infants is almost entirely a female responsibility within the household, women in rain-fed villages are expected to perform a range of additional agricultural tasks. But which agricultural tasks are performed by women? Work primarily associated with women is relatively illegible to the state compared to that associated with men. The overall picture of rural women, including the traditional knowledge they hold, is clouded when compared with that of urban, literate, middle- and upper-class women, and requires much more research to get a deeper understanding. Research on rural Pakistani women places itself at the margins of the margins and requires a critical understanding of their social and economic invisibility/illegibility. As poignantly put by Carol Carpenter (2001, 12): “Women’s work in rural Pakistan has been documented; its invisibility does not stem from its never having been studied. But this documentation lies in what we call, interestingly, ‘gray’ literature, which is unavailable outside Pakistan, and not readily available inside the country. ... After more than two decades of efforts by women, in Pakistan and elsewhere, to make women’s work visible and thus involve them in the development process, why does this invisibility persist?”

### 1.3. The Illegibility of Rural Women

The illegibility of rural women mainly persists because of a very limited understanding of the rural household economy in contemporary Pakistan and the highly functional role gender plays in it. Farmers, men and women, desire cash and the things it can buy, and are willing to take a lot of risks to get it—yet these risks also increase the need to have something in place to guarantee their survival. One of the main strategies that farm households follow to allow them to take advantage of opportunities while also securing their means of survival is to divide their economies into two: a risk-averse subsistence sector, and a market-oriented sector where risks are acceptable. In rural Pakistan, the institution of *purdah* defines how these two economies are separated: inside of it and veiled from the outside world, women are engaged in risk-averse subsistence activities, while outside of it men are plunging ahead with riskier activities, such as trying new seeds and producing crops for market (Carpenter 2001, 13).

Crops, and their related risks, comprise the men’s sector. Anything grown for cash in Pakistan becomes the province of men because of their domination of markets. The crop sector of the small-farm economy is motivated by rural households’ desire to better their socio-economic position and their willingness to experiment with new crops and take a variety of other risks to do so. Crops may be rural households’ primary source of cash. It is through crop production that they “develop” themselves, and thus participate in the national development process. In most of Pakistan, grain crops are strongly identified with men; the plow, for example, is such a potent male symbol that women may not even touch it. While women in most rural households must contribute a significant amount of labor to crops, working in the fields is considered slightly improper for them. In addition, some of women’s fieldwork, especially weeding (since weeds are fed to livestock), should be more properly understood as belonging in the livestock sector (Carpenter 2001, 13–14).

Livestock husbandry and subsistence farming comprise the women’s sector. Livestock plays two roles in this system: first, it is used to channel nutrients from forests and uncultivated grasslands to crops;<sup>11</sup> second, profits from cash crops are invested in livestock and as an insurance against crop failure. In contrast to crop farming, smallholder livestock husbandry in Pakistan is subsistence oriented. Milk and milk products are the primary source of protein in the diets of small farming

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<sup>11</sup> “In Pakistan’s culture, women are viewed as more wild than men; it is men who domesticate women, and not the reverse. Women’s power, like that of manure, is fertile but polluting. This view is congruent with the fact that women make uncultivated land, through livestock, into the manure that makes cultivated land fertile. And this process, upon which cultivation and culture are based, is conceptually outside cultivation and culture.” (Carpenter 2001, 15).

households. Dung is the only readily available fuel in some areas, and it remains an important fuel all over Pakistan as it is generally preferred for certain kinds of cooking. Manure is the most valued fertilizer. But the most interesting thing about livestock products in Pakistan is that they are typically not sold outside of villages. They are certainly traded (and probably sometimes sold) within village communities, from a woman with a surplus to a woman with a shortfall. But they are primarily intended to be used by the household producing them; that is, milk and dung are subsistence products par excellence (Carpenter 2001, 14).

To summarize, in agricultural societies in Pakistan, raising livestock is what women do, while raising crops is what men do. Livestock and crops are parts of a single, integrated farming system that once characterized the Indian subcontinent. Within this system, women's subsistence production provides the basis for households' participation in the wider cash economy. What is central is farmers' need to ensure their survival in the face of risks associated with commercialization and development, a need that divides the household into a commercial sector that is legible to the state, and a subsistence sector that is not. The gender division of labor lends itself to this split, and patriarchal values protect women from engaging in riskier agricultural activities. Thus, in Pakistan, *purdah* effectively walls off the subsistence sector (Carpenter 2001, 17).

It is also worth recalling how Pakistan is the fifth-largest milk-producing country in the world, a figure that highlights the importance of the livestock and dairy sector in its economy. In fact, almost half of Pakistan's income in agriculture is generated from the livestock sector (Munawar-Ishfaq 2010, 55). Cattle are an important part of rural, agricultural life in Pakistan. The usual dairy products domestically produced are milk, yogurt, curd, buttermilk, butter, and *desi ghee* (condensed butter, made by cooking milk and butter over low heat for long hours). Most of these products are consumed at home, while the rest are sold to other residents as a source of income (*ibid.*, 74).

Research conducted in Sindh shows that, although women are found to be involved in a range of agricultural tasks, either on their own or as part of a family unit, there are only a few specific sets of activities that are almost exclusively seen as women's work and for which women's entitlement to remuneration is even nominally acknowledged: cotton and vegetable harvesting, and livestock rearing. Cotton harvesting is the most conspicuous activity in terms of women's agricultural work. Plowing and field preparation are activities exclusively carried out by adult males, as is on-farm water management and the application of fertilizers and pesticides to crops. While there do not appear to be strong gendered norms around weeding, collecting fodder, and caring for livestock, these activities are mainly carried out by women and children rather than adult males. The sowing of wheat is done exclusively by men. Transplanting of rice and, in some instances, cotton is done by men and women. Wheat and rice harvesting is carried out by families—men, women and able-bodied children—and these staples make a major contribution to households' annual consumption (Balagamwala et al. 2015).

One study explored the emerging pattern of changes in the economic activities of women in Ziarat District (Balochistan) by assessing their direct and indirect contribution to the household economy (Mohyuddin et al. 2012). The authors found that traditionally women were mainly responsible for household tasks due to age-old cultural norms that required women to remain within the boundaries of their home. A closer look at the women's productive activities, however, revealed that the assumption that women's roles are confined to household chores only, or that household economic activity has been monopolized by males, is a mere myth. Women start participating in economic activities from a very young age by keeping and tending livestock and poultry in addition to a number of other tasks that add to the family income (*ibid.*, 244).

Sex-disaggregated information for livestock-related activities in Punjab clearly indicates that most

livestock-related activities are undertaken by women. Women play a major role in barn cleaning, cutting and chopping fodder, stall feeding, watering, washing, milking, processing milk byproducts into useful food items (e.g., cheese, butter, yogurt), and manure collection. Livestock rearing and management is mainly the job of women in rain-fed agricultural systems. A considerable amount of time (25% of working time) is spent on livestock-related activities, which are largely accepted as a part of routine household activities. As reported during interviews, except for decisions regarding insemination of cows where their participation is low, females are actively involved in decision-making with their husband regarding most other livestock-related activities. The analysis reflects that, although mutual consultation seemed to be the norm for most of the livestock-related decisions, the role of females in the decision-making process was found to be more prominent with regard to keeping goats or sheep, breed selection, replacing old breeds with improved ones, allocation of land for fodder, and putting animals on concentrated feed (Tibbo et al. 2009).

One of the most striking findings with regard to the lives of rural women is not so much their special connection to livestock husbandry in terms of time allocation and intensity (Allan 1990, 406; Halvorson 2002, 262; Ibraz 1993, 106–12; Joekes 1995, 67–68), but rather the degree of their commitment to and enjoyment in performing the task.<sup>12</sup> This was expounded on by Carpenter (1997, 159), who stated that

Women prefer housework to fieldwork, and they particularly like to raise livestock, feeling that it is both proper and emotionally interesting and rewarding, in contrast to agriculture, which is slightly improper and not, for women, valued. For a household to have its women working in the fields is a sign that its means are limited (even though very few households can afford to hire the labor that would keep their women entirely out of the fields); for a household to have milk animals, on the other hand, is a sign that it is prosperous.

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<sup>12</sup> The same is true of home gardening, as found in a high mountain valley of the Karakoram-Himalayas:

“Every evening, Halima unlocks the wooden gate of stripped saplings and goes into her garden. Of course, she has been working hard since she got up at 4 a.m. cooking, feeding the family, cleaning the house, then weeding, watering and tending their fields, accompanied everywhere by her baby and other small children. But when she enters her garden, her pride and contentment of being there are evident. Painstakingly and skillfully she transplants tiny onion and tomato seedlings; prunes the tomato plants and deftly picks greens and coriander leaves for their evening meal. She directs water from the main channel into each vegetable bed, removing a clod of earth from the surrounding edge until the bed is flooded, replacing it and continuing to do the same with the rest of the garden. Wherever she comes across a weed, she expertly pokes it up with a sharp tool, and tosses it into a pile for fodder. She may spend as much as two hours there. All the while she answers her children’s questions, delegates responsibilities, nurses the baby when he cries. “If I could, I would spend the whole day here,” she says, as her eyes travel over the garden. This work, while producing their daily sustenance, is not performed solely out of duty. It is pleasurable as well, even a therapeutic activity. (Azhar-Hewitt 2002, 84)

The care of home gardens is woman’s work—sowing, transplanting, weeding, watering, harvesting—when all her other work is done.

## 2. Annotated Bibliography

### 2.1. Development, livelihood strategies, vulnerabilities

**Niazi, T. 2004. "Rural Poverty and the Green Revolution: The Lessons from Pakistan." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 31(2): 242–60.**

*Keywords: Green Revolution, Poverty, Tenurial security, Rural employment, Rural household income*

The bright spot of the Green Revolution is purported to be India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. India and Pakistan are the putative beneficiaries of high-yielding wheat varieties that lifted each country out of food scarcity and put it on the road to food surplus. The ecological and social costs linked to this transformation are, however, slowly becoming evident. This article analyzes the longitudinal data for the past four decades, together with the published evidence on hunger, unemployment, and poverty in Pakistan.

Pakistan experienced the most impressive economic growth rate throughout the 1980s, which put it at the head of the league of regional economies. By the 1990s, Pakistan appears to have reached its yield and production limits, as additional cultivable land became scarce and crop yields started on a downward trend. Initial surges in yield, the author argues, were due to the development of virgin land that was responsive to a combination of high fertilizer inputs and abundant irrigation provision. A decline in the availability of cultivable land, a contraction in the supply of water for irrigation, a shrinking wheat yield due to the diminishing biological potential of the soils—not only did all of these result in decreased wheat production but they also contribute to the unsustainability of farm production in general.

Parallel with and linked to the process of landownership concentration was a decline in rural employment. In turn, the result of this increasing decline in rural employment is the reproduction of a cycle of poverty that currently affects one in every three Pakistanis, who as a consequence live below subsistence level. Although there has been a progressive increase in the poverty of the national, rural, and urban populations, since 1997/98 it is those working in agriculture who have been worst affected. A significant contributory factor in this transformation is the process of dispossession or “depeasantization.” Half the rural population no longer has access to land, the key productive resource in an agrarian society such as Pakistan. As many as 40% of those who lack access to land now live in poverty, with its attendant consequences, such as malnutrition and hunger.

In conclusion, while in aggregate terms it is true that the Green Revolution in Pakistan has managed both to meet national food requirements and to fuel economic growth, in disaggregate terms it has nevertheless worsened the incidence of rural poverty, and the maldistribution of rural incomes and assets. The article argues that these inequalities were made worse by the innate bias of Green Revolution technologies toward the rich in rural Pakistan, a situation that favored commercial farmers, better-off peasants, and large landholders over poor peasants, simple commodity producers, subsistence smallholders, and landless tenants.

**Smale, M., Hartell, J., Heisey, P.W., and Senauer, B. 1998. "The Contribution of Genetic Resources and Diversity to Wheat Production in the Punjab of Pakistan." *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 80: 482–93.**

*Keywords: Diversity, Genetic resources, Wheat production*

Despite initial and subsequent success in improving yield potential, yield stability, maintenance of disease resistance, and other plant characteristics, the popularity of semi dwarf wheats, or "Green Revolution wheats," has provoked criticism. Most recently, criticism has focused on the effects of their widespread adoption on the genetic diversity of the wheat varieties grown by farmers. By the late 1990s, wheat breeders use landraces infrequently in their improvement programs. The Punjab of Pakistan is one of the first regions in the developing world in which farmers adopted semi dwarf wheats.

The authors tested the relationship of genetic resource and diversity variables to mean and variance of wheat yields in 29 districts of Punjab from 1979 to 1985. The indicators developed for the analysis include the genealogical distances, crossing histories, landrace ancestors, age, and percent distribution by area of the varieties grown by farmers.

In the Punjab, one of the major wheat-producing provinces of Pakistan, wheat is produced during the winter low-rainfall season (October to May) and is one of two staple food grains. Important differences emerged from the analysis among districts of the Punjab when the total production area is disaggregated into irrigated and rain-fed (*barani*) areas. In the irrigated districts, mean wheat yields were higher and wheat was grown with more fertilizer, traction, bullocks, and labor, although literacy rates were lower than in the rain-fed districts. Cropping intensity in the irrigated districts was high, with double cropping of cash and food crops; generally, however, farmers in the irrigated areas were food self-sufficient and earned their cash income primarily from the summer crop. By contrast, the dominant farming system in rain-fed districts was a crop-livestock mix. Wheat or maize were the primary food crops and were also an important source of livestock fodder. Cropping intensities were lower. The *barani* areas were not generally food self-sufficient, and farm families in these districts earn most of their income from off-farm work and livestock production.

Beginning in 1967, the semi dwarf wheats adopted in the irrigated areas rapidly replaced the local landrace types. By 1985/86, adoption of high-yielding varieties generally did not exceed 50% of the wheat area in the drier rain-fed environments, although adoption was higher in the wetter rain-fed areas. Grain yield increases of the semi dwarf varieties in *barani* districts were less dramatic than in the irrigated areas, while fodder yields, which have a high value in these rain-fed areas, were lower. In many cases, the milling and baking qualities of the older varieties were preferred to those of the semi dwarf wheats. The article found that, among the irrigated districts, conventional inputs (fertilizer, water, human capital) had statistically significant and positive effects on mean wheat yield. Among the *barani* districts, in contrast to the irrigated areas, the genealogical distance among semi dwarf varieties and the number of distinct landraces in their ancestry was positively correlated with yield stability, in addition to yields themselves. The authors suggest that there is a need for better estimation models of the relationship between yield and genetic resources and their attributes.

**Allan, N.J.R. 1990. "Household Food Supply in Hunza Valley, Pakistan." *Geographical Review* 80(4): 399–415.**

*Keywords: Household food supply, Social hierarchy, Allocation of labor, Agrosystem*

In the northern Pakistan valley of the Hunza River, isolated since the British conquest in 1891 had meant an inadequate reliance on a subsistence food-production system. By 1990, the valley's agrosystem was in the midst of great change. With limited irrigation water available, the valley is making a transition from agriculture to horticulture supplemented with imported grain.

This article investigated the historical and cultural limitations on household food supply in the Hunza region. After a survey of the biophysical environment, the author explains how the scarcity of water and the need for intensive irrigation fostered a despotic political system, and how that system, coupled with other factors such as inefficient labor allocation and social customs, militated against household self-sufficiency.

The biophysical constraints in the Hunza Valley did not necessarily prevent adequate food production; on the contrary, with irrigation the conditions could be considered ideal for agriculture. This limiting variable, water, led to a principality form of social organization. Mirs of Hunza ruled the region over centuries, commanded local forces, and coerced the population into various hydraulic agricultural projects. The Hunza people could not make the transition to a more intensive system of food production, such as kitchen gardens, because the despotic ruler collected taxes in grain. Grain could be easily stored during the winter and transported. There were strict rules about the allocation of irrigation water to certain crops, and vegetables had lowest priority.

Moreover, the allocation of labor within South Asian households was governed by the social institution of *pardah*, the seclusion of women. By placing limits on the kinds of tasks that women can accomplish and, more importantly, on where these tasks may be performed (i.e., in the immediate vicinity of the steading), *pardah* helped curtail the effectiveness of food production in Hunza households. Yet women's labor in food production is absolutely essential to household subsistence. Men may have undertaken field tasks that entailed a higher level of energy expenditure (e.g., plowing and digging potato ridges), but weeding, harvesting, and winnowing by women consumed much more time than the men's labor.

Twenty-nine years after Allan's article, women's work remains labor intensive and is not ameliorated by technical innovations such as tractors and threshers. Fields still must be weeded, and crops cut. In addition to the more extensive activities associated with grain cultivation, women are responsible for the collection of fruit, planting and care of vegetable gardens, much of the collection of fodder, and keeping of livestock, such as poultry and ungulates, around the house.

Such social constriction was illustrated through the example of goat keeping. Every household keeps goats, but only males can milk them: such is the cultural bond between procreation of goats and masculinity. These goats curb Hunza food production. They contribute little to the dietary intake of the Hunzakuts. The goats are permitted free range during the entire late autumn, winter, and early spring, which inhibits cultivation of any crop that might be available for fodder or that would contribute substantially to food production. Garden crops, such as beets, turnips, and cabbage, are virtually unknown because the animals eat the seedlings. If the animals were tethered during the period they are around the household, many fruit trees could be espaliered along the terrace walls. Now that the costs of transporting chemical fertilizers are subsidized by the central government, goats are no longer relevant as a source of dung. Yet the fetish about goat keeping remains.

In 1974 the Pakistan central government removed the mir from power and since then has attempted to solve the problem of Hunza food scarcity by providing subsidized wheat to the populace. As a result of this policy, no one starves in Hunza as in former years, but the

government's action has tended to reinforce consumption of wheat instead of encouraging a shift in food production from grain to intensive cultivation of vegetables and increased orchard output. Household cash is now diverted into useless, non-food luxuries, such as tea, and into large quantities of the three scourges of the South Asian diet: salt, sugar, and fats. Subsidized wheat, grown relatively cheaply on the Indus plains, also creates a dependency by locals on the central government.

**Dove, M.R. 1994. "The Existential Status of the Pakistani Farmer: Studying Official Constructions of Social Reality." *Ethnology* 33(4): 331–51.**

*Keywords: Agroforestry, Development, Governmental context, Peasant context, Small farmers*

Pakistan's first major social forestry project, the joint Pakistan/U.S. Forestry Planning and Development Project, begun in 1985, immediately experienced problems with its field component, which was designed to assist small farmers to plant trees on their farms. But who were the "small farmers"? The foresters' views of Pakistani farmers were at variance with the government's own data. The disagreement over the nature of Pakistan's farmers was part of a broad disagreement over representations of rural social reality, involving the project foresters, the project designers and advisors, and the farmers.

The author discussed how development impasses and failures in the forestry sector still persisted, in part because one player remained to be recognized: the national forest services and their foresters. Much social forestry was done, but very little sociology of forestry. More generally, the governmental context of development was rarely problematized in the same way as the local peasant context. To illustrate how and why government and peasant views of development reality differed, the author drew upon experience with the Forestry Planning and Development Project in Pakistan, to which the author was attached as technical advisor hired by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The project was designed to redress resource degradation. Its ultimate goal was to expand tree planting and thus the production of fuelwood, fodder, and timber on farmlands in Pakistan, especially those of the *barani* (rain-fed) tracts of Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province, thereby sustaining the long-term economic and ecological viability of small farms. Its more immediate goal was to assist the Pakistan Forest Service to develop the institutional capacity to work with farmers, to change the basic function of the Forest Service from protecting the state's forests from the rural population to one of serving this same population.

Implementation of the operational component of the project ran into immediate difficulties, stemming mostly from the foresters themselves. The difficulties included disagreement over the meaning of the term "farmer." The disagreement over who could be termed a farmer was in effect a disagreement over who could be termed a client of the Forest Service. In short, it was a debate over the wisdom of making small farmers, as opposed to large farmers, the clientele of the Forestry Planning and Development Project.

The Pakistan Forest Service traditionally had distinct relations with two very distinct clienteles. From one clientele, the peasantry, the Forest Service extracted fees for approved use of forest resources (grazing cattle and gathering fuelwood) and fines (and bribes) for unapproved uses. For the other clientele, the principal landlords in each district, the Forest Service provided 100%-subsidized tree plantings on their lands, in the context of a broader pattern of reciprocal economic and political ties between the government and the rural elite. Many provincial foresters initially

assumed that the Planning and Development Project was designed to benefit this better-off clientele, and therefore oriented themselves toward large rather than small farmers and, correspondingly, toward large market-oriented plantings as opposed to small household-oriented ones. These foresters rationalized their orientation toward large farmers by saying that only “progressive farmers” could be expected to embrace a new technology like agroforestry.

In the face of pressure by some foresters to reorient and redesign the Planning and Development Project, anthropological research on village and household variables relevant to farm development was carried out during 1986–88, covering selected districts in Balochistan and Punjab, with a sample of approximately 1,132 households in 118 villages. Information was collected on farm ecology and economy, the production and consumption of fuel, fodder, and timber, the farmers’ perception of the rural environment, and whether the farmers were interested in participating in a government program to plant trees on their farms. The results confounded the foresters’ point of view. The study revealed that the foresters’ views were highly subjective and that the debate about the implementation of the project was not a debate about whether small farmers exist and are interested in farm forestry but rather about whether they should be recognized by the forest service and included in its projects. Cases such as this, involving a flat-out contradiction between reality and official views, are far from unique in development.

The article shows how sociological categories (namely, “small farmer”) can be manipulated to support a particular vision of how government agencies and rural peoples should relate. Indeed, the author argues, one of the most valuable contributions that anthropologists can make to development is to examine the beliefs that development officials hold regarding the object of development, in this case, the farmer.

**Dove, M.R. 2003. “Bitter Shade: Throwing Light on Politics and Ecology in Contemporary Pakistan.” *Human Organization* 62(3): 229–41.**

*Keywords: Agroforestry, Tree shade, Indigenous environmental knowledge, Political ecology*

The article draws on a multiyear study of rural resource use that the author carried out in the districts of Punjab and North-West Frontier Province. He was attached to the joint Pakistan/U.S. Forestry Planning and Development Project for nearly four years (1985–89) as chief social scientist in charge of contact with, studies of, and advising the federal government on the project’s farmer clientele. In the course of this study, he discovered a widespread, coherent, indigenous constellation of beliefs and practices regarding tree shade and its management within the context of on-farm tree-crop interactions. These beliefs diverged greatly from Western scientific concepts of shade and, most importantly, directly contradicted the accepted wisdom of Pakistan’s government foresters that farmers were not interested in trees and knew nothing about them.

Among the farmers surveyed, 87% reported having trees on their farms. Further, two-thirds of the farmers surveyed expressed interest in working with the Planning and Development Project to establish small plantings (of fewer than 1,000 trees) of multipurpose native species to meet their households’ fuel and timber needs. These findings clearly reflected the existing integration of tree cultivation into the farming landscape.

The number, species, location, and growth of on-farm trees was carefully managed to balance their perceived benefits against their perceived costs, referring largely to deleterious effects on agricultural land and crops. This balance was most often articulated within a farmer discourse of

*sayab* (tree shade). Tree shade is conceived not as the absence but rather as the presence of something, which the tree itself emits. This emission is thought to have density, temperature, taste, and size (which itself is thought to have length, width, height, and duration). Farmers believe the character of shade and its impact upon their crops varies by tree species and also by season and land type. Pakistani farmers have a management system for tree shade that draws on a variety of regional intellectual traditions, including Ayurveda; the central principle in these beliefs involves the combination and segregation of opposing qualities—hot and cold, wet and dry, bitter and sweet—to attain desired agricultural outcomes.

This complex system of beliefs collapses a dichotomy between tree and crop, forest and farm, forest department and farmer, and indeed nature and culture, that serves the interests of the Forest Department.

This research has a variety of implications for practice. Most obviously, the system of tree shade management has relevance for development analysts in Pakistan and elsewhere in South Asia. This management system foregrounds the challenge of tree-crop interactions and the need to study relevant dimensions of trees. This analysis also shows that the study of indigenous environmental knowledge and practice cannot be separated from the study of policy development.

**Dove, M.R. 1992. “The Dialectical History of ‘Jungle’ in Pakistan: An Examination of the Relationship between Nature and Culture.” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 48(3): 231–53.**

*Keywords: Nature and Culture, Land-use patterns, State views, Reification, Degradation*

The term *jangal* in contemporary Urdu refers to “forest.” Its etymological antecedent, the Sanskrit term *jangala*, referred to “savanna.” The author argues that the change in meaning, far from being a historical misunderstanding, accurately reflects a fundamental, historical alteration of relations between culture and nature.

This study is based on three-and-a-half years’ research and residence in Pakistan between 1985 and 1989. Most of the data presented were gathered during a household survey focusing on farm economy and ecology and paying special attention to farmers’ perceptions and classifications of the rural environment. This research was concentrated in the *barami* (rain-fed) region of Pakistan, comprising the Salt Range, Pothwar Plateau, and the plains of northern Punjab and southern North-West Frontier Province.

The economy of the early pastoral societies in this part of the subcontinent was based on transforming the regional thorn forest into an anthropogenic savanna. Data on the contemporary and historic use of fire suggest that early pastoralists would not merely have provoked forest fires but would have purposefully set and used them to create grazing for domestic and feral animals, to prepare the land for periodic, low-intensity agriculture, and to drive game in the hunt.

The author demonstrates that the contemporary concept of *jangal* is very different from that of *jangala*. The *jangala* has now disappeared, and in its place is the *jangal*. *Jangal* is typically found in peripheral areas whose remoteness makes them relatively less-suited to agriculture. The most important difference between *jangala* and *jangal* involves their respective relationships to society. Contemporary Pakistani farmers conceive of the *jangal* as uncultivated, as “wild.” This characteristic of wildness is partly shared with *jangala*, but the associated characteristic of “uncivilized” is not shared. Whereas civilized society was formerly seen as being part of nature,

now it is seen as standing outside of nature. Further, whereas nature once encompassed the values of civilized society, now it is seen as encompassing their antithesis. And finally, whereas extensive farming/agricultural practices caused society to honor nature and natural processes, intensive farming/agricultural practices led society to suspect and disparage natural processes, for example, as implied in the contemporary use of the term “forest [people]” in derogatory fashion. The ancient *jangala* was not a place of fear. It symbolized an achieved (and desired) balance between nature and culture, in contrast to which the *jangal* symbolizes either the lack or loss of balance. Whereas the *jangala* symbolized acculturation, the *jangal* symbolizes either non-acculturation or deculturation.

This transformation in both physical and environment and cultural values was the product of a dialectical relationship between nature and culture. This linkage between cultural and natural systems has implications for the political relationship between local communities and central governments. For reasons of self-interest, state governments have a history of obfuscating and not recognizing this relationship. This obfuscation merits attention because areas of Pakistan that have been intensively farmed since the Green Revolution are some of the most degraded on the face of the earth today. In light of this, the author raises the question, is the Pakistani administrations since the country was formed responsible (in whole or part) for the historical degradation of Pakistan’s environment?

**Sökefeld, M. 2014. “Anthropology of Gilgit-Baltistan: Introduction.” *Ethnoscripts* 16(1): 9–29.**

*Keywords: Political organization, Sectarianism, Development, Community activism, Gender*

Gilgit-Baltistan is a very sparsely populated high-mountain area in the north of Pakistan. Slope and aridity are decisive limitations for subsistence. Beside various sorts of grains that are cultivated—especially barley in former times, but wheat and maize prevail today—vegetables and fruits are grown. Agriculture was always combined with animal husbandry, not only because crops were insufficient but, even more importantly, because manure was required as fertilizer for the fields. Like in other high-mountain areas, communities in Gilgit-Baltistan were probably never really self-sufficient in terms of food. To some extent, local produce was supplemented by trade and, in some historical cases, also by raids; very often, people simply starved in winter and spring once stocks had run out and fresh food was not yet available.

Society in Gilgit-Baltistan is strongly gendered, although gender relations vary greatly according to sect and region. Among Shiites and Sunnis, *purdah* (i.e., gender segregation) is a strict norm; however, especially in villages where women are required to do fieldwork outside the house, it is not always rigidly enforced. Among Sunnis in Diamer District, *purdah* is strictest and is strongly supported by a culture of jealousy and violent feuds. Among Ismailis in Hunza and Ghizer, veiling practices are very lax and *purdah* almost non-existent. In Gilgit-Baltistan, female education has dramatically increased in the last ten years and employment opportunities for women have multiplied, especially as teachers in girls’ schools. In the administrative capital, Gilgit, a number of “ladies’ markets” have been built, access to which is restricted to women, both as customers and as shop owners or salespersons. Thus, gender segregation is maintained even as women enter new economic realms.

The article provides an outline of anthropological research on Gilgit-Baltistan, from British explorations of the uncharted high-mountain areas in the mid-19th century, to the German

Hindukush Expedition of 1955/56, which established a remarkable tradition of German research in the area which continues more or less through to the present day.

**MacDonald, K.I. 2010. "Landscapes of Diversity: Development and Vulnerability to Food Insecurity in Subsistence Agroecosystems of Northern Pakistan." In *Hunger Pains: Pakistan's Food Insecurity*, edited by M. Kugelman and R.M. Hathaway, 135–59. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.**

*Keywords: Food insecurity, Subsistence production systems, Tradition in development, Risk mediation, Natural resource management*

This article is concerned with subsistence production systems in Pakistan's Northern Areas, specifically the Baltistan region (now part of the Gilgit-Baltistan territory); the capacity of these systems to mediate risk and provide security for community members; and the potential for development practices to inadvertently compromise the risk-mediating characteristics of these agroecosystems, resulting in an increase in vulnerability to food insecurity.

In the course of more than two decades of fieldwork in northern Pakistan, the author's research revealed that, historically, subsistence production systems have provided a remarkably high degree of food security for community members. In the face of a physically dynamic environment that is prone to regular and high-magnitude geomorphological events, such as floods, and a high degree of meteorological variability, the production systems that have developed rely on both the integration of local ecological knowledge and the establishment of agricultural and social practices to produce consistent yields.

Traditional agroecosystems clearly prioritize minimizing risk over maximizing yield, retaining features that contribute to food security, self-sufficiency, and sustainability in communities where they persist. More importantly, the farmers in these systems do so with minimal reliance on external outputs, demonstrating an ability to adapt to dynamic ecological conditions and to survive under conditions of economic uncertainty. Despite these qualities, these agroecosystems are under threat from development approaches that characterize the region as environmentally poor and the farmers, pejoratively, as "traditional." Due in part to a failure to understand the rationality of these existing systems, development programs have often sought to replace diverse cropping practices with new varieties reliant on monoculture planting and agrochemical packages that aim to increase yields, labor efficiency, and farm incomes. However, in their failure to investigate and appreciate the role of diversity in traditional agroecosystems, development agencies promote a uniformity of production that, if adopted, could result in significant crop loss and have serious environmental and social impacts, including ecological degradation, poverty, hunger, and even famine.

The article demonstrated that the existing subsistence system is time-tested. Despite significant constraints on the supply of water and land, farmers in Baltistan have consistently attained high yields. These achievements challenge the views of interventionist agencies, such as the World Bank and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), who pronounced the area as marginal for agriculture. Indeed, agronomists have noted the high production potential of the area, including phenomenally high yields of wheat, that has led some to describe the region as "one of the best areas in the world for high yields of temperate crops, given adequate manuring and irrigation."

The article used the case of development intervention in agroecosystems in the Baltistan region to show that, far from embodying resistance to change, "tradition" can be understood as an institutionalized process capable of both evaluating the potential impacts of change and guiding

innovation in accordance with the integrated ecological and social features of the agroecosystems that underpin community self-sufficiency. By failing to appreciate not only the ecological rationale of existing agroecosystems but also the social processes that facilitate change, development agencies risk promoting interventions that dramatically increase the vulnerability of communities to food insecurity. Conversely, by understanding and appreciating the complex integration of ecological and social practices that have provided food security for communities over generations, development agencies could develop principles to guide their own practices while also developing more sustainable systems and practical strategies for natural resource management that are well-adapted to local circumstances.

## 2.2. Gender division of labour

**Carpenter, C. 2001. "The Role of Economic Invisibility in Development: Veiling Women's Work in Rural Pakistan." *Natural Resources Forum* 25: 11–19.**

*Keywords: Subsistence, Development, Women, Livestock husbandry, Peasant-State relations*

This article is based on secondary data collected in 1987–91 in Pakistan, where the author lived and worked as a development consultant for close to four years. The author asks, why is women's work allowed to be invisible, when states apparently depend on revealing and taxing all economic activities?

In Pakistan's farming households, the bulk of the women's working day is spent on livestock husbandry. Most of the fodder used to feed livestock comes from forests and other uncultivated land, which in many areas is state-owned. This leads to women calling foresters thieves and causes confrontations that end in court cases. As with much of women's agricultural labor, the use of forests and uncultivated grasslands as sources of fodder is illegible to the state.

In the small-farm economy, the female sector is, in fact, invisible to the state. The labor that women invest in livestock does not appear in government statistics. Livestock are also notoriously undercounted in Pakistan, and livestock products (milk and dung) are not measured at all. In addition, the fuelwood women collect, the poultry they raise, and the vegetables they grow are undercounted or simply do not appear in government statistics. Even women themselves, especially daughters, are known to be undercounted in censuses.

Yet one of the main strategies that peasant households follow to allow them to take advantage of opportunities while also securing their means of survival is to divide their household economies into two: inside of rural households, and veiled from the outside world, women are engaged in risk-averse subsistence activities; and outside of the households men are plunging ahead with riskier activities, such as trying new seeds and producing crops for market. Thus, the process of economic development is underpinned by women's invisible labor in the forests.

The thesis of Carpenter is that both women's work and its invisibility are essential to development, and at two levels: to the economy of rural households and to the wider development process. The case of rural households in Pakistan suggests it is the concealment of women's work that shields a portion of household production from the risks inherent in the involvement of small farms with development programs. This shielded production depends on off-farm natural resource use, which is also veiled. Development agencies and states need to include this labor to know how to better

implement programs so that they do not disrupt the benefits that the subsistence-oriented approach brings.

**Carpenter, C. 1997. "Women and Livestock, Fodder, and Uncultivated Land in Pakistan." In *Women Working in the Environment*, edited by C.E. Sachs, 157–76. London: Routledge.**

*Keywords: Women, Gender division of labor, Livestock husbandry, Fodder, Common-property resources, Manure, Agricultural sustainability, Agricultural intensification*

According to the gender division of labor on farms in Pakistan, women are largely responsible for the livestock portion of the household economy, as men are for other forms of agriculture, such as crops. There are some exceptions, for example, the cultural association between men and plowing is so strong that the general care of draft animals often falls to men; similarly, the association between women and fodder is so strong that women typically harvest fodder crops. Women are most closely linked to milk-producing livestock, and men to production of cash and staple food crops. Women profess to like raising milk animals, taking the same pride in the animals that men take in ripening fields. Women's and men's parts of the household economy are not separate. Crop agriculture and livestock husbandry are linked so closely that any limitations on women's ability to find fodder for livestock affects agricultural productivity and sustainability and thus the viability of the farm household as a whole.

This article by Carpenter (1997) presents a model of the relationships in rural Pakistan between women and livestock, fodder, and uncultivated land, and the importance of women (and their labor) more generally to farming households in rain-fed and irrigated farming areas. The ideas for this article were generated by a review of ethnographic literature on women's patterns of livestock production, much of which is unpublished and not widely available. Analysis was limited to literature on agricultural as opposed to pastoral groups, although this distinction is often difficult to make in Pakistan. The model presented by the author was supported by three and a half years of experience in Pakistan.

Women are primarily responsible for providing the main input for livestock production, that is, fodder, and it is often the most time-consuming livestock-related task they perform. In Pakistan, women may spend 14%–25% of their working day, or close to four hours, collecting and processing fodder. In rain-fed areas, fodder gathered by women from public, uncultivated land is a key natural resource, making possible the manure production that is essential to agriculture. Uncultivated, fodder-producing land is often perceived as women's territory. This resource is reduced in irrigated areas, where agriculture has encroached upon uncultivated land. Women in landed households in irrigated areas can harvest fodder from their own fields, but women in land-poor households must contend with fodder and fuel shortages that compel them to burn dung in cookfires rather than being used to fertilize agricultural fields. Resource-poor households depend on common-property resources much more than large farms.

The contrast between rain-fed and irrigated areas is important because it reveals the impact of agricultural intensification on an overlooked natural resource: the fodder gathered by women from uncultivated land. Perhaps because uncultivated fodder is exploited primarily by women in a culture that strongly values women's seclusion, this activity has not received the attention it merits. More important, this natural resource is particularly vulnerable to development programs that overlook its existence, and this may have serious consequences for cultivated as well as uncultivated land.

**Ibraz, T.S. 1993. "The Cultural Context of Women's Productive Invisibility: A Case Study of a Pakistani Village." *Pakistan Development Review* 32(1): 101–125.**

*Keywords: Productive activities, Female labor, Subsistence, Rural development*

The data used in this article are based on fieldwork conducted in Rajpur, a Punjabi village in Rawalpindi District approximately 40 kilometers southwest of the capital city, Islamabad. Information was collected using the techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing through long-term residence in the village (1989–90). A total of 30 households were observed. Keeping within the framework of the public/private, and male/female dichotomy, this article contends that the existing dominant cultural images of women and the invisibility of their productive dimensions reflect social values rather than social reality.

The institutions of *purdah* and segregation of sexes that confine women and their activities to the private domain and permit men access to the public domain act as effective cultural devices that obscure women's productive roles. The interesting aspect of this division is that it is based less on the physical difference in muscular strength between men and women but more on the way culture views their biology and biological propensities. For instance, women are barred from activities such as grazing and plowing, not because they are thought to be lacking the physical strength, but because a woman's plowing in the field alone and grazing animals away from the village compound, especially during late hours, would make her physically vulnerable to male advances. Similarly, women are barred from winnowing wheat in the open, because it may draw the attention of *unrelated*.

Yet women in Rajpur participate substantially in activities that are productive and are geared directly or indirectly toward producing utilities of some kind, which are both income-generating and/or expenditure-saving. Women are extensively involved in many agricultural and livestock-tending operations, in addition to their involvement in other productive domains, such as poultry-tending, processing of dairy products, and handicrafts. The caring of livestock forms an important part of the village economy and is vital for agricultural purposes and for sustenance. Cows, sheep, and goats are an important source of milk and meat. Milk, butter, and *ghee* (clarified butter), apart from being consumed at home, are also sold within and outside the village to generate additional cash.

Wheat is by far the most important crop of the year and the best land is allocated for this crop. Crop production and processing requires substantial amounts of time, labor, and specialized activities in which women's participation alongside men is considerable. Although women work alongside men in most of the processes involved in crop production, men take over as the crop is processed and made ready for sale, as only men are permitted access to the world of business and exchange. Ironically, not only does the return from the finished commodity go to the person who makes the sale but so too does the credit for its production. This earning power makes men appear as the only providers and leads to the erroneous assumption that all females of the household are economically dependent on them. Most importantly, as masculinity is understood in terms of the capacity to earn an income in Pakistani culture, a woman engaging visibly in earning activities reflects negatively on the male head of the household, casting him as a poor provider.

The author shows how, despite women's productive activities, they are largely projected as domestic and private beings and their roles as homemakers, mothers, and nurturers of children have come to be culturally emphasized to the exclusion of all others.

**Akram-Lodhi, A.H. 1996. "You Are Not Excused From Cooking': Peasants and the Gender Division of Labor in Pakistan." *Feminist Economics* 2(2): 87–105.**

*Keywords: Peasants, Gender, Households, Agrarian classes*

This article sets out to provide an analysis of the gender division of labor within the households of four peasant classes living in two villages (Sarfaraz and Plato) in the Peshawar valley (North-West Frontier Province). The analysis is based upon farm economic data collected from late 1984 until early 1986. Fifteen separate surveys were carried out over a fourteen-month period on 639 households in eight villages. The total population surveyed was 5,564 people, 52.7% of whom were male and 47.3% female. Women were interviewed in private on a range of social and economic issues in order to evaluate both their social status and their contribution to economic activities in the project area.

In the Peshawar valley, before 1996, women's on-farm labor was rarely performed beyond the physical boundary of the household compound. However, on occasion women's tasks included assistance in land preparation and in the harvesting, carrying, and storage of crops, such as sugarcane, wheat, corn, and tobacco. There was a significant "gender-typing" of tasks within the peasantry of the two villages. The basis of this gender division of labor was ideological and based on the code of behavior deemed ideal among the Pakhtun of the Peshawar valley. Known as *Pakhtunwali*, this code of behavior includes central notions of respectability, reputation, and honor of the household and its patriarch.

Women both reflect and affect the status of the patriarch within Pakhtun society. As a consequence, men strictly control both the circulation of women and their sexual activity. For the vast majority of women, then, seclusion within the walls of the household dwelling is rigidly observed. To further ensure the control of women, marriage is endogamous, ideally between patrilineal parallel cousins.

The author found that in all classes the hours worked by women substantially exceeded those worked by men and children. In terms of on-farm work, it is interesting to note that a poor peasant woman on average spent over 150 hours more per year in on-farm work than did a poor peasant man. It is similarly surprising that rich peasant women spent a higher proportion of their working time on the household farm than did women of the other classes.

The article argues in conclusion that, as women are disproportionately responsible for the performance of work, it is their labor that ultimately sustains the capacity of the household to secure its livelihood. Furthermore, the agrarian dynamism of the rich peasants has not been to the benefit of all members of the household. Rich peasant households appear to be even more inegalitarian, with the women performing labor in excess of that of women in other classes.

**Joekes, S. 1995. "Gender and Livelihoods in Northern Pakistan." *IDS Bulletin* 26(1): 66–74.**

*Keywords: Local ecology, Natural resource management, Gender division of labor, Adaptive livelihood changes*

This article reports on research done in 1993/94 in the Hunza and Nagar districts of the Karakorum mountains in the Northern Areas of Pakistan.

Twenty-three years ago, plowing was an exclusively male task and only women collected fuelwood. However, a large number of agriculture tasks were shared. Thus manuring, sowing, field irrigation, harvesting and threshing were all carried out by men and women separately at different times or together. Some tasks were carried out by different means by the two genders, for example, men carry manure to the fields using donkeys, whereas women carry it in baskets on their backs. In terms of crops, there is specialization only to the extent that growing vegetables (apart from potatoes) was done predominantly by women. Otherwise, both genders were involved in some way in production of all the main cereal and fruit crops.

Specialization was more marked in other aspects of the agro-economy. All domestic work and cooking was done by women, along with most handicraft production. The work involved in livestock rearing was strongly demarcated. Women take responsibility for stall feeding and the care of small livestock and poultry. Men, on the other hand, would take the large animals up to the high alpine pastures and live there with the herds for the summer months. There was an intriguing gender distinction in the end-use of certain products: for instance, traditionally, cow's milk is reserved for women, goat's milk for men.

The Northern Areas experienced two important parametric changes in the fifteen years prior to this study. The first was the opening in 1978 of the Karakorum Highway (KKH), the first metaled all-weather road in the area, which linked it year-round to other regions of Pakistan. The other major change was the establishment in the early 1980s of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), an NGO affiliated to the International Aga Khan Foundation. These developments led to marked and rapid adaptive changes in the livelihood pattern of the population. In 1995, agriculture productivity increased steadily without compromising soil fertility.

The author found that women's total workloads had, on balance, increased. Women accepted the increased demands on them willingly in exchange for the higher standard of living that communities now enjoy, generated (as they saw it) by male cash-earning activities. Women had taken over many more of the tasks in agriculture; the only accommodating factor is that they put in less labor time than before for wood fuel collection.

The article shows how women were prepared to take on new tasks in order to make possible men's greater engagement in monetized activities and generate cash for making increased purchases of goods for family consumption. The women saw this as a welfare trade-off rather than as something negative.

**Fafchamps, M. and Quisumbing, A.R. 2003. "Social Roles, Human Capital, and the Intrahousehold Division of Labor: Evidence from Pakistan." *Oxford Economic Papers* 55(1): 36–80.**

*Keywords: Social roles, Human capital, Intrahousehold allocation of labor, Learning-by-doing*

If bargaining is costly and generates friction, society may simplify the allocation process by proposing an "ideal" division of labor that achieves gains from specialization while satisfying some socially acceptable criteria of intrahousehold equity. These norms (or social roles) typically organize the intrahousehold division of labor around gender, age, and family status. The authors investigated which are the driving forces behind intrahousehold division of labor.

The data came from 12 rounds of a household survey conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in four districts of rural Pakistan between July 1986 and September

1989. A panel of close to 1,000 randomly selected households in 44 randomly selected villages were interviewed at three- to four-month intervals on a variety of issues ranging from incomes, agricultural activities, and labor choices to anthropometrics, education, land, and livestock.

The evidence suggested that rural Pakistani households operate like firms. They appear to have a hierarchical structure with a husband and wife couple at the top. Husband and wife each have a separate sphere of authority and influence. The husband is more involved in market-oriented activities and has more control over household finances. He seems to operate as the head of the household enterprise and is identified as such to survey enumerators whenever husband and wife are present in the respondent household. The wife is responsible for most household chores, with the exception of collecting firewood and visiting the market. The head of household and his or her spouse provide most of the labor within their respective sphere of influence; other household members work less. When present in the household, daughters-in-law work systematically harder than daughters of comparable age, height, and education. Other findings of interest were the increasing returns to scale in most household chores, that larger households worked more off-farm, and that better educated individuals enjoyed more leisure.

Gender was found to be a major determinant of work allocation. In fact, for several of the activities for which the authors had data, gender differences were so strong that they observed no, or virtually no, involvement by the other sex, irrespective of household composition. The only activities for which gender specialization was less significant were casual farm work, milking animals, gathering fodder, and non-farm self-employment. The authors also observed large gender differences in leisure consumption, with all-male categories consuming more leisure than females.

If learning-by-doing is the reason for intrahousehold specialization, individual household members should undertake the same activities repeatedly over time, that is, they will get locked into a particular role. To the extent that skills specific to certain tasks are acquired during childhood, people may even be “programmed” into particular tasks from a very young age. The ease with which individuals switched tasks constitutes evidence that the returns from learning-by-doing are not large, especially in simple chores, such as making dung cakes and cleaning the house. Taken together, the results indicated that the allocation of tasks within households was not solely driven by comparative advantage considerations. Something else, which the authors called “social roles,” also shaped the intrahousehold division of labor.

If there are returns to learning-by-doing in the many different tasks performed by rural Pakistani households, they were acquired sufficiently rapidly to have had little lasting impact on the intrahousehold allocation of tasks. Long-lasting returns to learning-by-doing were found in non-farm activities and farm management, but not in household chores. The authors therefore ruled out the idea that women get locked into these chores because they learned them as little girls. If lock-in is present, it is in non-farm activities, where males dominated, including in market places and educational attainment.

**Balagamwala, M., Gazdar, H., and Bux Mallah, H. 2015. *Women’s Agricultural Work and Nutrition in Pakistan: Findings from Qualitative Research*. LANSA Working Paper Series, No. 2.**

*Keywords: Agricultural work, Nutrition, Decision-making, Crops, Gendered work*

This working paper is part of a larger exploratory study that aims to answer the question: How might women’s work in agriculture help rather than hinder nutrition improvement in Pakistan?

The question has assumed great significance due to the steady feminization of the agricultural labor force over the last decade and the absence of nutritional improvement in the same period.

While statistical data sources suggest that there may be an association between women's work and their own health, as well as the nutrition status of their children, there is need for a more precise understanding of how these relationships operate. This article builds upon the agriculture-nutrition pathways framework to propose an approach to individual or household-level decision making, in which the provision of care (for children and women) plays an important part in determining nutrition outcomes.

The authors undertook preliminary qualitative fieldwork in the rural areas of two districts in the irrigated plains of Sindh. The first round of fieldwork was conducted in June 2014 in the Shahdadpur subdistrict of Sanghar District in central Sindh, known for cotton growing. This was followed in August by a second round of fieldwork in the canal-irrigated parts of Badin District in the southern part of the province. The preliminary qualitative fieldwork consisted of a series of unstructured key informant interviews, group discussions, and individual case studies.

While women play an important part in virtually all agricultural sub-sectors, there are some crops and tasks in which their contribution is more widely acknowledged. Cotton is one such crop. Cotton picking is one of the few areas of crop farming where women's contributions are openly acknowledged and underlines the association of this task with "lesser masculinity." Cotton is grown in some of the most productive agricultural regions—the irrigated plains of central and upper Sindh and southern Punjab—which also happen to have relatively high rates of poverty and malnutrition.

Harvesting is time-intensive during the cotton season. Cotton stands out as a crop where there is relatively less flexibility in women's allocation of time, and women from share-cropping tenant families, particularly those from socially marginalized and dependent communities, have virtually no choice but to work long hours. Given that women are crucial to child care—due to biology as well as social norms—the ability to provide care within the household is strained because of pressing time constraints. Besides being time-intensive, cotton harvesting is also physically intensive, involving as it does work while standing under the sun all day. This work is more calorie-intensive compared with other activities carried out on a regular basis by women in the sites where the authors conducted their fieldwork. Cotton harvesting is also of longer duration, both in terms of hours within a day and days within a season. The work environment has other health hazards, such as hand injuries, and breathing difficulties due to the presence of dust, cotton fiber, and pesticide residue in cotton fields. There are, therefore, direct impacts from cotton picking on women's own health and nutritional status, which, as well as being important in their own right, have repercussions for children's health and nutrition.

The article demonstrates that the severity of the trade-off between work and care time allocation depends on a range of factors, including existing norms around work and care, the socio-economic status of the women in question, and the nature of labor demand. Moreover, the authors argue that acknowledging women's economic value can lead to an improvement in their strategic position within the family and the wider community. Work, by itself, does not lead to such acknowledgement, and there are few agricultural roles, cotton harvesting being an exception, where women's autonomy and income are accepted.

Mohyuddin, A., Chaudry, H., and Ambreen, M. 2012. "Economic Empowerment of Women in the Rural Areas of Balochistan." *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies: Alam-e-Niswan* 19(2): 239–57.

*Keywords: World-systems, Capitalist economies, Women's economic empowerment*

This article explores the emerging pattern of changes in the economic activities of women in the village of Zandra in Ziarat District, Balochistan by assessing their direct and indirect contribution to the household economy. The authors raise questions regarding the nature of this change and its impact on family life.

Methodology for the collection of empirical data was based upon qualitative anthropological research methods, which include socio-economic survey, participant observation, and key informant interviews, interviews of the respondents, case studies, and focus group discussions. This research is a longitudinal study, conducted over three time-periods across almost twenty years. The first visit was conducted in 1987, followed by a couple of visits in the 1990s; the final research visit took place in 2007.

The article shows that, traditionally, women in Zandra were mainly responsible for household tasks. Age-old cultural norms required women to remain within the boundaries of their home. Thus, their contribution to the productive economy and their income-generating activities remained hidden and unrecognized by society. Closer study, however, revealed that the assumption of women's roles being confined to only household chores is a myth. In fact, the household economy of Zandra has never been monopolized by males. Women start participating in economic activities from a very young age by keeping and tending livestock and poultry in addition to a number of other tasks that add to the family income. However, similar to the norms of all male-dominated cultures, in these economic areas only men have been acknowledged as earning members of the family, in total disregard of women's multiple domestic roles of reproduction and care-giving in combination with their active informal contribution to the household economy.

With accelerated industrial development in Pakistan's rural areas since 2007, the situation is changing very rapidly both in rural areas as well as urban developments. More and more women have started participating in outdoor economic activities, thereby not only making them economically empowered but socially empowered as well. In Balochistan's rural economy, women contribute to the household directly and indirectly, which, in turn, proves greatly beneficial in improving the overall economic condition of all family members. Zandra, the locale of this study, serves as a useful model to monitor the increasing pace of development achieved during the last couple of decades that has given women more formal paid employment.

Women's movement into the employment sector has ushered in significant changes to their daily lives and altered the family power equation. With the introduction of new technology, women's daily routines and workloads have changed significantly. Initially, all women were involved in the farm as well as in livestock activities; today fewer women continue with this trend. More and more women are inclined to seek employment. They are able to lighten their workload in the home due to modern household appliances that run on electricity. Male migration has had a major impact on the daily lives and routines of women and their decision-making powers. Many women now perform duties once associated with men.

Ali, T.S., Krantz, G., Gul, R., Asad, N., Johansson, E., and Mogren, I. 2011. "Gender Roles and their Influence on Life Prospects for Women in Urban Karachi, Pakistan: A Qualitative Study." *Global Health Action* 4: 7448.

*Keywords: Gender roles, Gender inequality, Women's health, Intimate partner violence, Focus group discussions*

The aim of this research was to explore current gender roles in urban Pakistan, how these are reproduced and maintained and how they influence men's and women's life circumstances. The study was carried out in five areas of differing socio-economic status in urban Karachi, Pakistan. Five focus group discussions were conducted from June to August 2010, including 28 women representing employed, unemployed, educated and uneducated women from different socio-economic strata. Data collection continued until data saturation was reached. Qualitative content analysis was used to interpret the manifest content (what the text says) and the latent content (the interpreted meaning).

Two major themes emerged during analysis, namely "reiteration of gender roles" and "agents of change." The first theme included perceptions of traditional gender roles and how these preserve women's subordination. The power gradient (with men holding a superior position in relation to women), distinctive features in the culture, and the role of the extended family were considered to interact to suppress women. The second theme included agents of change, where the role of education was prominent alongside the role of mass media. It was further emphasized that the younger generation was more positive to modernization of gender roles than the elder generation.

According to the informants, a "good woman" was expected to do household chores, care for her children, husband and in-laws, and, when needed, provide the home with external income. A woman was expected to hide her emotions, to compromise with her opinions, and to sacrifice her own dreams. The informants reported that some women perceived their husband to be their owner and ruler and therefore should acquire their husband's permission to perform any activity. A "good man" was expected to be financially stable; he should also be a good leader and advisor, a fair decision maker, sincere, unbiased, cooperative, sensible, strong, composed, and elegant. A "good husband" was described as being trustworthy, maintaining gender equity and giving decision-making autonomy to his wife.

This study revealed serious gender inequalities in Pakistani society. The unequal gender roles were perceived by the informants as static and enforced by structures embedded in society. Women routinely faced serious restrictions and limitations on their autonomy. However, attainment of higher levels of education was viewed as an agent for change, especially for women but also for men. Furthermore, mass media was perceived as having a positive role to play in supporting women's empowerment.

A weakness of the study was that of 55 married women who were invited to participate in the study, 22 declined participation. The views of these women would probably have added to the value of this study. As only female informants were included in the study, the study only reflects female views on female and male gender roles in urban Pakistan. A corresponding study with male informants might have yielded somewhat different results and would be equally important to investigate the topic as a whole.

Elahi, N. 2015. “Development in Crisis: Livelihoods and Social Complexities in Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.” Unpublished PhD thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NMBU, Norway.

*Keywords: Gender relations, Development, Livelihood resources*

In the period 2005–2015, the Swat valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan has been the site of extreme crises in the form of conflicts with militants and flood disasters. Women and children have faced difficulties in accessing basic needs and services. Moreover, women in Swat society are dependent on the male members for their livelihoods and are constrained by many socio-cultural barriers. In practice, this means conflicts and disasters often affect women more severely than men in the community. There is a general lack of in-depth analysis of the social, cultural, and political perspectives of the people. Likewise, no academic research exists on the how development projects, humanitarian aid, and population displacement has changed household livelihood strategies and gender relations in the Swat valley. This study attempts to fill these gaps by exploring societal change in light of two interlinked processes: how livelihood development projects and their implementation strategies since 2001 have influenced gender relations, and how the conflict and flood crises (2008–2010) have affected the social and cultural system of the *pukhtoonwali* (code of ethics).

The thesis addresses the following four objectives in individual but interrelated papers, where gender and development, gender relations in livelihood and development, and social cultural transformation in the context of crisis are central: (a) to analyze how men and women of different ethnic and social groups access livelihood resources, and how gender relations in pursuing livelihood strategies changed during the last decade in the Swat valley; (b) to study how the development project interventions, humanitarian aid, and their implementation processes (approaches) contributed to gender empowerment and livelihood development of marginalized classes; (c) to explore how the consequences of militant conflicts, military operations, and internal displacement have influenced the social and cultural network of *pukhtoonwali* in the Swat valley; and (d) to examine the social, cultural, and political constraints in the implementation of development projects, and the influence of crises on participatory development.

The nature of the study is anthropological, based on ethnographic methodological findings and interpretations. Primary data was collected using mixed qualitative research methods of semi-structured interviews, participant observation, informal interviews, and household survey and focus group discussions with selected village dwellers. Key informant interviews with traditional leaders, government and NGO officials, and academic researchers selected from different parts of Swat were also conducted. In addition, secondary sources, such as project appraisal and completion reports, historical literature, and NGO progress reports, have been consulted.

The people of Swat have lived for centuries under the traditional system of *pukhtoonwali* and possess a strong social network system. In Swat, *pukhtoonwali* governs all aspects of social structure, genealogy, morality, political action, and economic life. *Pukhtoonwali* is composed of some prominent principles, namely *malmastia* (hospitality), *jirga* (council of elders), *badal* (revenge), *nanawatee* (refuge, asylum), *ghairat* and *nang* (honor, chivalry), *tor* (shame), *tarboornwali* (agnatic rivalry), *bujra* (guest place), *purdha* and *namoos* (gender boundaries), and *paighor* (taunt). Livelihoods in the Swat valley are based mainly on agriculture and trade, remittances (national and foreign), government and private employment, self-employment, and, until the recent conflict crisis, tourism was also a major source of livelihood. The study revealed that men are the main breadwinners and that they hold social and political power and authority outside the households, and therefore access all types of livelihood resources. Women, on the other hand, are limited to

reproductive roles within the household, which are viewed as being necessary in order to protect the honor of the family. However, inequality and access to livelihood resources varies between elite, educated, and poor families among both men and women.

The analysis showed that, during the last decade (2005–2015), trends in women’s employment among the poor and middle classes were changing rapidly, particularly during the rehabilitation and reconstruction period, where more opportunities were created and provided to women as part of post-crisis development policies and interventions. There were example success stories of women obtaining access to skills attainment and jobs, and a change in their roles within and outside the households. In particular, the participatory development interventions in the pre-crisis period helped raise awareness among women about education, self-help, participation in village committees, and women’s rights. The conflict crisis and post-crisis development strategies have further enhanced the trend toward greater girls’ education, skills attainment, and employment, and sensitized youths regarding sustainable livelihood strategies. From these findings it can be inferred that pukhtoonwali is not as rigid as communicated in literature and media. Therefore, more research needs to be conducted on narratives of pukhtoonwali and how the code can be revisited as a discourse on human dignity, pluralist democracy, and indigenous wisdom.

**Bari, F. 1998. “Gender, Disaster and Empowerment: A Case Study from Pakistan.” In *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women’s Eyes*, edited by E. Enarson and B. Heam Marrow, 125–32. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Press.**

*Keywords: Engaging women, Institutional building, Empowerment, Development*

The article analyzes gender as the basis for different effects of disaster on men and women, and in doing so it seeks to understand the socio-economic and cultural context/structures that create and maintain women’s vulnerability to disasters.

The ideology of gendered division of work between men and women plays a central role in constructing gender identities in Pakistan. This division not only creates women’s economic dependency but denies them access to resources not considered necessary to the performance of women’s reproductive roles, such as higher education and technical skills. It also creates a false hierarchy between productive and reproductive work. In reality, Pakistani women transcend these boundaries between private and public all the time. In rural areas, most women work in the fields and are the backbone of the agricultural economy. In urban areas, women frequently involve themselves in income-generating activities in order to supplement the family income. Yet the gross under-numeration and non-recognition of women’s economic role in the national and household economy has become a norm in the society.

The author discusses the nature and work of Pattan, a grassroots NGO that, as part of the Oxfam Flood Response Team, began working with affected communities after the disastrous 1992 flood. Pattan’s experience in dealing with disaster and post-disaster situations taught the organization that disaster and its effects are not gender neutral. Victims are usually poor and within this group women and children are among the most vulnerable. In the rehabilitation phase, wife-beating becomes common. It was also noted that in the project areas community structures were either unrepresentative or dominated by local powerful people, usually men. Relief or development work through existing power structures would therefore not benefit the entire community.

In a sex-segregated social environment, it is not possible for men to work with community women. Therefore, Pattan has made special efforts to recruit women. Moreover, since women have the responsibility for feeding their families, local women are placed in charge of food distribution during relief periods. The responsibility of distribution brings women respect and authority, and also protects them from any possible sexual exploitation or harassment that might come from male distributors.

The article shows that empowerment is a sophisticated, multidimensional, and complex notion. Pattan's projects were an effort in this direction, and one through which women started gaining confidence and self-esteem, decreasing their vulnerability in times of crisis.

**Hazarika, G. 2010. "Gender Issues in Children's Nutrition Security in Pakistan." In *Hunger Pains: Pakistan's Food Insecurity*, edited by M. Kugelman and R.M. Hathaway, 86–98. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Washington, D.C.**

*Keywords: Food and nutrition security, Children's well-being, Models of the household, Women's status*

This article analyzes the salient and critical issues of gender in young children's nutrition security in Pakistan, the role of gender in access to medical care, and the public health program of childhood immunization.

Pakistan has indisputably low levels of children's well-being. It is difficult for poor, unhealthy, and oppressed women to provide a high quality of any form of child care, and so the care *of* mothers closely determines care *by* mothers. Moreover, the noticeably low status of women in Pakistan, both in society and at home, suggests their bargaining power is weak. Work for cash income may raise a woman's bargaining power by demonstrating she has viable options outside her marriage. A woman may also become exposed to progressive norms of behavior upon working outside her home and find opportunities to build extra-familial support networks and to become more assertive as a result. A woman's age at first marriage may be indicative of her bargaining power as well, since early marriage often interrupts a woman's schooling and so diminishes her earning potential. Further, women in Pakistan often enter a highly cloistered world upon marriage, so a woman who marries young will have had fewer opportunities to build external support networks. The age difference between a woman and her spouse may also influence her bargaining power, since a woman much younger than her husband is more likely to defer to him. Similarly, a woman less educated than her husband is more likely to submit to his views, so differences in their educational attainments may determine her bargaining power as well. Finally, unearned income from remittances accruing to the women in a household may relate to their bargaining power, since it is conceivable, they will have more control over the disbursement of these sums.

The author discovered that work-for-cash income by mothers raises their children's nutrition as measured by weight-for-height and weight-for-age. The author also found that the smaller the differences between fathers' and mothers' years of schooling, the better nourished children are by the standards of height-for-age and weight-for-age. Households in which the age and educational differences between household heads and their wives are less pronounced devote a smaller share of their budget to goods consumed by adults alone, by implication allocating more household resources to children's consumption. In sum, women's bargaining power in Pakistan appears positively related to children's nutrition security.

Besides women's status, a second highly pertinent gender issue in Pakistani children's nutrition security is the favoring by parents of sons. Parents' relative neglect of daughters results in poorer health and higher mortality for daughters. There are indications that young Pakistani girls are less likely than boys to be immunized or receive medical care, and their lower access to health care makes young Pakistani girls' nutrition less secure. Pakistani parents may place greater value upon their sons' future earning capacity than their daughters', sons being their parents' principal support in old age. Realizing that this capacity is tied to nutrition in childhood, parents may be particularly keen to preserve their young sons' nutritional levels against illness by the means of health care. In sum, Pakistani parents' favoring of sons may have roots in the greater investment value of sons resulting from the social custom of patrilocality.

The article maintains that children's nutrition security is inextricably linked with the well-being of their mothers, and that the empowerment of women has the potential to improve child nutrition greatly.

**Zakar, R., Zakar, M.Z., and Kraemer, A. 2013. "Men's Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Pakistan." *Violence Against Women* 19(2): 246–68.**

*Keywords: Intimate partner violence, Men's beliefs, Patriarchy, Hegemonic masculinity, Women's role*

The issue of intimate partner violence (IPV) has not yet been comprehensively and systematically studied in Pakistan. For example, there are hardly any studies that aim to understand the beliefs and attitudes of the perpetrators (men) of violence in Pakistan. The roots of male supremacy and dominance vis-à-vis women lie deep in the history, sociology, and feudal-dominated agricultural economy of Pakistan. Hence, allowing a husband to commit violence against his wife is not an individual or family problem but a manifestation of the centuries-old system of patriarchy and male supremacy. If men commit violence against women, their action must be motivated by a particular set of beliefs. So, it is important to understand what those beliefs are and how they are inculcated. This article is an attempt to fill this research gap and is intended to document the beliefs and attitudes of men toward IPV against women within the context of Pakistani society.

The study is based on eight in-depth interviews and four focus group discussions conducted during an 8-week period in November and December 2008 with married males selected from Lahore and Sialkot (Pakistan). The study used a semi structured interview guide, which allowed the researchers to follow certain topics and open new lines of inquiry. About 40% (22 of 55) of the selected men refused to participate in the study for various reasons. The findings represent the views of a group of men who were mostly from the urban middle class. So, these findings may not represent the views of all men, especially men living in rural areas or poor, lower-class, and urban upper-class men. However, the strength of this study is that it is the first qualitative study of its kind in Pakistan.

The respondents were asked about their beliefs and attitudes about patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity. Most of the respondents (18 of 33) believed that women have a different "nature" than men. To be dominant and commanding is a desirable cultural role to a man. In Pakistani culture it is difficult for a husband to be known as *run-mureed* (wife's subordinate). So, in public life sometimes a husband pretends that he has a dominant and commanding position, especially in front of relatives. Despite occasional disagreements, the overall opinion was that a husband should have a supervisory and guiding role in the family.

*You never know about the exact nature of conjugal violence in your neighborhood. Sometimes mild violence is a “fake violence”; the husband just commits violence to please his mother or to show his dominance to others. Behind the curtain, he may be an “obedient husband,” but, in front of others, he might show his power over his wife. (252)*

Respondents were asked questions regarding their perspectives and beliefs about the role of women in society. Responses to these questions were complex, contradictory, and multilayered. Most of the respondents said they were willing to give “freedom” to “their” women but with certain qualifications and restrictions. The majority of the men (18 of 25) believed that women should not be given “absolute liberty” or “unchecked freedom.” Most of the participants thought that husbands should control their wives and restrict their behavior “within cultural and religious limits.”

*Respectable families don’t put their daughters and wives out to work. In principle and per our cultural and religious tradition, it is wrong. But the times are changing. What can poor people do? Men cannot earn enough, so women go to work. It is pathetic. (253)*

Respondents were asked to elicit their views about IPV within their cultural context. Some of the respondents contextualized their talk in religious terms and phrases. Some participants explained the special features of the Pakistani family system, where a wife has a very important role to play. They thought that women should play an active role to preserve family honor and reputation. Most of the participants (15 of 25) explained the role of wives by making religious references. Some participants criticized the role of “contemporary mullahs” (imams, religious leaders) for misleading people about the status of women.

*It is useless to argue about whether a husband should beat his wife or not. As per our culture, a husband is the guardian of his wife; he is responsible for her conduct. Ultimately, the husband has to ensure her proper and rightful behavior. So, there is no fixed formula for how to deal with a wife. It depends on the nature of the woman and the degree of her deviancy/disobedience. Some women need sweet pills [persuasion through love], some need bitter pills [threat of violence, snubs], and in some cases you go for surgery [i.e., physical punishment]. (256)*

Respondents were asked about the perceived seriousness of the issue of IPV. The data show that most of the respondents (19 of 33) did not consider IPV as a problem in Pakistani society. Instead of IPV, most of the respondents considered other problems, such as unemployment, corruption, inflation, and the worsening law-and-order situation as the real problems of the country. Most of the participants (17 of 25) considered IPV a byproduct of poverty, economic deprivation, and lack of proper understanding of basic Islamic principles. However, a majority of the respondents thought that in an urban, educated, middle-class setting violence against women is not a big issue because women are educated and well aware of their rights. The respondents tried to deny the problem of IPV by blaming the “rural illiterate poor.”

*In Pakistan, poor people live a very horrible life. Here poverty is rampant, and some people have no income to feed their children. Here parents commit suicide together with their children just because of hunger. When people don’t have food to fill their tummies, who cares about IPV? (257)*

In general, the respondents tried to deny, justify, or condone violence by shifting the blame and responsibility onto women. Some respondents considered that such violence is not in fact violence at all but rather a “necessity of the situation” created by women. While describing husbands’ relations with their wives, respondents frequently used terms such as “guidance,” “reformation,” or “put her on the right track.” Such discourses reflect the fact that men consider male supremacy

to be the natural order of things. In such a scheme of things, violence is ingrained and embedded in the very structure of husband-wife relations. It may be noted that in Pakistan, thousands of women are killed every year by their male guardians (husband, father, brother, or son) to preserve the honor of the family.

The qualitative data presented in this article show that the (rather unrealistic) notion of an “ideal wife” was very popular among the participants. If they found that their wives failed to conform to the “ideal standards,” most of the men were willing to apply various disciplinary tools. They may use coercion and violence to suppress their wives’ resistance and to ensure their conformist “ideal behavior.”

**Halvorson, S.J. 2002. “Environmental Health Risks and Gender in the Karakoram-Himalaya, Northern Pakistan.” *Geographical Review* 92(2): 257–81.**

*Keywords: Gender, Health risks, Farm work, Child care, Seasonality*

In the Karakoram-Himalaya of northern Pakistan, environmental health concerns are often associated with the waterborne parasitic and endemic diseases responsible for much of the area’s child morbidity and mortality. The impacts and management of water and environmental health problems are profoundly gendered in the area; but, overall, scholarship on women’s engagement in struggles to respond to the harsh specifics of environmental health-related risks was minimal in 2002.

Employing an ethnographic approach, this article explores women’s responses to environmental health risks that threaten child survival and the ways in which local geographies of gender influence the social organization of risk response. Between 1996 and 1998, the author spent a total of fourteen months immersed in family and community life in the Muslim community of Oshikhandass (Gilgit-Baltistan). Although the local economy is agricultural, it confronts significant changes associated with shifts to a cash-based economy. How women in Oshikhandass respond to the realities of domestic water supply and environmental health reflects the predominant gender division of labor and decision making. To understand these complex issues more fully, the author carried out thirty household microstudies that were, in the main, a product of long conversations with household members, generally women.

The article found that men in the region show little responsibility for children’s health; traditional gender divisions of labor cede child health-related work and caregiving to women. For example, men and boys seldom assist in the management of household wastes, both human waste and livestock manure—cleaning animal stalls, disposing of children’s feces, removing waste from the composting latrines each spring, and enriching nearby fields with the composted waste. Manure is heavy, and multiple trips are required to haul it to the field’s basket by basket. The manure is manually spread and hoed into the soil. Women recognize the filthy and laborious nature of this work but acknowledge its importance for maintaining soil fertility and food production. Moreover, while men and boys might spend time lovingly tending infants and toddlers, the day-to-day feeding and cleaning of children is invariably left to women.

The recent emphasis within the regional health and development community on increasing child survival through primary health initiatives has relied heavily on women as agents in the adoption of new health technologies and practices. This targeting of women perpetuates a “women in development” approach without considering the changing nature of gender and household arrangements and how these influence arrangements in the risk environment being targeted. The

prevailing model of water and health interventions focuses on women's "traditional" roles and knowledge, institutionalized through an idealized view of gender relations. The field observations suggest that these policies and practices assume a homogeneity among women and their relationship to child and family health without taking the critical step of considering the structural constraints and opportunities that differentiate women and their everyday experiences.

Major reconfigurations in household structure have resulted from a "geography of missing men" in the Karakoram-Himalaya. Women had become heads of household while male family members work off-farm. Women recollect that in the early 1980s, domestic and farm responsibilities were divided in fairly equal proportions between men and women, leaving sufficient time for mothers to care for children. In the late 1990s, early 2000s, women in Oshikhandass see life as more complicated due to the exigencies of "modern" life: the need for cash and incomes, the need to educate children, and the effects of male out-migration. Divisions of labor and responsibilities at the household level had evolved, with the bulk of farm work taken up by mothers and daughters. With the feminization of agriculture, increasing demands on time added to children's vulnerability to environmental health risks.

Complicating the realities of women's responses to environmental health risks is the cultural and social control over women's mobility and freedom that has been brought about by religious extremism and strict practices of purdah. The article argues that certain patterns—the increasing prevalence of female-headed households, household fragmentation, and stricter interpretations of purdah—could affect the security of child health. Hence the need to be more mindful of women's dual productive and reproductive roles and responsibilities, and to recognize that alterations in women's agricultural work may influence their child care options and their strategies for mediating risk.

**Halvorson, S.J. 2003. "A Geography of Children's Vulnerability: Gender, Household Resources, and Water-Related Disease Hazard in Northern Pakistan." *Professional Geographer* 55(2): 120–33.**

*Keywords: Children's vulnerability, Household resources, Gender, Livelihood transformations, Water-related diseases*

This article develops a theoretical perspective on the ways in which children's vulnerability to water-related disease hazard is produced within the everyday circumstances of livelihood and child care. Children's vulnerability is evaluated in the Oshikhandass community in the Gilgit District in northern Pakistan, a region in the early 2000s undergoing tremendous social and economic transformation. Special consideration was given in this analysis to the ways in which mothers' resource access profiles—especially their access to social networks—are negotiated in Oshikhandass. The author argues that a focus on access to resources is critical because it sheds light on important intrahousehold dynamics and gender relations that have a powerful bearing on disease risk and child-health outcomes.

The case study draws from ethnographic fieldwork involving qualitative household microstudies and interviews to elicit mothers' resource and risk-response strategies in the context of changes in livelihood systems and household dynamics. The primary methodological strategy employed in this study consisted of household microstudies, in which in-depth interviews and structured household observations were used to elicit information about household composition, household

assets and sources of income, division of work and responsibilities, mothers' life histories, social networks, and child illness histories.

Over the past two decades, one important factor affecting child health has been that the subsistence economies of previously isolated households are being transformed. Increasing pressure for cash, as well as widespread unemployment, has led many men and boys in the study site to take up employment outside of the community, either in the military or in the growing private and nonagricultural sectors. On a local level, these trends toward male off-farm employment and male out-migration have had two significant effects: one, a dramatic change in the social dynamic of rural households; and two, an increase in women's agricultural responsibilities. Women in Oshikhandass have traditionally made a large contribution to agricultural production. Yet today, the role of women farmers in feeding families, managing irrigation water, tending to livestock, and maintaining the environmental health of households has become even more visible and salient.

This study illustrates that the increasing demand of women's on-farm work was an important component shaping the risk environment in study households, severely restricting mothers' availability for child care. Thus, there is a critical need for access to informal networks of child care. In order to cope with the pressures on time, workload, and mobility, women rely heavily upon social resources—namely, kinship and friendship networks—to address the extent and intensity of household demands and restrictions on their activities. As the evidence from this study suggests, income itself is not enough when social networks are absent to reduce children's vulnerability to diarrheal disease. Alternatively, in the case where income is lacking, social networks can be crucial in negotiating good health outcomes for children.

**Tibbo, M., Abdelali-Martini, M., Tariq, B., Salehy, P., Khan, M.A., Anwar, M.Z., Manan, A.R., Rischkowsky, B., and Aw-Hassan, A. 2009. "Gender Sensitive Research Enhances Agricultural Employment in Conservative Societies: The Case of Women Livelihoods and Dairy Goat Programme in Afghanistan and Pakistan." Paper presented at the FAO-IFAD-ILO Workshop on Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty, Rome, March 31–April 2, 2009.**

*Keywords: Livestock production systems, Gender roles, Decision-making, Women livelihoods*

This paper reported results from participatory gender-sensitive research undertaken in Afghanistan (Baghlan and Nangarhar) and Pakistan (Balochistan and Punjab) that aimed at unraveling gender roles in agricultural activities in conservative societies. As women are not allowed to directly interact with male researchers, the study employed educated women coordinators, female facilitators, and female activists to reach women beneficiaries. In Pakistan, quantitative data were collected using semi structured questionnaires. A total of 150 female community members (i.e., 15 females per village) were interviewed.

Results indicated that, in Pakistan, females had greater involvement in livestock-related activities compared to males. Males, on the other hand, were more involved in crop-related activities than females. However, females played a major role in weeding, seed cleaning, and preparation. Land preparation, fertilizer application, threshing, off-farm transport, and marketing were all major activities performed by men. Activities such as binding, harvesting, drying, and storing of the produce were done by both females and males in Punjab. Men's participation was dominant in

heavy and mechanized farming operations, while women's participation was significant in post-harvest activities.

In Punjab, huge gender differences were observed in the keeping and spending of agriculture-derived incomes. Females were largely independent in deciding on how to manage their own income and the income from selling dairy products. Males were largely dominant in spending the income from crops and most livestock sales. However, women played a significant role in the decision-making process regarding family affairs, and farm and livestock management activities. As reported during interviews, except for decisions regarding insemination of cows where their participation is low (19%–30%), females were actively involved in decision making with their husband regarding most other livestock-related activities. The analysis reflects that although mutual consultation seemed to be the norm for most of the livestock-related decisions, the role of females in the decision-making process was found to be more prominent with regards to keeping goats or sheep, breed selection, replacing old breeds with improved ones, allocation of land for fodder, and putting animals on concentrated feed.

In Punjab, women remain busy, on average, for more than nine hours a day. Up to 13 major activities were performed daily by rural women. Besides taking care of different household activities, a considerable amount of time (158 minutes, 25% of working time) was spent on livestock-related activities (fodder cutting, feeding, watering, and animal care), which are largely accepted as a part of routine household activities.

The article shows that, in Pakistan and Afghanistan, women participation in most of the agricultural activities is important; their contribution to livestock-related activities is particularly high. Therefore, any investment program in livestock in rural areas of these two countries should consider women's participation when in the planning and implementation phases.

**Siegmann, K.A., and Sadaf, T. 2006. "Gendered Livelihood Assets and Workloads in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)." In *Troubled Times, Sustainable Development and Governance in the Age of Extremes*, edited by SDPI, 25–43. Karachi: Sustainable Development Policy Institute.**

*Keywords: Gender norms, Livelihood assets, Workload*

This paper provides an exploratory analysis of gendered access to livelihood assets and the resulting workload for women and men in rural North-West Frontier Province, or NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The analysis is based on the framework of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and makes use of data gathered in the Sustainable Livelihoods Survey that took place May–August 2004. Quantitative and qualitative data on livelihood assets and strategies were gathered from 114 female and 122 male adult respondents by a team of female and male enumerators in three selected villages of NWFP.

Gender norms that inhibit improvements in the well-being of women were more rigid in NWFP (alongside the southwestern province of Balochistan) when compared with the rest of the country. Gender norms held more sway in rural areas compared with urban areas. In Pakistan in general, and in NWFP in particular, gender norms link women's and men's space and their respective activities. Both women and men in the study area reported women's mobility to be most restricted when it came to shopping at local shops and markets outside the village. Visits to relatives and to hospitals, both outside the village, were handled more liberally. For the vast majority of women in the Peshawar valley, seclusion within the walls of the household dwelling was rigidly observed.

In education, a pronounced gender gap in literacy was apparent. Good health characterized men rather than women. Overall, striking gender differences were apparent from the livelihood survey regarding knowledge about access to land and water sources and women and men's access to energy sources. The pocket money available to women is significantly lower than the amount available to men.

Women in the survey area worked, on average, about 46 hours per week as compared to about 22 hours per week for their male household members. The bulk of work performed by women was located in the household compound. It included domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, animal care, and child care. However, work that involves traveling away from the house was also performed by women, including agricultural work and fuelwood and water collection. These data reflect the general pattern of unpaid labor in NWFP as a whole. Men in the study area performed most of their work outside the home, distributing it across salaried jobs, agricultural work on their own farm, non-agricultural labor, shopping, and animal care. Agricultural work on their own farm was equally important for men in all villages as it validated their masculinity as good providers.

In summary, women had a significantly longer working week than their male household counterparts. A gender division of labor was apparent, with women working at home rather than away from the house, reflecting their restricted mobility. This implied, among other things, that access to gainful work was severely restricted for women in rural areas of NWFP.

**Azhar-Hewitt, F. 2002. "Women and Sustainability in the Karakoram Himalayas." *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* 6(3-4): 84-89.**

*Keywords: Sustainable development, Harvest time, Seasonal life*

Sustainable development requires the reproduction of human beings and the ecosystem in the long term; in this regard we have much to learn from traditional societies. With this statement in mind, the author looked at a traditional society on the physical, economic, and political margins of the modern world, situated in a high mountain valley of the Karakoram-Himalaya ranges of northern Pakistan. Villagers pursued a way of living—based on farming and livestock herding—that had remained largely unchanged for several centuries, although inroads of modernity were becoming increasingly evident.

The growing season began in March and ended in early November. Throughout that period, women were most visible in the landscape. In the fields, on the pathways around the village, and on the rooftops, women could be seen going about their work. The work involved cultivation, helping with the harvest, cleaning and milling grain, and picking and processing fruits and nuts; this work was in addition to carrying out household-related and family chores. The watermills ran continually from the first harvest of barley in early June until November when the last of the buckwheat had been milled. *Yurma* (weeding) was the main occupation of women in the early part of the growing season. It is difficult to distinguish between weeds and crops because weeds mimic cereal very closely. Weeding involved pulling out and piling up the weeds to the sides, where they were gathered up in the evening by the women into their baskets to be used as fodder for the animals. An un-weeded field was the sign of a "lazy" wife, bringing shame on the householder.

Harvest time was a time for everyone in the family to work. School was closed for one month in July so that the children could help their parents in the fields. Cutting, gathering, and piling grain into baskets to be carried to the threshing floors was done in haste in case rains and winds spoiled

the harvest. It was not only a time of feverish activity, but also of conviviality with the neighbors and relatives who joined in the work; in turn, their help was reciprocated. In the fall, women worked on the roof to clean, dry, and store seed in wooden boxes for the next season's planting. The cereals were cleaned by tossing them up in winnowing baskets so that stones and other impurities can be separated from the grain and thrown out. The clean grain was then taken in goatskin bags to the watermills for grinding. Food processing was generally assigned to women because it was done close to home, so the women could carry on with their other tasks relating to nurturing the family. It was also designated as women's work because it was unskilled and repetitive. The care of home gardens was also a woman's work—sowing, transplanting, weeding, watering, harvesting—when all her other work was done.

What is apparent from this account of the cycle of activities is the pattern of frugal consumption, careful conservation, and minimal production of waste matter. The author presented scenes of traditional seasonal life in the village but pointed out that this was nonetheless a society in transition. Modernization was changing the everyday lives of the villagers—increasing pressure from the outside world created a greater need for cash to pay for a greater variety of goods and services, such as health care, medicines, and education. Men migrated to work in the service sector or the army, or to work as porters and guides for foreign mountaineering and trekking expeditions. The effect on women was to be left behind as virtual heads of households, but without the power. These women did not participate in the benefits of modernization—rather, they were being relegated to a hidden and private domain, where their work was not diminished but their voice was reduced as if they had become “invisible.”

The effects of modernization also involved the destruction of the commons. This transhumant society needed the work from both men and women to survive. As the men were lured into the towns and cities of Pakistan, the high pastures were being neglected or wastefully used and abandoned. This left women with more work to do, yet existing taboos barred them from the high pastures in many of the valleys, so they were unable to have any say in the matter. In this way, the whole community suffered from reduced resources, such as butter, wool, hair, timber, and herbs. However, the women were still expected to maintain the subsistence economy and the traditional way of life for their families.

**Munawar-Ishfaq, S. 2010. “Women’s Traditional Knowledge and Sustainable Development in Rural Sialkot, Pakistan.” Unpublished Master’s thesis, School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.**

*Keywords: Sustainable development, Traditional knowledge, Women roles*

Traditional knowledge systems, and particularly those of women, are hardly recognized in national sustainable development rhetoric. There is little or no literature available on women's unique traditional epistemologies in rural Pakistan and their complex relationship with the natural environment. This thesis explores the intricate link between traditional knowledge studies and sustainable development, with a particular focus on the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of human welfare.

The thesis draws upon research carried out in northeastern Punjab in March 2009. The evidence was collected from four adjacent villages in a relatively urbanized rural area of Sialkot, where elderly women were interviewed about their knowledge systems and changing social roles in the context

of local socio-economic and environmental change. Thirty-one semi structured interviews were conducted, mostly with women.

The women displayed traditional know-how across a diverse range of subjects, from agriculture, livestock husbandry, and ethnobotany, to handicrafts, midwifery, and traditional medicine. The research showed how women helped secure food for their families. They worked beside men to harvest, cultivate, and store crops, although the more intensive and laborious chores were carried out by men. At home, the women looked after their livestock and domestic animals, fetched fuelwood and essential resources, and managed their household. Moreover, women used to domestically prepare organic fertilizers by mixing cow dung and ash (from traditional stoves) with household waste, such as leftover food and vegetable peelings. The women interviewed had a profound knowledge of their local flora—herbs, shrubs, plants, trees, and crops—that was important to the household and the field.

Nonetheless, over time, women seem to have become less engaged in the agriculture sector compared to a decade before. Handsome incomes and increased food security as a result of agricultural intensification seemed to have negatively impacted women's involvement in the agricultural sector. Women's knowledge (and livelihoods) in agriculture had been displaced by the introduction of new technology and knowledge. Village women had switched from resource management to resource neglect, the result of which was a lot of naturally-growing vegetation disappearing from the landscape. Not surprisingly, traditional knowledge about natural resources had been significantly affected. Concurrently, women's lifestyles had become increasingly sedentary and their social mobility had become restricted. Gender roles and responsibilities had become markedly specialized. Where earlier women helped both in the field and in the household to secure food and earn livelihoods, now they were only looking after their household and domestic livestock.

In the past, women had moved around outside the home out of the necessity to fetch resources and earn extra income. They relied greatly on traditional know-how when other opportunities were limited. Poverty and lack of basic facilities forced women to work for longer hours, to go further to fetch resources (water, wood, and useful plants), to diversify their means of earning a livelihood, and to work harder, often on a par with men, on farms. The author argues in conclusion that economic prosperity is not always positively correlated to greater social mobility. Greater wealth can mean that women have more personal time to dedicate to their priorities, which in this case seemed to be inside the household.

### 2.3. Domesticity and agency revisited

**Ali, K.A. 2004. "Pulp Fictions': Reading Pakistani Domesticity." *Social Text* 22, no. 1 (issue 78): 123–45.**

*Keywords: Muslim reform, Women's literature, Urban space, Ethnicity, Gender*

In this article the author seeks to understand how religious reform, expanding educational opportunities for both genders, and colonial modernization in the first quarter of the twentieth century, has impacted upon the social context of contemporary Pakistani domestic space. He uses examples from Urdu fiction in popular women's magazines in order to comprehend how middle- and lower-middle-class literate women articulate notions of family, individuality, and sexual mores in a rapidly changing social and economic milieu.

To investigate the domestic sphere in contemporary Pakistan, the author presents two short stories from a popular Urdu digest published in the 1990s and translates the particular cultural and historical milieu of these narratives into a sociological language. He focuses on those aspects of Pakistani contemporary life that are generally underrepresented in social-scientific literature by shining a light on aspects of Pakistani social history that remain hidden in the margins and interstices.

Both stories portray women's anxieties about male betrayal and violence. At the same time, the reader notices how women's assertions of their conjugal rights, situated within the construction of individualized agency, may cohabit with their desire to be modest, self-sacrificial, subservient, and humble. The stories also present fantasies about "inefficient men" (the impotent, the homosexual), which may, for example, resonate with women's anxieties about the sexually threatening public sphere. Despite state guarantees to protect the honor of women, especially during the Zia regime, Pakistan had unfortunately witnessed a marked increase in cases of rape and domestic violence in the same period as this paper was written.

The genre of popular women's fiction complicates, pollutes, and "corrupts" the sanitized and moral rendering of the Muslim polity commonly found in representations of Pakistani society favored by the Pakistani political and social elite. *Urdu Digest* readership was typically constructed as victimized women who are crushed under the weight of patriarchy and need to be jolted out of their misery by some consciousness raising.

**Jejeebhoy, S.J., and Sathar, Z.A. 2001. "Women's Autonomy in India and Pakistan: The Influence of Religion and Region." *Population and Development Review* 27(4): 687–712.**

*Keywords: Women's autonomy, Decision-making, Household characteristics, Religion*

The Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and the Pakistani province of Punjab are typically patriarchal and patrilocal and are well known for inequalitarian gender relations. But beyond these broad generalizations, social systems and the ways in which kinship norms affect women's lives vary widely. The main argument of this article is that norms imprinted by regionally prescribed social systems play the major conditioning role with regard to patterns of female autonomy. When the analysis controls for region, it was revealed that Muslim women exerted about as much autonomy in their lives as did Hindu women residing in regionally similar social systems.

This article explores these assertions empirically, using data drawn from Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab. Data were drawn from surveys conducted in 1993/94 and designed explicitly to measure women's status. In Punjab, currently married women were selected from ten communities ranging in size from 2,500 to 5,000 households. In the ten communities selected, all households were listed and about 100 households were sampled randomly to interview one currently married woman in each. About half the husbands were successfully interviewed. Almost all women in Punjab were Muslims; 1,036 currently married women aged 15–39 were interviewed along with 436 husbands. From these responses, four dimensions of autonomy were selected, and indexes were created for each: (a) economic decision-making; (b) mobility; (c) freedom from threat from husband; and (d) access to and control over economic resources.

Results confirmed the limited autonomy of women in all spheres but suggested strong regional differences. Women from both northern sites (Uttar Pradesh and Punjab) fell significantly below women from Tamil Nadu in almost every measure of autonomy, a finding that strongly supports

the argument that the north-south cultural divide powerfully conditions the extent of women's autonomy. In contrast, there was far less support for the commonly held assumption that Muslim women have less autonomy than Hindu women.

In conclusion, the findings from the study sample showed that religion played a modest role in influencing female autonomy. Every indicator of autonomy remained strongly conditioned by region within the subcontinent, with Tamilian women (representing women from the south) experiencing significantly greater autonomy than women from either Uttar Pradesh or Punjab (jointly representing women from the north). The authors thus argue that there is greater distinction in women's autonomy by a broad north-south residence than by religious ascription.

**Mumtaz, Z., and Salway, S. 2005. "I Never Go Anywhere': Extricating the Links between Women's Mobility and Uptake of Reproductive Health Services in Pakistan." *Social Science and Medicine* 60: 1751–65.**

*Keywords: Women's mobility, Reproductive health services, Space and movement, Life cycle, Insecurity, Seclusion*

Conceptualized largely by Western feminists, women's autonomy is understood as a key factor in improving women's reproductive health. Broadly described as "control over their lives," women's autonomy has been viewed as a set of multiple interlinked domains that usually include, but are not limited to, decision-making authority, economic and social autonomy, and emotional and physical autonomy. It is the last characteristic, physical autonomy in interactions with the outside world, that is the basis for the empirical research focus on women's "freedom of movement." In Pakistan in particular, which is characterized by women's seclusion and restricted mobility, the dominant discourse within the demographic and reproductive health literatures remains one where independent, unaccompanied mobility is seen as the goal and is expected to be associated with greater uptake of health care services and positive reproductive health outcomes. The article explores the appropriateness of the current conceptual emphasis of much of the reproductive health literature.

Quantitative survey data and detailed ethnography were used to illuminate these issues. Prior to this study much of the work on this topic had used either surveys or qualitative methods alone. The mixed-methods approach of this study enabled the authors first to examine mobility differentials and statistical associations between types of mobility and reproductive health outcomes for a large, probability sample of Pakistani women, and then, through ethnographic work, to seek explanatory mechanisms underlying the relationships identified. The qualitative data also enabled contextualization of the patterns of mobility as well as identification of deviance between normatively constituted behavior and actual reality.

Findings confirmed that women's mobility was circumscribed, but also illustrated the complex and contested nature of female movement. A review of the anthropological literature suggested that women's mobility in Pakistan is more complex than a simple restriction of movement. The authors cautioned against the use of simplistic public-private dichotomies and drew attention to the fluid and negotiable nature of gender norms. No direct relationship between a woman's unaccompanied mobility and her use of either contraception or antenatal care was found. In contrast, accompanied mobility did appear to play a role in the uptake of antenatal care, and was found to reflect the strength of a woman's social resources. Class and gender hierarchies interacted to pattern women's experiences.

The ethnographic data suggested that unaccompanied and accompanied mobility were quite distinct behaviors, implying different sets of constraints and resources. The rich (who also tend to be educated) have the resources (social and financial) to practice the norm of accompanied mobility, while the poor do not. Unaccompanied mobility did not, therefore, generally emerge as a sign of a woman's independence, but rather of economic necessity or a lack of social resources. The social costs of unaccompanied mobility are also particularly high for poor women. Not only is accompanied mobility a more common and socially acceptable behavior, it may also be an enabling factor in women's uptake of reproductive health services. It was usually older women who did the accompanying, and these older women had a culturally ordained responsibility to look after the younger women's reproductive health needs.

The measurement of unaccompanied mobility common in Pakistan surveys (and those elsewhere in South Asia) reflects the influence of Western feminism. A focus on independence and autonomy has permeated the academic gender discourse, leading to the use of empirical measures of "freedom to travel alone" (as well as "independent final decision making" and "control over resources"). The implicit assumption is that increased, unaccompanied mobility of women is desirable and will mean better access to the resources needed to improve women's well-being, including their reproductive health. Women who report traveling alone are also expected to report higher use of services. The findings of this article clearly show that this is not necessarily the case.

**Besio, K. 2006. "Chutes and Ladders: Negotiating Gender and Privilege in a Village in Northern Pakistan." *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 5(2): 258–78.**

*Keywords: Autoethnography, Gender, Tourism, Militarization, Gendered spatiality, Postcolonial relations, Socio-gender relations, Privilege*

This article uses the game of Chutes and Ladders to metaphorically guide the author's reading of the spatial and material landscape of Askole village, located in the Karakoram Mountains of northern Pakistan. Askole subjects have been and continue to be naturalized in regional discourses as *jangli*, an Urdu/Hindi word used in the pejorative to describe people and things that are dirty and, literally "of the jungle" or the hills and woods, in short, places at the margins of society. This discourse of *jangli* situates Askole women at the margins of that margin.

This reading was based upon ethnographic fieldwork undertaken between 1996 and 1998 and focused upon the changes in household and gender relations within a growing adventure tourism economy.

The vertical orientation of households and the up-and-down spatial movements entail and symbolize the dynamic relationship between spatiality, gender, and privilege. The domestic spaces of Chutes and Ladders are those most associated with women, children, and the elderly, those bodies most engaged in less-highly valued reproductive activities. Going down a chute meant that one was entering into the spaces of reproductive labor, metaphorically "lower" in social hierarchies. On the other hand, moving up the ladders led out of the household, into the nominally public spaces of the village, those of masculine gendered bodies, of portering work and earning income. These bodies and activities were most highly-valued by villagers.

The public spaces of the village include the sustained yet transient presence of two new groups of arguably colonial masculine bodies: Pakistani military and police personnel, and western trekkers and mountaineers. While not all of these bodies are male, they are nevertheless gendered

masculine. The presence in Askole of these various masculine bodies, who are more colonizer than colonized because they are associated with the nation-state, produced changes to the ways that villagers, especially Askole women, use village spaces. Women cannot travel across village spaces with as much ease, because they are wary of interacting with unknown and unrelated males given their values about gender-appropriate spaces. Discourses of colonial privilege and power intersect with local discourses of *purdah* (women's seclusion).

The author showed how Askole villagers used space to assert their agency in strategic ways; how they creatively transformed apparent chutes into ladders; how they rewrote household spaces, for example, by creating "guest rooms" that can effectively contain male bodies. Askole domestic space was increasingly organized horizontally; households "modernized"; doors and windows replaced ladders. As village spaces became more masculinized, household spaces became more exclusionary and a more feminized space.

The article highlights the intricacies of describing space in Askole through the dichotomy of "public" versus "private," and perceptively outlines a fluidity of space and movement of bodies.

**Chaudhry, L.N. 2009. "Flowers, Queens, and Goons: Unruly Women in Rural Pakistan." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 11(1): 246–67.**

*Keywords: Resistance, Pakistani women, Qualitative research*

This article focuses on girls and women perceived as deviant, difficult, or different by their communities in rural Punjab. It pluralizes and historicizes performances of rebellious, unruly characters by attending to the locations of these girls and women within multilayered relations of domination and subjugation. Specifically, the author examined defiance of gendered norms within the context of material, structural, and discursive realities that frame individual lives. To this end, the paper draws on fieldwork interactions with girls who enjoyed wandering in out-of-bound spaces, women who claimed a position of authority as headmistresses in village schools, and women who troubled the social imaginary through their acts of intimidation and involvement in local politics.

Women's words and performances illustrate how their agency is constrained *and* enabled through identities made available through religion, kinship/caste, and other markers of difference, including socio-economic class, and household means of livelihood. The women's determined pursuit of their ambitions had definite reverberations that went beyond their individual lives. Their resistance to gendered norms pertaining to formal education and women's employment could not be dismissed as inconsequential or "peripheral" to the communities they inhabited. The women's critical understanding of oppressive structures and their own place and relationship with respect to them led these women to carve out niches for themselves within the systems of inequality generated by those structures.

Ultimately, the author acknowledges that the challenges to gendered norms enacted by the research participants did not fundamentally subvert the status quo or radically overhaul the heterosexual contract within the context of Punjabi society. Possibilities of justice and egalitarian change were overwhelmed by postcolonial realities: the collusion of multileveled power relations, from the local to the national to the global, ensure that women's bodies in developing nations remain restricted to their proper place. The girls' success at generating spaces of relative freedom in the midst of intense gendered violence continued to be precarious, while the women's entanglement with hegemonic norms and discourses in their communities, including norms that justified harm to the

weak and discourses attributed to Islam that sought to control female bodies, forestalled the potential for sustained, more widespread transformation of gender norms. The disruption or interruption of gender norms in these cases, then, was either overshadowed by the threat of violence, or co-opted by the imposition of others' identity vectors, such as caste, class, or affiliation with repressive state apparatuses, that further reinforced relations of domination and subjugation.

The author concludes by reiterating the significance of understanding rural Punjabi women's deviance, regardless of its perceived efficaciousness, within the specificity of these women's life circumstances, and their social and geographical locations. The focus on resistance and transgression helps to debunk myths of the passive rural Muslim woman: the strength and capacity for critical consciousness of the girls and women represented in this study remains unquestionable.

**Charsley, K. 2005. "Unhappy Husbands: Masculinity and Migration in Transnational Pakistani Marriages." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11(1): 85–105.**

*Keywords: Gender, Migration, Downward mobility, Marriage, Masculinity*

This article, based on fieldwork in the Pakistani Punjab and with predominantly Punjabi families in Bristol, UK, is concerned with the common practice of British Pakistanis marrying Pakistani nationals. Fieldwork included voluntary work, visiting and attending functions and other social occasions, informal interviewing, and thirty more formal semi structured interviews with individuals and couples.

Migration to the UK offers most Pakistani men the opportunity to earn far more than they could in Pakistan. Nevertheless, the conditions in which these financial gains are to be made can come as a shock to newly arrived husbands. Migration commonly involves downward mobility. In many respects, the experience of the migrant husband is "starting from scratch again."

This research highlights the social, cultural, and economic difficulties faced by migrant husbands, comparing their position to that of the *ghar damad* (house son-in-law). The *ghar damad* is the subject of stereotyping and is generally considered to hold an undesirable position with its connotations of being, like the conventional daughter-in-law, dependent on and subservient to the parents-in-law. While women are instructed from a young age on the adjustments the move to their husband's household will entail, male migrants to the UK are often unprepared for this situation. Also, the wife's strong ties within the household or neighborhood in which the husband is an outsider can disrupt conventional power relationships, giving the woman more support in case of conflict. Equally, part of becoming a wife is being a daughter-in-law, and the lack of this position of subordination and training, combined with the husband's want of family support, may alter the dynamics of power between husband and wife.

Frustrations experienced by such men may help to explain instances where such marriages have ended in the husband's violence, desertion, or taking a second wife. These sometimes aggressive attempts to assert control or authority may be read as efforts to shore up the fragile edifices of adult masculinity (as migrants, husbands, and fathers) under challenging conditions. Marriage migration can limit men's ability to fulfil their expected masculine role, for example, to provide for their families and be able to exert a certain level of control over their wife (or wives) and children. Residing in his father-in-law's household can undermine the migrant husband's ability to act in accordance with Pakistani ideals of masculinity. These "hegemonic masculinities" define successful ways of "being a man," consequently defining other masculine styles as inadequate or inferior. The

ghar damad represents one of these other “subordinate variants” of Pakistani and north Indian masculinity.

**Nyborg, I.L.P. 2002. “Yours Today, Mine Tomorrow? A Study of Women and Men’s Negotiations Over Resources in Baltistan, Pakistan.” PhD diss., Agricultural University of Norway (Noragric PhD Dissertation No. 1).**

*Keywords: Processes of negotiation, Access to resources, Women’s mobility, Gender roles*

This study explores the nature of women and men’s negotiations over resources in Sultanabad, a high-altitude village in the Baltistan region of Pakistan’s Northern Areas (now part of the Gilgit-Baltistan territory). Fieldwork was conducted in Basho Valley, stretching over a period of four years. The study offers an alternative perspective of peoples’ relationship to their environment when compared with studies that focus on the identification of fixed local rules and rights over resources, or on community resource management exclusively in relation to government regulations and policy, as if the community was an entity acting in unity. The focus on negotiations reveals the dynamics of local power relations, processes of social differentiation, and the importance of issues of identity and morality.

Empirical data was collected through participant observation and interviews. Under the methodological umbrella of participant observation, and in the context of either individual or group interviews, a combination of qualitative methods was used, including situational and discursive methods, network analysis, and life histories. This last method was particularly useful in exploring the relationship between normative notions (what people say they should do) and action (what people actually do).

The women and men of Sultanabad negotiate over several resource types, namely, agricultural land, monetary resources, grazing resources, timber and firewood.

Labor was both exchanged and sold, both by men and by women. Women exchanged labor primarily among their extended family, but also between friends. This type of labor exchange allowed a woman to enjoy a broader network of support in the village, in that she could call upon members of her own family, as well as that of her husbands, to assist. Another arena around which the author observed a particular system of social relationships was animal herding. Firewood collection was mainly done by women, although men played an important role in collection at certain times of the year when the women were heavily engaged in critical agricultural tasks, such as weeding. The women went in groups to collect wood, but these groups were neither fixed nor based solely on families. Their composition varied from day to day, giving each woman a chance to “network” with women from the whole village. This flexibility allowed friendships across established family and hamlet lines, widening the support system for a woman. It also ensured women’s mobility in a system where the ability of females to move around the valley alone is limited.

This social and economic networking strategy allowed women in particular to spread risk, cement friendships, and effectively foster new alliances, and provided a degree of freedom from familial obligations. Networks in Sultanabad, with their inherent flexibility and multiplicity, seemed to provide both women and men with options for association under changing conditions. One of the most striking attributes of resource acquisition was that, when overtly claiming resources, women and men seldom act “alone”; on the contrary, resource negotiation was a process by which women

and men actively recruited allies (e.g., family, village elders, religious leaders, or persons outside the village) that they felt would strengthen their position vis a vis others.

In terms of gender roles, the study showed that there are very few agricultural and resource management activities that are exclusively performed by women or men. More generally, it questioned the concept of “kinship networks” as the only, or at least dominant, determinant of social relations in rural societies, where it has, in fact, proven to be inadequate in explaining how women and men actually organize their interaction.

**Sathar, Z.A., and Kazi, S. 2000a. “Women’s Autonomy in the Context of Rural Pakistan.” *Pakistan Development Review* 39(2): 89–110.**

*Keywords: Women’s autonomy, Decision-making, Mobility, Socio-economic status*

Prior to 2000, most research on women’s status in Pakistan has either been restricted to proxy measures of women’s status generally or to the urban areas. Women’s autonomy has mostly been studied in the context of its inhibiting influence on fertility and infant child mortality. This article explores women’s autonomy in relation to that of men, but also in relative ranking with women, from different rural communities in Pakistan. The basis of the sample selection was the hypothesis that gender norms are expected to differ by agro-ecological systems because of their different familial arrangements and modes of production. Furthermore, because women’s empowerment and status are multidimensional, several measures had to be used to gauge women’s status in various settings.

Data were collected in 1993 and 1994 with the specific purpose of investigating the relationship between women’s status and fertility in five Asian countries. In Pakistan, the ten communities chosen for the sample were located in the most populous administrative area within Punjab. For each village, about 100 currently married women between the ages of 15 and 40 were randomly selected for detailed interviews. About 50% of husbands were also interviewed. In addition, focus group interviews were conducted with both men and women in all ten communities to establish gender-related norms. The core of the data for this article came from the 1,036 women’s questionnaires completed in the course of the survey. Indices were compiled of what were considered some crucial aspects of autonomy of women: mobility, access to resources, decision making inside and outside home spheres, economic autonomy, domestic violence, and interspousal communication.

While most women in rural areas contributed economically, the majority worked on the household farm or within the household economic unit. These women did not derive any additional autonomy as a result of their contribution. Paid employment, though offset by other restrictions on poor women, offered greater potential for women’s autonomy. Education, on the other hand, had a lesser influence on female autonomy in the context of rural Punjab. Education was barely associated with the perception of economic autonomy and decision making inside or outside the home. In the *barani* (rain-fed regions), for example, the level of education, both of men and particularly of women, were quite high. But the opportunities for paid employment were few and far between for women, who mainly took up the agricultural roles of men who tended to seek off-farm employment outside the village. This conferred on the women some additional decision-making power, but it was also likely to bind them to living in non-nuclear arrangements that restricted their authority within the household. This study was the first indication that female education, perhaps because of its low overall attainment levels in rural areas, was not a strong indicator of women’s status as it was for urban Pakistan.

Age was found to have a strong positive association with all autonomy indicators. Older women were much more mobile, had greater access to resources in the family, were more likely to be economically autonomous, and were more likely to make decisions both in the inside and outside spheres. Another relevant finding was that women living in nuclear households (as opposed to those with brothers- and sisters-in-law or parents-in-law) were much more mobile, had greater access to resources, and were able to make more decisions both in the inside and outside home spheres.

**Sathar, Z.A., and Kazi, S. 2000b. "Pakistani Couples: Different Productive and Reproductive Realities?" *Pakistan Development Review* 39(4): 891–912.**

*Keywords: Outside sphere, Domestic sphere, Gender relations*

This article used responses from matched husbands and wives in rural Pakistan to test whether there was a difference between spouses in their perceptions and goals/orientation concerning production and reproduction. The authors argued that there had been little research thus far on whether social realities were different for men and women. In all probability, women and men are susceptible and constrained by the same social constructs, which confine them in certain roles and reinforce the status quo. The study took up the division between the public/outside and private/inside spheres and the cultural designation of women to the private sphere as the starting point of their analysis.

Data were collected in 1993 and 1994 with the specific purpose of investigating the relationship between women's status and fertility in five Asian countries. The core of the data for this study came from the 1,036 women's and 470 "matchable" men's questionnaires completed during the course of the survey. The authors concentrated on indices of what were considered some crucial aspects of the autonomy of women: the mobility of women, their freedom to control income and purchase personal items, their decision making inside and outside the home sphere, and access to resources and reproductive attitudes.

The study found that 91% of women thought that the most important decisions regarding the household should be made by men, while 83% thought that women should not work outside the home. In answer to "there is work that men should only do and work that women should only do," older women were more conservative in their answers than uneducated women about whether the major household decisions should be taken by men; educated women, on the contrary, were less conservative than uneducated women. Husbands gave much more liberal answers, particularly about the division of the spheres of work. These responses show that women were no different to men in reaffirming and redefining existing social relations. Further, it is interesting to note that educated women (in the case of decision making) and younger women (in the case of division of spheres) were at least readier to admit to breaking with these otherwise publicly accepted norms.

With regard to the productive behavior of men and women, strong linkages were found between women and men's productive activities. For example, in the *barani* (rain-fed areas) there had been a tradition of seeking employment outside the farming sector and a large proportion of the male population were employed in non-farming sectors, particularly in the army and police and nearby cities. Women were left with much more responsibility for managing the family farm, while the men diversified into non-farming sectors to supplement family incomes. A livelihood system had

emerged that provided relatively stable male wage employment in the formal sector combined with subsistence agricultural production managed by women.

The authors also highlighted that the loss of social status associated with women's work was often cited as an explanation for the low reporting of women's participation rates in the Pakistani labor force, because data on women's work were collected by male enumerators from the male heads of households. In addition to the men's reluctance in admitting to women working because it may be associated with a loss of status, husbands may simply have not been aware of their wives' employment or did not consider it as productive activity. Men clearly did not like to report the involvement of women in agriculture as it impinged on their sphere of life; men were reluctant to admit that wives were participating in the outside sphere of decision making, even though women admitted to a higher level of participation in outside-sphere decision making.

The article demonstrates, how men representing the public/outside sphere and women the private/inside sphere actually overlap much more than they are likely to admit.

**Ali, K.A. 2010. "Voicing Difference: Gender and Civic Engagement among Karachi's Poor." *Current Anthropology* 51(2): 313–20.**

*Keywords: Women's lives, Women's voices, Public spaces, Politics of empowerment*

Urbanization and rural-urban migration has led to ethnic and social heterogeneity in most urban spaces of Pakistan has led to ethnic and social heterogeneity in most urban spaces of Pakistan. This article concentrated on an aspect of Karachi's working-class life that is not always captured in the predetermined narrative tropes that had previously formed the basis of most research on the city. Relying upon ethnographic research conducted in 2002/03, primarily in Orangi Town among women workers in Karachi's ready-to-wear export garment industry, it looked at how lower-class women live and navigate the gendered public spaces in Karachi.

In seeking to map out the complex and dynamic lives of poor women (and men) in Karachi's working-class neighborhood, the author used the vocabulary of fear (and the related category of risk) as one of the organizing categories to represent his research. The insecurity and worries in women's lives come from potential threats or violence that they suffered in domestic and public spaces. A major worry for many women that the author met during his fieldwork was the challenge of traversing public spaces that they had to pass through on the way to and from their workplace. The need to negotiate streets filled with the "unknown" and "unrelated" was something the women faced on a daily basis. Men, on the contrary, traversed the public sphere without the same kind of bodily discipline and emotional restraint that women had to endure. Many men found new spouses, abandoning their families to precarious futures, or they pursued the many pleasures that the urban environment offered. But men were also vulnerable to drug addiction and delinquency. The women interviewed showed extreme frustrations and regrets in their public and private lives. However, most women were also acutely aware of the ways in which male unemployment and lack of education were affecting male behavior. Many attributed the teasing on the streets, and also the drug addiction (but not domestic violence), to a sense of hopelessness that had crept in among the working poor in their area.

The article highlighted the clash of the modernist ideal with the reality of men not fulfilling the traditional masculine role of providing for and supporting their families. Harsh socio-economic conditions and "demasculinization" processes, among other things, destabilized gender relations and undermined the harmony within the family structure, at times leading to violent effects within

the domestic and public spheres. Yet women's narratives of their personal lives made it clear that along with conflict there may also be spaces of mutual dependence, respect, and caring that continued in these families.

While asserting their independence, right to work, and right to equal wages—a sign of contractual and assertive individualized agency—the experiences and voices of the women simultaneously hinted at their emphasizing familial honor and respectability. Much rhetorical effort was spent by the women during interviews to convince the ethnographer, and perhaps themselves, that they were people of high moral character and did not lose their honor or respect if they worked in factories. In subtle ways, the larger social construct of the “respectable woman” is constantly invoked in their self-presentations. Although in many cases the women live as single parents and carry the burden of educating their children (because of their husbands' unemployment, addiction problems, or having taken another wife), they seldom speak about divorce or separation from their husbands.

The article clearly shows that women's assertion of their independence may well cohabit with their desire to be modest, self-sacrificial, subservient, and humble.

**Grünenfelder, J. 2013. “Negotiating Gender Relations: Muslim Women and Formal Employment in Pakistan's Rural Development Sector.” *Gender, Work and Organization* 20(6): 599–615.**

*Keywords: Muslim women, Formal employment, Gender, Development*

The dominant picture of the one-dimensional, oppressed and passive “Third World Muslim woman” who is disproportionately burdened by unpaid work at home is being disrupted and amended with alternative constructions, such as the image of the courageous and active professional Muslim woman. Unfortunately, this has sometimes led to a similarly one-dimensional picture based on a dichotomy between Muslim women who are obedient and those who rebel against local gender norms. Several researchers have now started to unpack the notion of the professional Muslim woman. Following calls for in-depth explorations of the complexities, diversities, and ambiguities in professional Muslim women's lives in specific socio-political contexts, this study aimed at making visible how Pakistani working women are both subjugated and empowered by diverse relations of power. In particular, it examined how Muslim women were able to work in Pakistan's rural development sector despite gender norms that were, in many cases, disadvantageous to their engagement in formal labor markets.

The available literature showed how women and employers had developed strategies to adapt *purdah* to new work contexts, such as factories and offices. Nevertheless, developing strategies for maintaining gender segregation did not guarantee that professional women were socially respected by their families and work colleagues. Therefore, many women were reluctant to take on a job, even if they were formally allowed to do so by their family members. This article followed the argument that it is essential for Muslim professional women to develop strategies that enable them to participate in formal labor markets.

This article reports on selected insights from a larger research project carried out in the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as North-West Frontier Province), Pakistan. The aim of the research project was to understand the impact of development discourses on local people's livelihoods in rural northwest Pakistan. The material for this study was selected from a set of data that the author collected during eight months of field research in 2007 and 2008. During

that time the author engaged in participant observation and conducted various types of interviews and group discussions with villagers, government employees, and staff of NGOs, including male and female social organizers. (Social organization entails tasks that are carried out in the office as well as in the village.) Fieldwork has an especially bad reputation in many parts of Pakistani society. Women development practitioners' engagement with gender norms turned out to be a crucial theme and was thus explored in this article.

In this context, policies at the global and national level have demanded that more female development practitioners work in remote rural places in Pakistan, thus creating new employment opportunities for some Pakistani women. Social organizers worked in so-called “[gender-]mixed working environments,” which meant that female and male workers have to interact in daily work situations, a highly unorthodox situation for many workers in Pakistan. Although both male and female social organizers had to cope with this mixed-gender environment, it was particularly challenging for women. The author found that some women talked of their employment as a temporary and undesired deviation from applicable local gender norms; for others, it was rather a conscious break with or redefinition of local norms toward more equal gender relations.

The article argued that, in mixed-gender work environments, women were exposed to different expectations about their gender behavior and, in response, they developed physical strategies on the one hand and discursive strategies on the other in order to negotiate gender relations in a way that allowed them to engage in formal employment. The conclusion showed that, in Pakistan, the coexistence of competing discourses has forced women employees to negotiate gender relations so that they can reconcile the requirements of being both a good Muslim and a good worker.

**Kasmani, O. 2016. “Fakir Her-Stories. Women’s Spiritual Careers and the Limits of the Masculine in Pakistan.” *TRAFO — Blog for Transregional Research*. May 26, 2016. <https://trafo.hypotheses.org/4243>.**

*Keywords: Minority masculinities, Religious careers, Queer & Gender studies*

In this brief ethnographic reflection grounded in Sehwan Sharif, a Sufi pilgrimage town in southern Pakistan, the author picks from women’s stories and their narrativization of spiritual careers to disclose and call into question the limited epistemological scope in which gender—more precisely femaleness and femininity in the case of South Asian women’s religious careers—is regularly viewed, discussed, and explained. The author argues that questions like why Muslim women mystics have remained largely invisible in historical accounts, or why some have come to be recorded in nameless ways, are better situated in what in historiographical terms is described as hagiographic transvestism. What this means is that any description of female spiritual feats risked disclosing the persons involved, necessitating their strategic portrayal as men in the guise of women or, for that matter, as rare women who achieved the status of a man. It also means that an absence of women in historical texts does not always correspond to an exclusion of women Sufis in historical contexts. Thus, reading contemporary women fakirs’ life narratives in Sehwan as her-stories is to foreground and maintain the discursive labor that such women perform with every instance of telling; it is also to reappraise archival records so as to render previously invisible lives visible.

Women fakirs—who in Sehwan perform mainly as spiritual guides and intercessors and, to a lesser extent, as healers—are acutely aware of the male operative norm against which all ascetic lives come to be measured, not only by their male counterparts, but equally in the eyes of their own followers, women and men. Thus, these women fakirs regularly preempt the questionable character

of their bodies as well as the validity of their public roles and practices. Women, unsurprisingly, cannot find a place in the patrilineal ordered system of charisma, which means that non-male persons (women and *hijra*, or transgender) who pursue fakir careers in Sehwan must do so without institutional support or must secure some form of patronage.

Unlike their male counterparts, the careers of women and hijras are more likely to draw on experiences of dreams and waking visions, but also of enduring illnesses and cohabiting fakir-spirits. Because women cannot be lodged at all-male fakir communes in Sehwan, the public space of the shrine offers a fruitful alternative. Saints' places and religious shrines, which were taken over by the Pakistani state in the early 1960s, have since been administered as inalienable endowments under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. With its unique mix of state administration and saintly refuge, the shrine—a site where fakir her-stories are regularly performed—offers an advanced yet contained field of publicness within which non-customary spiritual careers and women's aspirations for more public roles are fostered. Contemporary saintly careers, especially of women, have benefitted from this modern governance of religious sites, which, by enabling greater access, promotes gendered possibilities of engaging with the saint and his followers.

The article describes how female spiritual masters must act pragmatically and innovate with what is available to them. Women who claim to receive charisma from saintly sources found in dreams and visions circumvent the patrilineal rule of transmission, but also reinstate its genealogical forms when they wish to transmit it to their daughters. In other words, the radicalness of non-male ways of doing a male script lies in its promise to contour the norm, to trace it anew. Likewise, fakir her-stories from Sehwan reveal innovative practices, demonstrating that, if it is indeed the femaleness of their bodies that so often hinders women's prospects for religious and spiritual careers, femininity is nevertheless regularly employed as a way to argue the distinctiveness of women's charismatic promise.

**Hegland, M.E. 1995. "Shi'a Women of Northwest Pakistan and Agency through Practice: Ritual, Resistance, Resilience." *PoLAR* 18(2): 65–80.**

*Keywords: Mourning rituals, Agency, Gender, Ritual practice, Resistance, Resilience*

Much like today, the lives of Peshawar women in the late twentieth century[or, early 1990s were more restricted than those of Pakistani women elsewhere. They lived in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, since renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), homeland of the Pukhtun ethnic group, whose stark views of a woman's place were distilled in their ominous saying: "Women—either the house or the grave." Women had to be kept in seclusion. Men had separate buildings or set-apart rooms for entertaining other males so that their females were never exposed to outsiders. In the NWFP, only some 3% of females were literate. To be allowed out of the home, Peshawar females had to have very good reason, be fully covered with a body veil (and, for most, a face shield), and be escorted by a male relative. Very real danger, threats to physical safety, and reputation combined with social, psychological, and economic dependence on the family to force Peshawar women into compliance with confining social, cultural, and religious structures.

Their agency constrained by their reluctance to jeopardize bonds with family, religion, and all they held sacred, Shiite (Shi'a) Muslim women did not directly contradict or deny religious teachings and the associated male hierarchy. Instead, they turned to authorized, valorized ritual performances to open larger worlds and subtly and tactfully query belittling assessments of their worth, character, and competence. They used their performances of mourning rites to practice an oblique, undeclared contestation against their subordinate position in a harshly patriarchal society. In so

doing, these women nurtured resilience in the face of constant reminders of their dependency and lack of agency. Their energizing ritual performances allowed them to build up, within a protected framework, characteristics and abilities which they may later be able to apply more overtly for self-advancement and influence.

Based on participant observation conducted in 1991 at women's *majales* (sing. *majles*, communal mourning ritual) in Peshawar, the author described how Shiite women managed to drown out messages inherent in the mourning rituals about the inferiority, dependency, and disruptive nature of females by devising keener communications from their own validating ritual experiences. Symbols of male dominance were everywhere—in sermon messages, social interaction, ritual paraphernalia, and embodied crests—proclaiming women's inferiority and lack of autonomy. Paradoxically, instead of embracing the instructions of these ubiquitous phallogocentric symbols and becoming more subdued and submissive, women used the *majles* for performance, socializing, and even competition. They subverted Shiite rituals of martyrdom recitations, mourning chants, self-flagellation, and male primacy to build up their own skills, self-esteem, and self-confidence. They saw *majales* as a chance to get away from home, housework, and male authority and to develop social networks, abilities, and reputations. Through these rituals, some women cultivated unique talents and gained fame as performers.

The article highlights how these valuable abilities and characteristic performances—created through their ritual practices and fueled by growing literacy, opportunities through education, and evolving social and economic conditions—formed a realm of contention and negotiation over gender power, control, and change extending beyond the *majles*.

**Marsden, M. 2007a. "All-Male Sonic Gatherings, Islamic Reform, and Masculinity in Northern Pakistan." *American Ethnologist* 34(3): 473–90.**

*Keywords: Islam, Emotion, Performance, Masculinity, Music*

The material on which this article is based was collected during an 18-month period of research in 2000/01 and eight further research visits between January 2003 and August 2006. The article explores the complex opportunities afforded by high-intensity performative events for the instantiation of diverse forms of sociality and masculinity in the mountainous Chitral region of Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). It focuses ethnographically on two types of all-male musical gatherings that were regularly attended by Chitrali Muslims: the *istók* and the *mahfil*. The "permissibility" of these types of entertainment, according to Islamic authoritative teachings, is a source of considerable debate in the region. Many Chitrali "men of piety," who were mostly trained in Pakistani madrassas and were often affiliated with so-called Islamist political parties, delivered mosque addresses during which they pronounced such gatherings "impermissible" within Islam and a source of un-Islamic immorality.

Analysis of the role played by these all-male sonic gatherings in the instantiation of locally contested forms of masculinity furnishes unique insights into the much-debated issue of how Muslims handle and respond to pressures to become more religious. At first glance, much of what the author's informants said about their understanding of "manliness" appears to fit non-Muslim stereotypes that emphasize the inherent patriarchy of Islamic manhood. Almost all daily life in Chitral was characterized by strict forms of sexual segregation. A well-developed vocabulary related to virility and male strength was frequently deployed during the course of daily life. Male assertiveness was also a feature of displays of manly bravado as enacted by Chitrali men and boys. By exploring the production of masculinities in diverse types of all-male sonic gatherings, however,

the author came to recognize that displays of masculine bravado are not hegemonic in Chitral. Categorizing the multiple expressions of masculinity that the author encountered in Chitral as either “dominant” or “subordinate” in relation to a shared moral code overlooks the ways in which Chitrali social aesthetics valued men who demonstrated that they were capable of mastering a range of diverse and apparently irreconcilable yet interlocking masculine registers.

The author found that there was no simple division between men who chose to inhabit the world of aristocracy, as embodied in plays and mahfils, and those who challenged such forms of sociality by embracing “reform-minded” forms of Islamic piety. Plays, rather, are events at which alternative forms of contrasting yet interconnected types of manly behavior were creatively enacted and instantiated.

During the course of *istók* and mahfils, men had to negotiate their way between diverse forms of manhood, including those that valued “hot” (*garam*) vitality, physical excellence, and the performance of assertiveness and competition. Equally prominent, however, were those forms that emphasized very different manly arts. The key reference points for these other forms were manifestations of taste, cultural connoisseurship, and the cultivation of properly human (*pura insan*) forms of affection (*khuloos*) through the patronage of music and the semipublic performance of longing, sadness, and introspection induced by the experience of ecstatic love (*ishq*). The ability to move with art and grace between these contrasting registers of masculinity was the true test of manhood for many men in Chitral.

The article shows that there was, therefore, no “Chitrali masculinity” embedded within a monolithic “Chitrali culture.” Neither was there any simple two-way split between forms of Chitrali masculinities that conformed to an “ideal,” dominant or hegemonic form of Chitrali manhood and those that are subordinate or “subversive” in any straightforwardly instrumental sense. Rather, Chitralis worked hard to ensure that different, although interactive, types of all-male musical gatherings existed as critical places within which diverse forms of masculinities invested with meaning in local settings were produced and enacted. Chitralis remain famous across Pakistan today for their love of music, dance, polo, and hunting—activities that provide “multiplex arenas” for the display of manly inner qualities.

This work challenged older anthropological accounts that often treated manhood in rural Muslim societies as rigid, inflexible, and defined by unchanging codes of honor and systems of patriarchy. The study, rather, showed how apparently diverse types of Chitrali masculinity (dominant and subordinate, “heavy” and “light”) were dynamically connected to one another and interacted with broader processes of social, political, and religious transformation.

**Marsden, M. 2007b. “Love and Elopement in Northern Pakistan.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13(1): 91–108.**

*Keywords: Romantic love, Poetic genre, Elopement marriages*

This article explores concerns over love and sexuality in Chitral, a remote and mountainous region of Pakistan’s North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) populated primarily by Khowar-speaking Sunni and Shiite Ismaili Muslims. Matters of the heart are a source of considerable discussion in Chitral, and, less widely documented in scholarly literature on rural regions of the Muslim world, elopement marriages are also an important feature of Chitrali life. What the author sought to show was the ways in which these matters of the heart illuminated the complexity of choice-making processes in a Muslim society that was experiencing a high degree of

social and political transformation. The victory of an alliance of “religious parties” in Pakistan’s 2002 elections in the province is of especial importance in relationship to the themes explored in this article.

Chitralis used many different terms to refer to romantic and passionate forms of love. This complex vocabulary of both Khowar and Persian terms concerning romantic love was often a public and visible dimension of Chitrali small-town and village life. In contrast to other regional Muslim societies, Chitralis saw love as reflecting more complex emotional and psychological processes rather than simply being the product of female cunning alone. Their discussions about pre-marital love relationships were injected with a clear recognition of the unique personal and emotional elements involved in any particular “friendship.” The complexity of Chitralis’ attitudes regarding the origins of feelings of love meant that, unlike some other Muslims in South Asia, they did not see all manifestations of “romantic love” as motivated simply by sexual desire.

The article also asks where Chitrali ideas of romantic love come from, documenting how newer and older conceptions of romantic love were involved in a dynamic engagement in Chitral’s musical and poetic culture. One way in which many people framed their real-life experiences of romantic love was by relating them to the rich tradition of *ghazal* (love poetry) music that forms one important part of Chitral’s musical culture. Khowar *ghazal* music has been influenced by transformations that have occurred in other South Asian musical forms. The sentiments of yearning *ghazal* music expresses are the product of an interaction between the fantasy-like world of Bollywood and the vivid images of intoxicating love found in Persian Sufism. This interaction between new and older motifs of love was seen not only in the all-male musical gatherings in Chitral, but also in the intimate spaces of the home. In contrast to other settings where ideas about romance are only now making inroads into Muslims’ imagination, romantic love was experienced in a range of forms by Chitralis.

Finally, the article focuses on Chitralis who sought to marry their lovers. This was a situation that, whilst not uncommon, was still in violation of more “traditional” conventions prescribing marriage choice as a matter for parents to determine rather than something based on personal inclination and romantic love. The author documents the ways in which Chitralis saw marriages of elopement (*alueik*), and how they conceptualized “love” and “arranged” marriages as existing as part of a continuum rather than being distinct types of marriage. Chitralis did not hold a one-dimensional view of elopement marriages as immoral acts on the part of Chitral’s corrupted youth. The couples the author found to have married through elopement came from many backgrounds that varied widely in terms of status, wealth, and religion. One important dimension in all of these marriages of elopement was the difference in status and religion between the “lovers” (*ashegan*) involved.

In conclusion, some Chitralis did see cross-gender love relationships, premarital sex, and elopement marriages as a threat to both individual and collective forms of honor. Yet for many others, elopement marriages were invested with the potential for what the author saw as the conspicuous display of self-aware forms of “tolerant” attitudes. These assertive displays of tolerance were notable especially because they took place in a setting where political parties were propounding strongly Islamizing aims that were at odds with those ideals that tolerated romantic love as a feature of daily life.

**Marsden, M. 2009. “A Tour Not so Grand: Mobile Muslims in Northern Pakistan.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15: 57–75.**

*Keywords: Mobility, Identity, Muslim self-understanding, Place-making*

It would be tempting to assume that Muslims living in a remote and rural region of Pakistan travel primarily to visit kin, seek out labor, or make pilgrimages. People also travel for leisure, however, and this is a constant source of planning, expenditure, and discussion in Chitral.

This article explores the ways in which village Muslims living in the Chitral region of northern Pakistan sought to nurture and sustain their region as a socially heterogeneous space by actively embarking on local forms of travel. Cramped villages, as well as small towns with busy bazaars, are said to cause people to feel “heart explosion” (*hardi phat*) and put them at constant risk of “mental collapse” (they use the English term). To offset these dangers, groups of young Chitrali men visited villages that were known for being old-fashioned and distinctive places full of “wonders and marvels” (*aja’ibo gbara’ib*), or that had earned a reputation for the beauty, hospitality, and “life-loving” (*zindadi*) dispositions of their inhabitants. Referred to using the English term “tours,” these were mostly short trips involving a one-night stay in the house of a friend. They may also be more expedition-like journeys (*safar*) that see the travelers walking over high mountain passes and staying in the guesthouses of strangers.

The author found that tour-going was an important practice through which Chitralis encountered, perceived, and sought to understand their region’s valleys and villages, investing these places, as well as the Chitralis themselves, with significance. At the same time, Chitralis talked about tours as providing opportunities to hone their capacity to enact and cultivate diverse modes of sociality as well as their moral, aesthetic, and intellectual sensibilities, notably those connected to a complex performative nexus of wit, humor, and mockery. Tours were inspired by a complex combination of both sacred and non-sacred motivations. Visiting sacred sites, acquiring knowledge about Chitral and its people, escaping the moralizing constraints of daily village life, evading social claims placed upon them by their fellow villagers, and “relaxing” were among the most important motivations for tours. Many Chitralis associated movement outside the confines of their villages with a complex nexus of performance, curiosity in difference, the display of wit, and what they referred to as a fleeting sensation of freedom (*azadi*) from the constraints (*pabandi*) of daily village life.

Importantly, when Chitralis did seek to cultivate an appreciation for the heterogeneity of their region and its people or think out loud about questions of sameness and difference, they did so in a region of Pakistan that was profoundly Muslim. At first glance, Chitral’s landscape suggested the hegemony of political Islamists who sought to fashion Muslim life in the region according to reform-minded Islamic doctrinal precepts. Yet in the context of this world of prescribed faith, many Sunni and Shiite Ismaili Chitralis took account of their particular circumstances and did not simply interpret heterogeneity—old or new—as an obstacle to living a coherent Muslim life or as a threat to their society’s undeniably Muslim nature. Rather, the heterogeneity of places in the region offered the potential for Chitrali Muslims to enact diverse ways of being Muslim, forge complex structures of attachment to Chitral, and cultivate an attitude of curiosity. Chitral’s diversity was considered of local importance because it rendered the region worthy of ceaseless exploration. Chitrali tours were an everyday social practice, often purposefully deployed by people, albeit temporarily, to distance themselves from the concerns of sectarian difference and status distinction that permeated everyday village life.

The article considers and compares contrasting yet interactive forms of Muslim self-understanding as enacted in cities, small towns, and villages to illuminate much about the complexity of the contemporary Muslim world in the early 21st century. It highlights how, in a world of increasingly prescribed faith, many Chitralis cultivated other strands of mindful existence alongside those

associated with the need to lead a virtuous Muslim life, building upon complex local traditions, such as travel.

**Grima, B. 1991. "The Role of Suffering in Women's Performance of *Paxto*." In *Gender, Genre and Power in South Asian Expressive Traditions*, edited by A. Appadurai, F.J. Korom, and M.A. Mills, 78–101. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.**

*Keywords: Women's performances, Code of honor, Modesty/shame, Narratives of the self, Performance of emotion, Identity*

Paxtuns (commonly known as Pashtuns today) were first studied and described by British colonialists stationed in what they called northern India (present day Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan) in the mid-19th century. Later, they became of interest to anthropologists as a tribal society. What most of these studies had in common is that they were conducted by men and focused on male culture and society, and so the Paxtun world is presented largely as a man's world.

Anthropologists, travelers, and generalists writing about Paxtuns never failed to mention the code of honor and modesty/shame, a code with rigid behavioral requirements, sometimes referred to as *paxtun-wali*. *Paxto* is equivalent to honor. So, what does it mean to have, do, or perform *paxto*? Those who have written about the code unanimously agreed on several points that constituted the male code of honor, such as hospitality, the right of refuge, and revenge. The doing of *paxto* for men, then, generally meant showing oneself as strong, combative, generous, and hospitable. This side of *paxto* has been elaborated on by male ethnographers relying on data from male informants. The author of this article instead turned to what *paxto* meant for women.

Just as the gun and turban were typically used as images to exemplify Paxtun manhood, the author suggested that tears and the endurance of hardship exemplified Paxtun womanhood. The author illustrated this notion of honor in suffering by discussing two types of narrative in which women present themselves to each other. The author began by introducing the life story as it is perceived and performed. Then she discussed a particular genre of personal-experience tale, *tapos*, a relating of illness and misfortune in the form of a formal emotion ritual. This is the purpose of a women's visit to share sadness over someone's misfortune. These data were used to suggest that the display, or performance of emotion (in this case, of loss and suffering), is related to identity, that is, Paxtun Muslim and feminine.

These narratives were performed and framed within a genre of defined social contexts and rules. Each time they were told, it was with the implicit message of asserting and reasserting membership and reputation as a good Paxtun in the community. The life stories told by Paxtun women were vehicles for sentiment and emotion that were inappropriate to tell out of specific contexts of intimacy and privacy, but at the same time, they were a discourse of honor that gained them reputation. There was a great appreciation for the skilled teller of her own life story. This skill lay mostly in the teller's ability to move her listeners to tears. Women communally known to have the best stories and to be the best tellers were the ones who had experienced difficult and sad lives. Their experience itself, its beauty judged by the appropriateness according to *paxto*, along with the fact that they had not run from the hardship, made for the best story in the community's estimation. *Gham* (pain, suffering) is what determined the best story. As put by an informant: "With age and hardship, a woman gains respect, her story becomes known, and she is respected by all in the community for having undergone so much suffering. Her suffering is perceived as action according to the code of honor and morality."

The author showed that the measuring of sorrow against joy was continually recalled in the culture. A person's greatness was judged from the point of view of gham. Thus, it was not joy but reactions to tragedy that mattered. A comparative analysis of many tapos narratives showed that they all shared the same structural elements. It was learned gender-related behavior in response to the aesthetic of suffering expected of women.

This research speaks to issues of feminist folklore and anthropology in that women's culture deserves separate attention and cannot be subsumed under the dominant male models (either endogenous or exogenous). It also adds to the claim that researchers must look beyond the private interior of the self, observing instead the processes of social interaction and discourse to see why and how of emotion manifests as learned, culturally coded, and performed behavior, rather than as a phenomenon opposed to cognition.

**Ahmed, A. 2005. "Death and Celebration among Muslim Women: A Case Study from Pakistan." *Modern Asian Studies* 39(4): 929–80.**

*Keywords: Women's agency, Social networks, Family politics, Mutual obligations, Group norms, Reciprocity, Morality, Participation*

In an attempt to explain how Muslims, organize their lives, this work is an examination of rituals conducted by women. In particular, it contributes to the ethnographic discussion on the Pukhtun in the regions of Swat and Mardan in northern Pakistan.

The widely used Pukhto term *gham-khadi* refers to both the specific segregated gatherings commemorating death, marriage, birth and other such events, and the emotions of sorrow (*gham*) and joy (*khadi*) that such events elicit. Gham-khadi comprises a body of ideas and life practices in which happiness and sadness are understood as indissoluble and are celebrated communally within networks of reciprocal social obligations.

First, the article seeks to establish the distinctive sociality of Pukhtun wealthy women or *Bibiane* in terms of their participation in gham-khadi festivities within and beyond the household. Second, it makes a case for documenting the lives of this grouping of elite South Asian women, contesting their conventional representation as idle by illustrating their commitment to various forms of work within familial and societal contexts. Third, it describes the segregated zones of gham-khadi as a space of female agency. Reconstructing the terms of this agency helps to revise previous anthropological accounts of Pukhtun society, which project *pukhtunwali*<sup>13</sup> in predominantly masculine terms, while depicting gham-khadi as an entirely feminine category. Bibiane's gham-khadi performances allowed a reflection upon pukhtunwali and wider Pukhtun society as it was undergoing transformation in the early 21st century.

Preparation for and attendance at gham-khadi events was locally understood as "women's work," a set of complex activities integral to Pukhtun identity or pukhtunwawali. The author argued that the notion of gham-khadi constitutes the "work of life" (*zeest-rozgar*), through which Bibiane maintained the fabric of social life by sustaining inter- and intra-family relationships. Bibiane's sense of their gham-khadi obligations underpinned their understanding of personhood. The article identifies and explores a Pukhtun construction of work divergent from professionalism or physical

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<sup>13</sup> Pukhtunwali and pukhtoonwali (p.32) and paxtun-wali (p.57) are all essentially the same words, just rendered differently depending on whether the original author refers to the language as Pashto/Pukhto/Paxto.

labor measured and quantified by production output. In fact, the Pukhtun construction considers work as producing not things but social relations and transactions.

Married Bibiane rarely left the home unless it was for a task connected to gham-khadi (principally weddings and funerals, but also covering a range of other rituals of congratulation and condolence). These excursions, which took place as often as two or three times a day during the spring and autumn “wedding season,” and as infrequently as once a week in winter, tied the Bibiane to a wide network of relations with hundreds of individuals from different families and social backgrounds. Membership of a gham-khadi circle created a complex pattern of overlapping bonds, loyalties, allegiances, and debts between families (extended and nuclear). Bibiane (and not their husbands) in these contexts characteristically offered money, food, or gifts in accordance with family status and any accounts (*hisab-kitab*) of earlier debts and donations. These activities represented the most pronounced form of a general social system of *tlal-ratlal* (“going-and-coming”), conceived of by Bibiane as an ongoing zeest-rozgar. Bibiane’s own discourses suggested that visiting, gifting, and attending ceremonial events were all part of a conceptually single, though highly complex, process of “making kinship” and building social relations—a process, moreover, experienced as a form of work.

In the perspective offered by this study, Bibiane’s activities of brokering information, control, and influence through the negotiated order of gham-khadi achieve new theoretical visibility. The author described Bibiane’s gham-khadi as segregated but not apolitical. Rather, the Pukhtun house emerged as a place where both male and female (segregated) work, especially the work of gham-khadi, assumed a public aspect. Women did not engage in hospitality or prestige- and position-building to the extent that they were excluded from male public life; despite this, the women’s networks frequently overlapped with male circuits of patronage and clientele. Gham-kadi is continuous with male politicking, not parallel to it.

### 3. Conclusion

#### 3.1. Men and Women in the Shadow of Purdah

In Pakistan, gendered norms permeate and shape the lives of both men and women, in urban as well as in rural life, in public and nonpublic spaces, in factories, offices, and fields alike. There has been little research thus far on whether social realities are different for men and women. In all probability, women and men are susceptible and constrained by the same social constructs, which confine them to certain roles and reinforce the status quo. Women may well be found (unsurprisingly) to reaffirm and redefine existing sets of social relations as men do (Sathar and Kazi 2000b).

Acts of resistance seem to give room for maneuver, which comes with both challenges and practical consequences. These acts of breaking away from otherwise publicly accepted norms create coexisting and comingling worlds where the contours of mobility, honor, domesticity, and agency for both sexes appear less static. The way men and women bargain with and maneuver their social and work roles reflects to a certain extent a conscious strategy to gain access to resources they need or desire. At the same time as they are negotiating access to resources, however, they are also negotiating their broader identity as men and women physically moving through cultural spaces and with the norms governing their sexuality. Despite the sometimes dogmatic insistence of the strictness of *purdah* in public places, women and men’s actual participation in such fora points there being some flexibility in this concept.

These breaking away actions (e.g., seemingly innocuous actions that may signal deviations from patriarchal norms) are well documented for women. Women in corporate households (common to South Asia) with dominant male household heads often choose covert strategies in resource negotiations, as opposed to women in segmented households (common in Africa) who can negotiate more overtly. In the Pakistani context, it is not always possible or desirable to actively or vocally contest or lobby for control over resources, sometimes because of fear of physical retaliation. Women therefore resort to less confrontational forms of negotiation (Nyborg 2002, 114).

This literature review highlights how women's voices can be powerfully and provocatively channeled: (a) in popular women's magazines (in the case of middle- and lower-middle-class literate women) where stories present fantasies about "inefficient men" that may, for example, resonate with women's anxieties about the sexually threatening public sphere (Ali 2004); (b) through a vocabulary of fear (and the related category of risk), as expressed by lower-class women workers in gendered public spaces in Karachi (Ali 2010); (c) in the rural development sector, and specifically in gender-mixed working environments, where women are forced to negotiate gender relations so that they can reconcile the requirements of being both a good Muslim and a good worker (Grünenfelder 2013).

There is a rich body of literature that discusses the spiritual, ascetic, and mystic careers of women (as guides, intercessors, or healers), which discloses the ways in which femaleness and femininity are regularly viewed and explained. It shows how women place themselves in the patrilineal ordered system of charisma, secure support or forms of patronage, and how they act pragmatically and innovatively with the resources available to them (Kasmani 2016). Women use energizing ritual performances (at festivities, or gatherings commemorating death, marriage, birth, and other such events) to practice an oblique, undeclared contestation against their subordinate position in a harshly patriarchal society; and, in so doing, these women nurture resilience in the face of constant reminders of their dependency and lack of agency (Ahmed 2005; Hegland 1995). The aesthetic of suffering expected of women is discussed as inherent in the performative and framed genre of life stories, where women convey sentiments and emotions that are inappropriate to tell out of specific contexts of intimacy and privacy, but at the same time, function as a discourse of honor that gains them reputation (Grima 1991).

Equally rich records exist of the tasks, ideals, and contested forms associated with Pakistani masculinity in its hegemonic or subordinate variants. The work of Magnus Marsden among Chitrali Muslims in the North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) stands out for its fine ethnographic analysis of the active role played by youths in embodying, interpreting, and rewriting forms of Islamic ethical sensibility and piety. These youths do so not only because they are stimulated by modern developments, but also because they are inspired by the ongoing influence of forms of mobility, morality, creativity and curiosity that derive from the region's past. This anthropological work pays great attention to the ways in which rural Muslims act within and perceive their worlds and invest them with relevance. As a result, the assumption that village Muslim life is static, bucolic, and of little relevance for anthropological debate is sharply contested. Far from Chitral being a dead space of immobile villagers, mobility is central to the ways in which its young men are trained to perceive, understand, and inhabit their world via locally valued modes of living. Young Chitrali Muslims are described in their capacity to be witty, funny, clever, and strategic adults; to cultivate or problematize the claims of reflexive, independent, and critical selfhood; to conceive of romantic love as a feature of daily life; and, ultimately, to master a range of diverse and apparently irreconcilable yet interlocking masculine registers (Marsden 2007a; 2007b; 2009).

As seen in the references so far analyzed, one subject that is persistently neglected is that of the rural, frequently illiterate, woman. There are only a few exceptions: the study of how women and men of Sultanabad negotiate over several resource types, that is, agricultural land, monetary resources, grazing resources, timber, and firewood (Nyborg 2002); research on girls who enjoy wandering in out-of-bound spaces in rural Punjab, and on their performances of rebellious, unruly selves (Chaudhry 2009); an intriguing ethnography of how Askole villagers in the Karakoram navigate the dichotomy “public” versus “private” (Besio 2006); and an article that explores women’s autonomy in relation to that of men, but also in relative ranking with women, from different rural communities in Pakistan (Sathar and Kazi 2000a). The general body of research that looks at the links between gender, social relationships, and livelihood choices in Pakistan does not really venture into the realm of crop choices or livelihood strategies; of seasonality, intrahousehold decision-making, and “making kinship” (building social relations); of overlapping bonds, loyalties, allegiances, and debts between families (extended and nuclear). Food items, food preferences and preparation, and women’s control over resources are mentioned rarely, if at all.

To summarize, the literature provides substantial evidence that the spheres of men and women do overlap much more than the men and women themselves are likely to admit.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, there remains a knowledge gap regarding the life histories, local experiences, and unofficial, unritualized, or informal networks of small farmers in general, and of poor and marginalized women in particular.<sup>15</sup> We have little to no information on rural women’s means of experimenting on their fields and sharing the results (that do not depend on literacy). This neglect also results in a missed opportunity to learn and, consequently, to engage in improved development program design that contributes to enhanced food security and resilience in rural communities. As women’s lives get enmeshed in the process of developmental priorities, certain kinds of voices—the unruly, the contradictory, the peripheral—may remain suppressed. This literature review suggests, therefore, that instead of creating grand narratives of change and resistance, it may be worth taking a moment of introspection to rethink and enhance our work with regard to the private sphere of women’s lives.

### 3.2. Beyond the Curtain (on Tiptoe)

The anthropological literature available shows that, in Pakistan, customary practices and gender roles are successively refined through slight and incremental variations. The same is true with regard to the productive behavior of men and women, where gender roles and women and men’s

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<sup>14</sup> For example, Sathar and Kazi (2000b) note that

The loss of social status associated with women’s work is often cited as an explanation for the low reporting of women’s labour force participation rates in Pakistan where data on women’s work is collected by male enumerators from the male head of households. ... In addition to the reluctance to admitting to women working because it may be associated with a loss of status, husbands may simply not be aware of their wives’ employment or did not consider it as productive activity....

... Men clearly do not like to report the involvement of women in agriculture as it impinges on their sphere of life. ...

... Men are reluctant to admit that wives are participating in the outside sphere of decision making even though women admit a higher level of participation in outside decisions. (897–909)

<sup>15</sup> This shortcoming was by Ali (2004):

Keeping the history of state repression of women’s rights in perspective, studies on women in Pakistan have largely been written in the context of the struggle of elite and urban women against the antiwomen laws and structural changes that have adversely affected women’s lives. Important as this literature has been, such representations have traditionally ignored the experiences of the majority of poor and rural women and women’s domestic experiences. They have also been framed in a teleological grid as histories of progress and setbacks. To circumvent these thematic lacks and ideological underpinnings, Shahnaz Rouse (1996) has argued for a return to sources where we find women speaking in nonpublic spaces. (129–30)

productive activities are strongly linked.<sup>16</sup> Yet so many questions are left to be answered with respect to the politics of gender and understanding livelihood choices of Pakistani farmers. A better focus, methodology, and theoretical framework is needed if researchers are to properly investigate that nebulous but vast region of life between submission and revolt, between silence and overt talk—a region that encompasses most female resistance.

Two case studies illustrate how existing development approaches may have overlooked localized, culturally determined concepts of empowerment.

The first case study pertains to the subsistence production system in the Baltistan region, where, within both the crop and livestock spheres of production, polycultures are maintained that are based upon a diversity of species, promoting dietary diversity, yield stability, reduced insect and disease incidence, the efficient use of labor, the intensification of production with limited resources, and the maximization of returns under low levels of technology (MacDonald 2010, 144–49). This agroecosystem is clearly flexible and adjusts to political and ecological dynamics, as well as to opportunities such as the introduction of new cultivars. In the case of introducing new cultivars, this traditionally occurred within the bounds of the established agroecosystem. This approach allowed time-tested social norms and institutions to guide change and experimentation, providing a system of evaluation that could be used when deciding whether or not to implement changes.

An example of this process of evaluating change is useful in helping to understand the relations between development agents and farmers. Through the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP) set about introducing a new, allegedly high-yielding variety of wheat into Baltistan. In addition to testing under variable growing conditions, there were distinct criteria by which the farmers of Baltistan assessed the new variety's suitability for adoption. Some of these criteria concerned how the variety performed through the agricultural season and included assessments of stalk strength, size of head, yield of grain, yield of fodder straw, and time to maturation. Other criteria for determining acceptability revolved around issues of preparation and consumption, including dry stone grinding, its malleability as dough, and its taste. In a diet that relies heavily on cereal grains, these criteria are extremely important; thus, the new variety's acceptability was bounded by social norms of style and taste, and its commensurability with other traditional practices (e.g., specific techniques of milling and food preparation).<sup>17</sup> Through a form of experimentation that provided villagers with "longitudinal data" they could judge the response of new innovations with respect to seasonal growing conditions, the ability to fit into existing production systems, and how well they satisfy specific social requirements. In the case of the

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<sup>16</sup> For example, in the rain-fed regions of rural Pakistan there has been a tradition of seeking employment outside the farming sector, resulting in a large proportion of the male population being employed in non-farming sectors, particularly in the army and police and nearby cities. Women were left with much more responsibility for managing the family farm, while the men diversified into non-farming sectors to supplement family incomes. A livelihood system emerged that provided relatively stable male wage employment in the formal sector combined with subsistence agricultural production managed by women (Sathar and Kazi 2000b, 896).

<sup>17</sup> The author related how development agencies failed to appreciate the role of diversity in this traditional agroecosystem:

When I was describing farmers' concerns about the taste, one agronomist dismissively replied that "they won't care what it tastes like when they're starving." While seemingly trivial, this comment is revealing, as it belittles the qualities of crops that farmers think are important and demonstrates an emphasis on the qualities such as yield maximization that are priorities from the perspective of the development agency. It also demonstrates a lack of knowledge of food security in villages, and an assumption that villagers lack the capacity to satisfy their own food requirements. Notably, while famine was not uncommon in other areas of Kashmir during the 19th and early 20th centuries, largely due to a lack of entitlement, it has not historically been an issue in Baltistan. (MacDonald 2010, 147–48)

specific variety introduced by the AKRSP, most farmers were reluctant to adopt it. Contrary to development agency plans, the farmers preferred to maintain a strategy of polyvariant planting. This preference is not unusual among small-scale farmers and reflects a concern with providing as many options as possible in the face of potential environmental fluctuations. Whereas the development agency viewed the new variety as a monovarietal replacement for the polyvariant system that currently existed, villagers saw it as a potential addition to that system. If this variety were to be accepted, it had to be suited to, and improve upon, existing production practices and the seasonality of the local economy, which hinged not only upon the main wheat crop but also on the entire agropastoral transhumant cycle.

This case highlights that experimentation on the part of farmers seems to go unnoticed, or at least unappreciated, by local nongovernmental and governmental development agencies. This unfamiliarity with small-scale farmers' propensity for experimentation may lead to communication breakdowns, serious misunderstandings, and conflicts when new varieties are officially introduced. Ethnographic and agroecological research into local farming systems should be undertaken to enhance the understanding of existing systems of production, that is, why people do what they do and the social, economic, and political factors that shape their actions.

The second case study more specifically touches upon rural women's competence and contribution and refers to research done in the Hunza and Nagar districts in the Karakorum mountains (Joekes 1995). In the later 1980s, the AKRSP tried to introduce apricot kernel cracking machines, on the assumption that this was an effective labor-saving device that would relieve women of one of their most demanding tasks (since the cracking was otherwise done manually). While there were some minor technical problems with the machine, the main issue was that the women themselves had not been pressing AKRSP to supply labor-saving machinery for this or any other task—the effort was subsequently suspended due to lack of interest on the part of the recipients. Another type of project, by contrast, has been very successful, which was support for new productive activities under women's control, namely poultry raising and vegetable growing. Both poultry and vegetable production benefited the local agroecological system by adding to the supply of organic matter for soil improvement in the form of poultry manure, green compost, and fodder (from vegetable waste and residue). Both poultry and vegetable production also helped women meet their household provisioning obligations by significantly improving the quantity and quality of food intake for their families. The production of eggs was particularly valuable, for household incomes otherwise supported only low-level of consumption of protein (in the form of milk and milk products). In narrow economic terms, vegetables in particular were highly profitable. Being less labor intensive than wheat production, purchased inputs for vegetable growing were less costly, and realized prices gave a clear margin of advantage.

It may well be that, along with these agricultural advantages, poultry and vegetable production also generated more immediate benefits than the mechanization of kernel crushing. There was no resistance to mechanization per se in these communities; rather, the failure of such projects often conceal other issues.

Women's resistance to the new technology makes sense in terms of the political economy of gender relations. The crucial feature of mechanized kernel crushing was that, unlike poultry and vegetable production, it did not offer women any individual benefit within the gendered agroecological system. The savings in women's time that would have been won would have been redirected to increase total household income, which is subject to male control and discretion in expenditure. Poultry and vegetable production, by contrast, offered an avenue whereby women could for the first time control the proceeds themselves, because the products can be sold or bartered locally. Other crops (e.g., wheat, maize, fresh or dried fruit, potatoes) are all sold in

wholesale markets in Gilgit town, a journey of two hours or more away by truck. Women did not have access to distant marketing of this kind.

The issue of the “productive invisibility” of rural women (Ibraz 1993) has come full circle. This literature review sheds light on dynamics that are rarely tackled in policymaking or in the development agenda. First, it foregrounds the inversely proportional relation between the legibility of grain crops and the legibility of rural women. Second, Pakistani women use different approaches to cope with the dominant paradigm of a male-dominated society, talking around rather than contradicting it head on, be it inside domestic walls or in open fields; there is therefore plenty of scope for exploring how women’s assertions of independence may well coexist with their desire to be modest, self-sacrificial, subservient, and humble. Third, women’s work mainly and meaningfully stands in the realm of subsistence, yet development often competes with the subsistence sector for natural resources and women’s labor, with development institutions aiming to commercialize subsistence activities; in order to be sustainable, development should, by contrast, help farmers maintain a subsistence sector rather than attempting to commercialize it. And finally, the emotional and practical components of women’s relationship with livestock rearing must be brought into clearer focus if we are to fully grasp the role women play in natural resource management, agriculture, and intrahousehold decision-making.

#### 4. Annexes

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