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THAAP

Editorial Board

Culture, Art & Architecture of the Marginalized & the Poor

Contents

Introduction

Prof. Pervaiz Vandal

The Thaap Series of Conferences began in November 2010 with **"Historiography of Architecture in Pakistan and the Region"**. Thaap being a private sector institution, without any substantial funding other than what the organizers could pull out from their own pockets, the attempt to some friends looked slightly foolhardy. During the year, there had been a few Thaap Talks with good response from the young faculty of colleges and universities and it was thought fit to try the waters with a call for a one-day international conference inviting abstracts on the given theme. Only abstracts of quality would be selected and their authors would then be invited to present their papers at Lahore with the cost of travel and local hospitality being paid. The response from national and international scholars exceeded the initial planning. The conference was extended as a two-day affair. It was also decided to publish the presented papers after due peer-review. Quality was, and remains, the corner stone of all activities of Thaap.

That conference was the first tentative testing of the young scholars in Pakistan who responded and have continued to respond magnificently. The conference has grown in spread and depth; Thaap has organized 5 international conferences on varying themes in collaboration with various educational institutions and organizations. Celebrated scholars along with a large number of young enthusiastic entrants to fields bring a unique color from which all benefit. The proceedings of the conference came to the notice of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan who have then been kind to provide some much needed funds. Thaap acknowledges help with deep gratitude.

Thaap conference has become a respected forum of research and publication with both national and international reach. 70 percent of the paper readers are young being under 40 years of age and mostly are the faculty in various universities. This will supplement and underpin the research efforts to be carried out at a new venture, 'University of Culture and Art' under-construction in Lahore. The prospective faculty of the university is thus also being trained accordingly.

It has often been said that the fundamental reason of our TODAY is our YESTERDAY; and unless we confront our yesterday, our TOMORROW will be the same, if not worse. What we have today is a society split into murderous factions; an interpretation of beliefs which divides rather than unites; an

education which engenders parrots rather than thinking humans; an economy that brings forth snarling competing animals rather than humans living in cooperation; a polity that is fast degenerating into an acceptance of the autocratic dictates trampling over rights; a progress that is measured in the numbers of superrich rather than the wellbeing of all; a social inequity that juxtaposes starvation with gluttony and a culture that is confused, devoid of tolerance and patience, adrift like a ship without moorings. Our cultural expressions, art and architecture, having lost self-confidence, seek approbation only from the West and for that either mindlessly ape the Western trends or cater to their esoteric view of the East. This is our present state and that calls out for change.

> In a structured society there will be a group or class that dominants and rules over the rest… periods in which the ruling class is firmly in power, when its ideology is clear and strong, when the social structure decreed by it is firm and thus, when its culture permeates society, its literature, art and architecture appear to have a style admired by art critics and historians for its clarity of expression and honesty of thought. And, of course, the reverse is also true. [1]

The dominant culture in Pakistan is suspended in a comatose state between misunderstood modernization and nostalgic yearning for the middle ages. It is reflected in the confused state of culture, art and architecture in the country, not to mention the tension ridden society with swift resort to violence at the slightest provocation. Clearly the society lives on edge. The vulnerable sectors of the society: children, women, minorities, the handicapped and the poor are under perpetual threat. In a country starved of energy, huge glass-faced structures are built *a la* Dubai and imitations of paintings of the Renaissance masters adorn the houses of the nouveau riche. The ruling esthetic ethos is simply confused.

Alongside there is, nevertheless, a minor stream of caring and tolerant people, a line of thought that engenders buildings that respect their physical and cultural context and an art that reflects the joy and challenges of the new century. There are other streams also that survive alongside the dominant culture and sometimes in conflict with it. These belong to the marginalized ethnic groups, the minority religious sects, the non-Muslims, the handicapped and the poor. Looking to revitalize our arts and culture it is necessary to broaden the mainstream, enrich it and facilitate it to develop a direction and a meaning which can be truly rooted in our traditions and our people. Culture, art and architecture thrive in an ambience reflecting all the people.

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1   Vandal, Pervaiz "*The Spatial Organization of a Metropolis*", paper read at Arcasia Conference at Lahore, 1984

The Flying Needle

Aasim Akhtar

What immediately impresses viewers of Hazara embroidery is its extraordinary complexity and variety of surface decoration. These superb designs demonstrate quite clearly the maker's intrinsic awareness of beauty and the centrality of aesthetic criteria to the embroiderer's art. The use of colorful silken thread does not improve the cloth's functional qualities; it only renders the fabric more beautiful and makes an artistic and cultural statement. Certain design elements can add to the spiritual importance of a cloth. Perhaps the closest one can come to understanding the aesthetic sensibilities of Hazara embroiderers is to listen to their words. I have asked these artisans many times what qualities they consider 'beautiful' in a textile and their willingness to respond is in itself a bold effort to operate within another conceptual frame. In their own world, these women usually do not speak in abstractions about their work but rather in the visual language of their individual creations – the embroidered textiles. The cryptic quality of many of the statements reveals a non-verbal approach that is characteristic of many visual artists the world over.

Visitors to Noordi, near Haripur, find themselves thrust back in time to a place where centuries old everyday activities have not been severely altered. Lacking modern conveniences, an embroiderer in Noordi village will work with the threads much as her ancestors did, following a cycle of production based on the seasons, the weather and natural light. There is sometimes an eerie quiet, offering the craftsperson a sense of limitless time and space within which to create and thus, reinforcing the deep connection between past and present in Hazara life.

As women in villages were confined by social customs to their houses, embroidery was an appropriate way for them to pass the time. Women were the first to wake up; after sending their husbands to work and finishing their daily chores they would sit down with their embroidery. Sometimes women of more than one household gathered together to work and socialize at the same time. Younger women would have occupied themselves with sheets and quilts or pillow covers for their trousseau or to bedeck their nuptial chambers, while those already wedded would work on pieces for the rooms of newborns and their sons' circumcision beds. Through oral history and living memory,

we know that women not only embroidered but were also engaged in spinning yarn in their houses. The silk threads used by these women were bought from the bazaar. In the Hazara tradition, cotton embroidery thread was of secondary importance to silk. It is almost non-existent as a surface embroidery thread. The only extensive use of it was as a couching thread in a specific style of embroidery.

Figure 1

Patterns in running satin stitch on plain weave cloth from Noordi, Haripur District, embroidered by Gulshan Bibi. Source: Author

Historically, Hazara – the home of Hindko speakers – has been an important center for fine embroidery, known as 'jisti' in the local parlance and as 'phulkari' in neighboring Punjab. Highly skilled techniques flourished due to the custom of giving embroidered articles in dowries. In antiquity, each of the myriad families possessed a distinct style that was passed down from mother to daughter. For over two millennia, Hazara has been a nexus for migration and trade situated along the Silk Route, and connecting the North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and the Punjab.

Hazara embroidery is unique. It is instantly recognizable and distinguishable from other embroideries around the world by its style. As in other traditions, floral motifs predominate. Although a variety of flowers and trees are depicted in these textiles, a few distinct motifs are considered 'typical' *jisti* motifs. Hazara embroidery was usually

executed by counting the warp and weft yarns of a balanced plain-weave ground fabric. This embroidery technique fostered very uniform stitching and minimized irregularities. The fineness of the embroidery depended on the fineness of the ground weave; the finer the ground fabric, the smaller the stitches such as running, satin and others. Hazara women were exceptional in their ability to create a great range of various effects by manipulating a single stitch in numerous ways.

Embroidered textiles were an integral part of Hazara daily life and special occasions such as weddings and other ceremonial rites. These textiles served many functions, from home furnishings to fashion accoutrements. In Hazara homes, everything was covered and stored or presented wrapped with layers of lavishly embroidered textiles. Rooms were decorated with embroidered hangings, covers and cushions. Food was served on trays covered with embroidered napkins. After washing their hands, guests dried them on embroidered textiles. Gifts were given in embroidered bundles. Women's costumes included many embroidered items such as caps, shawls and shifts. They were items used to exhibit the wealth of a woman's family and her skill as an embroiderer.

Hand spun and hand woven *khaddar* is the base material for *jisti*. *Halwan* or light weight finely-woven fabric was exclusively used for shawls. However, the most popular fabric on which such embroidery was done was the inexpensive, durable and easily available local *khaddar*. White *khaddar* used to be dyed indigenously by local dyers using natural vegetable dyes. Soft, glossy and untwisted silk thread was employed for stitching, which was basically supplied from Kashmir, Afghanistan and Bengal. However, the best quality 'pat' came from China. Darn stitch is the basic unit of *jisti* and the workmanship is graded according to the length and density of the stitches. The usual length ranges from half to one fourth of an inch. Darning stitch is usually started with a small knot or back stitch and finished with a little back stitch. Double running stitch is started without a knot, the first stitch being locked in by the final stitch. Every thread in the ground fabric is picked up from the obverse side. The needle craft consists of mainly long and short darning stitches, worked on the wrong side of the cloth. Stem, chain and herringbone stitches are employed for outlining the borders and marking the areas. Double running and satin stitches are also used. However, the edging is done either by buttonhole or crochet. Earlier, this *khaddar* was woven in narrow widths and hence two to three such widths used to be joined to get two and a half yards of length and three quarter yards of width. The joints of the base fabric were expertly covered with herringbone stitch.

Figure 2

Quran cover in *jisti* (hand embroidery) in running satin stitch on plain weave (khaadi). Source: Author

Contrary to popular opinion, the embroidery trade does not thrive on emergency sales in times of a natural catastrophe although these have at times made up a certain proportion of the trade. The factors that induce a woman to sell her embroidery are in general much more complex and relate to the emergence of changing desires and aspirations amongst the local people. Like everyone else, they wish to keep up with new trends. In the past, they were geographically protected from rapid technological developments by the inadequacy of transport facilities and the slowness of their bullock carts. Now with improved road networks most villages have become fairly accessible which allows not only the villagers to frequent cities and towns but also townspeople to visit the villages, bringing with them city wares. One such item to penetrate the villages was stainless steel. In the 1960s, this was still a rarity in villages and was met with great enthusiasm, not only because it did not tarnish like brass but also because it glowed like the desirable and more costly 'German silver'. This attractive and durable new item, lugged to the villages by the *pheriwallahs*, provided a strong positive incentive for exchange.

Many elements of traditional lifestyle have persisted at the Hazarawals; tilling the ancient fields and raising livestock still play a part in the subsistence economy. Members of these communities also work in the nearby towns of Abbottabad and Rawalpindi; they hold jobs as waiters, retail store employees and teachers. Many, although by no means all, of those commuting to work in the towns are men; more women have managed to maintain pastimes such as embroidery.

Contemporary embroiderers face the monthly pressures of utility bills and the need for cash to cover school supplies, medical expenses and so on. This has had an effect on the process, with women sometimes arranging their production schedules so that they can meet their various payments. Television and radio have become part of the daily setting of Hazara craftsmanship: a woman may use her TV set as 'company' while she is embroidering or as a diversion for her children while she works. Changes

are evident in everything: styles, functions, methods and materials. Commercial materials and technology such as the machine-woven *khaddar* and the sewing machine make it possible for women to take technical shortcuts; there is a general movement away from painstakingly embroidered textiles towards mass-produced commercial items.

Most women do not have a separate room for embroidery but squat out in the open courtyard while the men are at work. The esteem in which traditional embroidery is held at the Hazarawals is evident from the fact that family heirlooms appear in many of these women's homes. Although most of the older pieces find their way to the marketplace, a few items are always kept within the family. In modern Hazara homes, textiles can be considered a vehicle for conveying cultural nostalgia, reminding people of their heritage and of much loved craftspeople in the family.

In Islamabad, the Museum of Ethnology at Lok Virsa houses a large collection with a display of folk costumes and textiles from rural Hazara. However, such collections do not reflect the Pakistani population's general interest in buying traditional craft. Rather they represent the growing appreciation and concern of a small educated minority who realized that ancient textile traditions were endangered by many of the contemporary developments such as road networks and mill technology. Apart from museum curators, the only people to buy folk embroidery now in any systematic way are dealers (on whom curators depend for their collections) and foreigners, some of whom have become foreign dealers.

About one decade ago, SUNGI Development Foundation – an independent institute founded to help the people of Hazara fend for themselves by honing their innate skills – established a network of self-sustainable activity in Haripur, Mansehra and Balakot sectors of the Hazara Division.

The Jisti Craft Programme was founded in 1994 under the aegis of SUNGI Development Foundation, Abbottabad, as a Public Interest Organization. What began as a small-time initiative from one village in Haripur District has now spread across four districts in Hazara, namely Abbottabad, Mansehra, Balakot and Battagram with over 1500 crafts persons beyond 120 villages. Structurally speaking, SUNGI enables the rural folk to access information, trainings and skills as well as handicraft production; it organizes programs in natural resource management, education for women and girls, health education, legal support and micro finance.

Figure 3

Women in Kutera, Abbottabad District, wearing embroidered clothes. Source: Author

Figure 4

Detail of a motif from Muharian, Abbottabad District. Source: Author

To improve the situation through workplace initiatives and community health improvement strategies, SUNGI's work is part of a rural development project designed to connect distinct individuals. Collectively, they set standards of quality while maintaining their unique traditions. To ensure equity and build confidence, decisions regarding costing, design and organization are subject to unanimity.

In this way, responsibility for the direction of the embroidery is placed where it is most appropriate – in the hands of the women who create it.

Hazara women live under a very strict code of conduct called 'purdah' that governs the interaction between men and women. Strict adherence requires women to be veiled in the presence of unrelated men. These women rarely leave their house clusters unless seriously ill and are restricted from leaving the village without being accompanied by a male family member. Most men work either as postmen or serve the army. Within the confines of their home, however, the women create and earn with cloth, needle and thread. "The larger commissions that take us 4-6 months to complete bring us an income normally earned over a year. Doing them is like having a savings account. Every stitch is a deposit and when we finish we get such a large amount of money that we can do something important. I will get paid enough to send my son to an English school", confides Mukhtar Bibi of Pirkot.

The women of SUNGI are committed to embroidering the designs of their own heritage. They firmly believe in cultural property rights. They also recognize the long-term benefit of preserving and building their own traditions. They control the pricing of their work and they recognize the power of working co-operatively and maintaining exceptional quality. Since they were systematically cheated by middlemen who took advantage of their ignorance to pay them even less than the promised rate for their delicate embroidery, SUNGI formed an association where the cutting, stitching and embroidery were all done within the confines of private homes but without middlemen. Their main objectives are to give women better wages, to train workers in all aspects of production and to expand the market with various designs and products.

Though a cultural artifact may be beautiful and interesting in isolation, its true value lies in its ability to invoke a curiosity for the people and the place of its origin. Foremost in our appreciation must be the artisans themselves. Artisans are the community's historians and their work is mindfully created. Changes in embroidery style over time reflect the changing conditions of the community: contact with new environments, individuals and cultures. Without a written language, tribal communities use embroidery to record their experience. In the more affluent households, embroidering has been abandoned so that the girls may acquire a modern education. With the great social advances and upheavals of the last fifty years, many people in the towns and cities can find work outside their traditional occupation. In

commercial centers, women have access to modern media: television, radio and magazines. Many no longer wish to be identified with their community through the wearing of traditional embroidered garments.

In remote villages – where there has been little economic development – lives have not undergone such radical changes. Through economic pressure, however, many women have been forced to abandon the desert and tribal embroidery, especially in Thar, in order to manufacture work destined for foreign markets. When traditional work is produced, it is often under the constraints of a production environment. To produce pieces more quickly, many of the more expressive and intricate traditional stitches are either compromised or abandoned entirely. Over time traditions are lost. For the rural folk, such loss is comparable to the loss of a language. It is permanent and leads directly to cultural extinction.

Traditional embroidery has a long and complex history. Commercial embroidery, produced by male craft guilds, was clearly a highly developed skill in Mughal times and was traded throughout India and abroad. Little interest was shown in the more female-dominated rural folk traditions until the last century. The Victoria and Albert Museum contains some fine acquisitions collected largely in the early 1900s but again these are mostly of sophisticated professional embroidery.

The work of SUNGI has attracted merchants who are inspired by traditional craft. The staff of the SUNGI outlets in Islamabad and Karachi ensure that the purchasing public knows about the culture of the artifacts, the association and the living conditions of the artisans. This edification is essential to eliminate the perception of Hazara embroidery as cheap tourist-ware and to position it in its rightful place – as a highly skilled art. In order to establish a relationship in which indigenous culture can flourish, SUNGI pursues an unusual business model. It is a model which demands trust and respect from both the artisan and the entrepreneur. The process is similar to the commissioning of an artwork. No major attempt is made to dictate design choices: pattern, color and motif all remain in the control of the artisan. The buyer exercises firm quality control and encourages the production of more detailed and elaborate work, knowing that the rare beauty of a skillfully produced piece will command higher prices in the open market. In a world economy where mass-produced items are cheaply and efficiently made, quality of life for the artisan can only come from the respect that is accorded to the master craftsperson. In many ways this contradicts

what craftspeople are so often told: make more pieces in less time, spend less on raw materials, cut corners, avoid complex or time-intensive procedures and do not invest your soul in your work. Museums and collectors, who are directly concerned with the fate of exceptional artisans, have an opportunity to educate the public. Yet they have typically confined themselves to historical pieces and ignored contemporary work. In this way, SUNGI is different – it affords the unique display of the artifacts of a living culture.

Figure 5

A woman in Takiya, Haripur District, busy embroidering in *jisti* technique, typical of Hazara Division. Source: Author

On the morning of 08 October 2005, a massive earthquake rocked Hazara. The town of Balakot was flattened, its villages razed to the ground. The Foundation immediately began fundraising and the money was used for the purchase of tents to provide immediate and long-term housing, purchase of food and medical supplies. The structure provided by SUNGI was essential for the women to begin the difficult task of rebuilding their villages. For the residents of the area, the devastation seemed unending. This part of the world is familiar with struggle but the scope of the catastrophe, the collapsed infrastructure and the loss of life undermined both determination and optimism. United, they supported each other in their loss. As quickly as possible, the women returned to their embroidery – their primary source of income.

However, the Jisti Craft Programme would not have such a strong, ideological base if it was not for the material benefits that go to the workers. Basically, SUNGI is a working syllogism for women in Hazara. Their devotion to the organization always stems from the ability to be self-sufficient and to support themselves. When asked how working for SUNGI is different, the women replied "We get to know our rights".

On the Debris of Capitalism: Memory, Art and the Accidental Archive of Rana Plaza

Dina Mahnaz Siddiqi, PhD

Introduction

This paper is framed by a general concern with the lines between the aesthetic and the political, between art and activism, and ultimately on the possibilities for contesting and remapping the conventional between these two ostensibly separate and incommensurable realms. My vantage point is not that of a literary or art critic but that of a social scientist. As someone trained in anthropology, I am intrigued – and heartened – by the numerous interventions through art installations, street performances, traditional photography and even dance, generated in the aftermath of the Rana Plaza collapse in Dhaka in April 2013. This extraordinary show of solidarity, nationally and internationally, itself undermines easy boundaries between the purportedly apolitical world of art and 'hyper-political' world of activism and popular resistance. Here I am concerned with the 'accidental' archives[1] and interstitial spaces that opened up literally within the ruins of Rana Plaza.

Background

The traces of a ruinous neoliberal capitalism are strewn across the landscape of urban Bangladesh, although this is not always visible or evident. Teeming slums hide behind glittering new malls and multi-storied apartment complexes. Physical contiguity does not mean shared social spaces. As in so many other cities of the global South, middle and upper class lives rarely collide with those of various subaltern populations whose labor is indispensable in reproducing the comfortable rhythms of everyday urban existence. When paths overlap, in the form of instructions to cooks, cleaners and drivers, the interactions are ideologically over-determined and invariably asymmetrical. Garment workers belong to this invisible population.

The collapse of Rana Plaza on April 24, 2013 in Savar, Bangladesh in which over 1100 workers were killed, numerous others maimed for life and the livelihoods of several thousand workers destroyed, catapulted the Bangladeshi 'sweatshop' into global headlines. It also ruptured

the easy fantasy of precarious and deadening industrial labor as the pathway to long-term sustainable female empowerment. The caving in of a multi-storied 'mall' that housed a bank and retail stores as well as several factories producing apparel for export, literalized the dangers of unregulated neoliberal globalization. The site itself, the desperate rescue teams clawing away huge slabs of jagged concrete and steel rods bent out of shape, offered a visual iconicity from which it was not possible to turn away easily. This was a spectacle of a different order.

Competing narratives are firmly attached to the ruins and infrastructure of what was once Rana Plaza. For those shut out of the promises of modernity, these were deaths foretold. For others, the destruction and loss of life signaled the corruption and inefficiency of the state.

It has been almost two years but arguments rage on about whether this was a regrettable tragedy or corporate genocide. There are several serious initiatives to ensure ethical sourcing. These efforts are, rightly, focused on the future. Those left behind, whose future depends on proving their past ties to garment factory work, have been all but forgotten. Meaningful compensation is yet to take place. The families of those who are still missing find themselves in a double bind. They cannot mourn fully without bodies. In the absence of documentary and visual evidence, families of the dead cannot seek compensation, since they cannot prove their loved ones ever existed.

In this backdrop, this paper explores the constitutive role of photographs from 'happier times' and factory issued worker ID cards, which have taken on a different significance for those who live in the permanent shadow of the Rana Plaza collapse. This paper traces the shifting valences and multiple registers through which photographs and more official forms of documentation such as ID cards mediate lives, bodies and subjectivities in Rana Plaza's afterlife. It ends with some reflections on a powerful art exhibition by the installation artist Dilara Begum Jolly entitled *Threads of Testimony* on the workers of Rana Plaza. Throughout, my reading relies on knowledge of the industry and its workers, gleaned through ethnographic research I have carried out over the course of about twenty years.

Precarious Labor and the 'Disposable' Third World Woman

Women as signifiers of modernity have a long genealogy in formerly colonial places (Lata Mani 1999). Today, Muslim women's public visibility – or lack thereof – ideologically marks the difference between civilized and 'barbaric' cultures (Lila Abu-Lughod 2013).

It has become commonplace to note that the gendered landscape of urban Bangladesh has been altered radically, from a space in which there were apparently no women to one in which working class women dominate public spaces. The garment industry profoundly shifted the tenor of urban life, producing a radical reworking of social and sexual spaces.[2] Anchored in the valorization of the export led development model, the expectation is that industrial employment undermines patriarchal structures as well as improves everyday living conditions. Women factory workers are no longer seen as passive victims of capital exploitation, as early feminist scholars cast them; rather they have been re-imagined as willing capitalist subjects. From this perspective, the ideal garment worker is a consumer-citizen exercising her right to freedom through her consumption practices. At least this is how many people would like to imagine the Bangladeshi garment worker. The visibility indexes modernity in the middle class imagination.

Undeniably, factory employment has benefited many individual women, providing some measure of financial and personal autonomy (Naila Kabeer 2002). Yet, it is precisely the progress symbolized by the subaltern female body at work in public spaces, combined with an uncritical embrace of a language of individual empowerment that obscures the tenuous and partial nature of such gains. Neoliberal ideologies not only valorize the individual but also occlude the significance of collective solidarity. So it is that while the individual woman worker may have more decision-making power in the household, she does not have the right to refuse entering premises that are visibly dangerous. Workers that fateful morning of April 24th were coerced into entering their workplace. It happened to be the end of the month and the management threatened to withhold the entire month's salary if they did not comply. It is a common practice for workers to be paid months after their wages are due. It is one of the main reasons for worker protests and violence. Back pay or arrears cause significant hardship – the reason for unpaid rent, piling store credits and school fees and a well-founded fear of harassment by landlords and other creditors. Given that Bangladeshi garment workers are paid the lowest

wages in the world, this is hardly a desirable position but it is one that is situated squarely within larger global conditions of transnational production.

Elsewhere, I argue that the spectacular (the collapse of Rana Plaza) is intimately tied to the everyday (extremely short lead times, the compulsion to work against one's better judgment, a financial structure in which payment is invariably outstanding and the threat to withhold payment) and how the latter has as much to do with the deaths of Rana Plaza as faulty infrastructure.

Arguably, Bangladeshi workers' bodies are rendered into 'waste' in the process of contemporary capital accumulation. I suggest that in the emergent hyper-mediatized discourse of ethical production and consumption, there is no place for visibly disposable bodies. Rana Plaza did not simply leave behind the visible ruins of modernity but by unsettling the naturalized logics of neoliberal capitalism, it threatened to ruin the very promise of modernity. To put it differently, the deaths at Rana Plaza and Tazreen Fashions were unacceptable precisely for making visible the violent underbelly of transnational capital and rendering legible the violence that binds consuming bodies in the Global North with producing bodies in places like Bangladesh. Too disturbing aesthetically, everyday practices (overdue wages) can be ignored but not the spectacular violence.

Staging Lives, Consuming Subjects at Leisure

The ethnographic research I carried out earlier, alerted me to the prominent place of staged photographs in mediating the concrete web of social relationships in the everyday lives of workers. Dressing up in one's best (or borrowed) clothes, jewelry and makeup before a visit to the photographer's studio is a well-established ritual among garment workers. These are photographs of representation rather than of record. Staging selves through studio photography and more recently the cellphone camera could be called to constitute an emergent subaltern tradition. The photograph is a material sign and often an enactment of a particular imagined modernity. It can be a fleeting but playful performance of subjectivities, both experimental and sometimes of out of reach. Staged photography enacts desired/desirable subjectivities. How close one stands to a man, the degree and kind of makeup and the cut of clothing, all index the production of specific identities.

Individual photos do not simply allow the subject to indulge in flights of fantasy, to escape the harsh limits of reality or perhaps to simply capture a moment of pleasure. They mediate practices of consumption and so the desire for certain kinds of subjectivities. Group pictures with friends and colleagues bind individuals to one another. They work as reminders of collective ties, of obligations and preferences. Staged photographs can be fraught and sites of contestation when a couple is involved. They may constitute evidence of romantic interest or involvement. In cases of strife or discontent, photos can be deployed to demand obligations and rights and stave off denial of an existing relationship. Modes of negotiation are highly gendered; women tend to use photographs to insist on the veracity of a relationship. Men may use photos to coerce women into staying or leaving.

Following the Rana Plaza collapse, these photographs proved central in locating the dead and the missing. Originally produced for 'private' consumption, these pictures have irrupted into the public realm; rather than objects of desire in a 'curated' mode, they circulate in interstitial and contingent spaces, ciphers of subjectivity in the midst of destruction and loss. On every wall and in the hands of anxious relatives milling outside the disaster site, these photographs performed

Figure 1

Close up of a mock coffin wrapped in a blanket with reproductions of fliers with photographs of dead or missing workers circulated by their families. The text reads: "There are no pictures of my daughter 24.11.2012". From the Exhibition *Threads of Testimony* by Dilara Begum Jolly at the Bengal Art Lounge, Dhaka. August 16 – Sep 4, 2014.
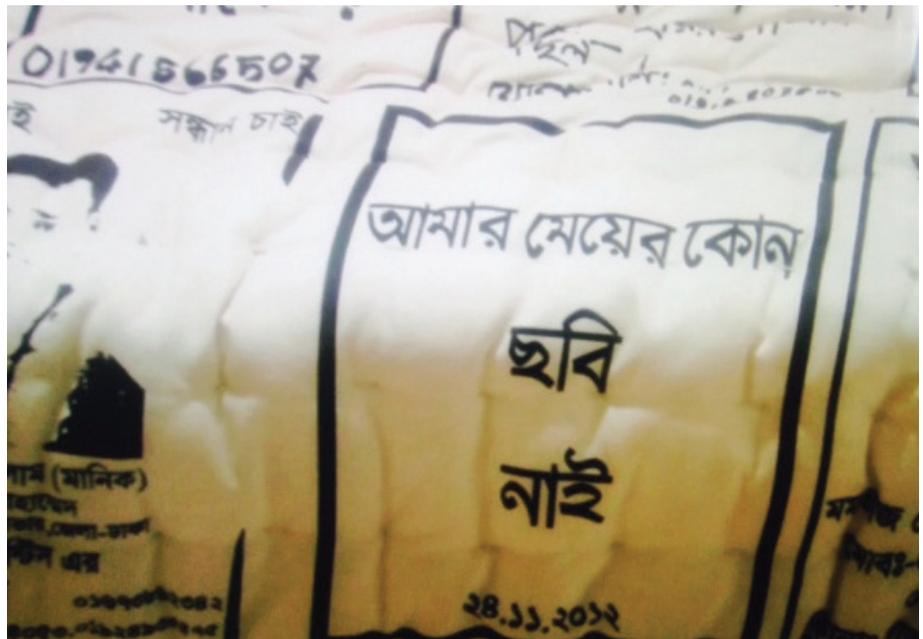
the task of standing in for real people, as remainders or supplements of the event, traces of those who refuse to disappear into the rubble. Sometimes, they were the only proof of existence. The ubiquitous fliers with the plaintive appeal, *Shondhan Chai* (Looking For), indexed not simply powerlessness in the face of a bureaucratic behemoth but also a resolute refusal to forget the dead. The limit case may be of those who find themselves without a single image with which to begin the arduous task of tracking lost relatives. The declaration, *Amar meyer kono chobi nai* (There are no pictures of my daughter), operates at a different register of pain and poignancy. Here it t is as though the absence of the photo completes the erasure of the person. The task of retrieving the person from the debris is rendered impossible by the missing image.

Learning from the Past: The Work of the ID Card

Anthropologist Matthew Hull observes that official documents are not simply instruments of bureaucratic organizations but rather are constitutive of bureaucratic rules, ideologies, knowledge, practices, subjectivities, objects, outcomes and even the organizations themselves (Hull 2012). We can draw on this body of literature, on paperwork and bureaucracies to chart the ways in which not just photos but also certain kinds of documentation are constitutive of the making and erasure of subjectivities. The simple lament, "There are no pictures of my daughter" translates into the certainty of bureaucratic erasure. Not only has the body disappeared, the person herself exists through absence. By the same token, there can be no DNA test without a body, so even a body charred out of recognition is preferable to no body. However, without an ID card as proof of employment, DNA tests will recover the identity of a brother or wife or mother but not the latter's identity as a factory worker. Hence, the "ceaseless pursuit of documents and certificates that, it was hoped, would provide a measure of permanence and security" (Sanjay Srivastava 2012, 79).

Photos taken at the site hint at what workers might have been thinking as they confronted certain death. It seemed that even as the world was collapsing around them, workers knew that without their ID cards, their very existence was in danger of being erased. Hence, the many photographs of men and women under the rubble clutching their ID cards to their bodies. Even so, matching bodies and faces to families proved to be an arduous task to which the makeshift morgue in a nearby school was not up to the task.

Deathly/Deadly Intimacy

Some of the most powerful images of Rana Plaza, seared into the viewer's memory, come from photographs taken by Taslima Akhter and others during the rescue efforts. Entangled bodies, limbs or simply an ID card told stories far beyond their immediate materiality.

Figure 2

Taslima Akhter's award winning photograph of a couple at the Rana Plaza site.

Photographs have the power to conceal as well as reveal; they are never unmediated representations of the truth. It would be naïve to forget the power-knowledge nexus in the making of visual meanings. Among the perils of photographing the dead, is how to negotiate the lines between the aesthetic and the political. These are not staged photographs; they are meant to be records, not representations. But what happens when their '"accidental aesthetic brilliance" eclipses their message? "At what point does the aesthetic excellence of the photograph eclipse the depicted event or distract the viewer from inquiring into what happened?"(Barrett Swanson p.2)

It is worth remembering too that artists do not necessarily have control over the meanings of their works. So the trajectory of Taslima Akhter's award winning photograph of a man and woman, in apparent embrace, offers some valuable insight on how images travel and their shifting meanings across different contexts. The photograph has been wrenched

from its original context and now circulates in a transnational sphere in which the meanings of Bangladesh women's bodies are mediated through historically Orientalist and developmentalist modes. One reason the image is so powerful is the viewer can only guess at the relationship between the two people in the picture, which is open and ambiguous. We do not know if they were total strangers or a close couple. The viewer can produce fantasies of the most intimate kind. That may account for the popularity of this photograph (quite apart from its political force) -- the potential to mobilize 'universal' sentiments in terms of a shared humanity. The disaster can thus be personalized and depoliticized, side stepping the broader issues of ideological and structural complicity of the viewer.

Photographers have noted the struggle between wanting to both photograph and assist physically with the rescue operations (Ismail Ferdous 2014). This tension between the visceral and visual remains unresolved when one of all the pictures taken becomes iconic of the disaster. Poverty can easily be aestheticized – just erase the context – and it absolves us of responsibility.

Art and Resistance

There has been a profusion of art of various kinds, ranging from photography exhibits to street theatre, demanding justice for the workers of Rana Plaza. I will end my paper with a brief discussion of an exhibition of paintings, drawings and video work by feminist artist Dilara Begum Jolly entitled *Threads of Testimony*. Jolly's paintings are visually bold and often quite vibrant in their use of color. This particular exhibition, however, is entirely in black and white, with traces of color here and there. A visual motif that runs through the collection is the fliers mentioned earlier, Xeroxed leaflets, usually in black and white, of the missing and the dead. Jolly uses these fliers to impressive effect. They are ubiquitous, inescapable and grim reminders and traces of lost subjectivities and the bleak longing of those left behind. Objects contain traces of the women who died or are missing. Jolly also restores and resituates discarded personal objects found at the site after the collapse such as a pair of sandals and one gold earring to remind us of the spectral presence of those who are absent. Everyday belongings demand acknowledgment of their owners' existence. They reassert the sovereignty of presence, according to art critic Sajjad Sharif. Discarded and destroyed, such objects can be understood as the 'remainder'

that refuses to leave us. Scattered through the exhibition are typically 'middle class' objects such as dressing tables and cushion covers, indelibly inscribed with images of workers' photographs, staged. Jolly also depicts garment workers as turning into waste, unraveling through the spools of thread that turn into distended bodies and wombs. Sajjad Sharif puts it "as if the giver of birth is giving birth to her own death". So garment workers give birth to items to be used by the middle classes, even as their bodies are rendered into waste.

Jolly's exhibition raises fundamental questions about the relationship between art and political resistance. After all, what can the artist do in the face of such tremendous destruction and injustice? Jolly does not offer any answers. The reclamation of objects, the refusal to let go of the memory of the people who have been erased in the bureaucratic gaze, restores a spectral presence. The viewer is not simply an art connoisseur in this space; he or she is forced to contend with the intimate relationship between laboring subaltern bodies and desiring bourgeois bodies as mediated through the garment industry. There can be no closure to this asymmetrical but intimate bond. Jolly's work hails the viewer; it is an invitation to understand and recognize our place in the oppressive system that gave rise to Rana Plaza. My paper does not offer closure. It is an invitation to recognize our complicities and unlearn our privileges, as Gayatri Spivak would say. It is also a call to rethink what the place of witnessing, of giving voice means in the blurring of the line between the aesthetic and the political.

Endnotes

1   See Marcus Banks and Richard Vokes. Introduction: Anthropology, Photography and the Archive. *History and Anthropology* Volume 21: No. 4, December 2010. pp 337-349.

2   *Purdah* culture is not left behind as women enter the public labor market but like other cultural phenomena travels with the women themselves. My research indicates that women entering into capitalist wage labor actively rework practices of *purdah* to produce culturally acceptable modes of respectability. Garment workers present themselves as disciplined and respectable bodies as they enter previously male spaces and reconstruct practices of *purdah* in relation to localized socio-economic factors. In other words, *purdah* cannot be understood as an exclusively oppressive cultural artifact to be shed upon entry into the public sphere; on the contrary, garment workers are redefining what constitutes a good (Muslim) woman in the public sphere. By extension, women's strategic and practical interests cannot be easily disentangled.

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Madness and Discontent: The Realist Imaginary in South Asian Literature

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In 1936, at the All-India Progressive Writers' Conference in Lucknow, Urdu-Hindi writer Premchand argued for a turn to realism. "In earlier times we might well have been impressed by fairy tales, ghost stories and accounts of star-crossed lovers but those have little interest for us anymore", he declared. "In order to produce an impression in literature it is necessary for it to be a mirror on life's truths [*jeevan ki sachaiyon ka darpan*]" (Premchand 75). Here, Premchand connects realism with political resistance, anti-colonial nationalism and the continuing fight for social justice.

However, what does it really mean for literature to be "a mirror on life's truths"? What assumptions about realism are embedded in that phrase? Is realism merely mimesis or an accurate representation of reality? Or might realism have an epistemic project as well – one which asks us to reorder our very conventions of knowledge and meaning-making?

This paper argues that understanding the role of literature in political resistance movements requires a complex theory of what literary realism is and how it works. Even Premchand, who talked about the importance of including marginalized characters in his novels and short stories (Dalits, prostitutes and so on), was acutely aware of how his realism was conditioned by the limitations his poor and subaltern characters had to full subjecthood. Thus, his 1936 Hindi novel *Godaan* is split into two parts which never quite reconcile: one for the impoverished rural characters whose lives get worse and worse and one for the urban characters living lives of relative luxury. Although the characters meet, they remain – until the very end – representatives of two distinct worlds. A novel with such a split structure asks us to complicate our idea of realism as straightforward, unvarnished representation. We learn as much from the gaps in representation as from the details about the rural and urban worlds that Premchand presents to us. We see this in a range of realisms in modern South Asia. Fakir Mohan Senapati published his Odia novel *Chha Mana Atha Guntha (Six Acres and a Third)* in 1899 and the work will surprise many contemporary readers with its nuanced consideration of the relationship between power and knowledge in an era long before Foucault. Consider this passage, which describes the

novel's protagonist, Mangaraj, a wily Brahmin landowner who fleeces his tenant farmers with high rents and generally corrupt behavior:

> Just behind Mangaraj's house, there was a large orchard opening onto a big pond, with coconut trees planted all around its edge and banana, jack-fruit, mango and ou trees further behind. A fence of young bamboo surrounded the orchard like a fortress wall. Few people are as selfless and altruistic as Mangaraj: even the market in Gobindapur owed its existence and prosperity to him. Without his orchard's bounty of fruits and vegetables – coconuts, bananas, brinjals, pumpkins, green chilies and so on – the market would have presented a much sorrier sight. Nor was anyone allowed to put his vegetables up for sale until the produce from the *zamindar's* orchard had all been sold. That was of course as it should be. Would it have been fair to sell inferior goods before high-quality produce? Besides, the market belonged to the *zamindar*, and the gifts of pumpkins, brinjals and bananas he received on festive occasions, such as the Oriya New Year, all went straight to the market (Senapati 42).

The narrator's critique of Mangaraj is discernible under the thin veneer of an obsequious narrator, who in telling us how great and generous Mangaraj is, ends up conveying precisely the opposite. Thus, we learn that he dumps his own produce on the market ensuring that there is no competition and even goes so far as to sell fruit he receives as gifts, on the market for a profit. The narrator's seeming realism: his description of the marketplace using myriad details and his sly use of rhetorical questions – "Would it have been fair to sell inferior goods before high-quality produce?" – in fact here become clever ruses for social critique. The narrative itself is thus mobilized as a source of political power, which contests the power of the landowner it describes by means of language itself. Here is another way realism can be a form of resistance, though not in a simplistic or naïve way as merely representing injustice or the hardships faced by its characters.

In what follows, I take a cue from Premchand's and Senapati's complex realist writings to suggest that realism is not a straightforward mode, even when marshalled in the service of political protest. Looking at two authors who push realism to its limits, Saadat Hasan Manto and Mohammed Hanif, I argue that their works use madness as a way of representing social dysfunction and of imagining a political futurity that might transcend it. In doing so, they not only critique the histories of Partition and contemporary Karachi, respectively, as "mad" but delineate an epistemic space from which to imagine, if not alternative worlds, then at least momentary spaces outside madness – spaces of the everyday, of intimacy and tenderness – that

pierce through the veil of madness to expose the kernel of truth that lies within it. These works, thus, offer a new way of imagining political dissent in literature outside the limited category of "social realism". Together with Senapati and Premchand, these texts tell the story of a rich South Asian literature of resistance, literature that is a political democratic project to represent the struggles of the poor and the disenfranchised – yet one that is also powerfully aware of representation as a perennially incomplete project.

Manto's Madness

Manto's account of the madness of Partition in *Toba Tek Singh* is well-known and well-studied and of course, by setting his story of Partition in an actual psychiatric asylum, Manto makes literal the madness with which he characterizes the event in other stories as well. In *Thanda Gosht* for instance, Manto describes an encounter between Ishwar Singh and Kalwant Kaur -- two lovers enjoying a tryst in the middle of the Partition riots while earning some money from the looting taking place around them. The commodified erotic energy that marks their relationship is diminished one night as Ishwar seems preoccupied and Kalwant pushes him for the truth of what she suspects is his infidelity. Only by piercing him with his *kirpan* (ceremonial sword or dagger) does Kalwant elicit Ishwar's confession – but it is not what she expected. Ishwar describes how he had kidnapped a beautiful Muslim girl and raped her. But soon afterwards, he tells Kalwant, he discovered that "*woh… woh mari hui thi… lash thi… bilkul thanda gosht* [she… she was dead… she was a corpse… just cold flesh]". However, Manto highlights that hers is not the only cold flesh. The last line of the story reads, "Kalwant Kaur *ne apna haath* Ishwar Singh *ke haath par rakha jo barf se bhi zyaada thanda tha*". Through the trope of "thanda gosht", the story connects the dead flesh of the murdered and raped girl with that of the rapist, suggesting that even though he is officially alive, his life has become a sort of living death, which contests the euphoria of the couple's sexual relations and the pleasure and wealth they have gained through the riots. Although the tragedy might seem to be that the girl was raped and/or dead, that of course is not the point of the story: it is that in a world of such brutality, life itself is a form of death.

We see a similar theme in *Khol Do*, another Manto story about the sexual violence of Partition. The kernel of this story involves an incident that is not narrated in the story but left implicit – which is the gang rape of Sakina, a young abducted woman, not by her abductors but by her rescuers. We read about her rescue and then the narrator details her father's frantic

search for her and only when father and daughter are reunited do we begin to ascertain what happened to her in the intervening time. In the hospital bed, where she lies semi-conscious, the doctor tells the nurse to open a window. Upon hearing that command, "*Sakina ke murda jism mein zubish hui. Bejaan haathon se usne izaarband khola aur shalwar neeche sarkaa di*". The story is entitled *Khol Do* to emphasize how these two seemingly innocent words – open it – become the site not only of the crime, to the girl who is repeatedly asked to open her *shalwar*, but also of the memory of the crime, where we and the doctor understand what happened to her only when we see her reaction to those words. Again, the violence here is not only in the gang rape but in the way words themselves carry the story of unspeakable violence. The violence is not an isolated incident but has pervaded language itself.

"A Magic Race"

Can Manto's stories be called realist? Critics who focus on the horrors of Partition violence read these stories as a sort of record or testimony of the brutal realities of the time – and in the examples I have discussed here, that is at least partly the case. However, the core of both these stories lies in something else, which is the transposition of the individual crime into the realm of representation itself. Both stories rely on a double-meaning of their titular phrases – and that word play is precisely the point (this is why it is so disheartening to see the translation of *Khol Do* in the English collection *Mottled Dawn* titled "The Return"; the point conveyed by the title is completely lost). In both cases, language itself becomes the site of violence. Among other things, this raises the question of the author's role in political critique. If words bear the trace or taint of violence, then how can language ever be used in the service of political critique?

Manto addresses this question through a realism that is not merely a transparent conveyer of meaning but where words have a materiality of their own. While the actual rape is not represented in the narrative of *Khol Do*, the words are powerful enough that they conjure the reality of the act for Sakina – who automatically repeats the action of opening her *shalwar* upon hearing them – and eventually, for the readers, who now interpret those heretofore innocent words as carrying in them unspeakable violence. This is, I suggest, as realist as the bifurcated form of Premchand's *Godaan* or the loquacious, sly narration of *Chha Mana Atha Guntha* – however, it is realism not merely as a referential project but as an epistemic one as well.

This is an unconventional interpretation of realism because it complicates conventional timelines of literary history drawn from the Anglo-American model (but often transposed to South Asia) to suggest that realism was a phase -- a temporary stopping-point on the road to modernism. In this narrative, realism belongs to a prior age when authors naively believed in the referentiality of language; by contrast, modernism belongs to the 20th century for its aesthetic innovations and meta-fictional qualities. Modernist authors are seen to question the assumptions embedded in realism: of representational mimesis, the one-to-one correspondence between word and text and the belief that writing can do political work. A writer like Salman Rushdie is a case in point; all his novels express a certain rush of freedom that comes from a break from realism. In his 1995 novel, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, Rushdie specifically decries the earnest mimeticism of the earlier generation of social realists through the character of Aurora Zogoiby, the protagonist's artist-mother, who struggles, in the decades following Independence, between painting "imaginary worlds" on one hand and deploying "a clear-sighted naturalism that would help India describe herself to herself" (173) on the other. Aurora is a fictionalized colleague of "Premchand and Sadat [sic] Hasan Manto and Mulk Raj Anand and Ismat Chughtai, committed realists all" – but she moves, Rushdie tells us, beyond their limitations because of "her instinctive dislike of the purely mimetic" and begins to represent in art "not only… her dreams but… the dream-like wonder of the waking world. 'We are not a nation of "averages"'", she begins to understand, "'but a magic race'". As her lover Vasco Miranda affirms, "Will you spend your life painting boot-polish boys and air-hostesses and two acres of land? Is it to be all coolies and tractor-drivers and Nargis-y hydroelectric projects from now on?... Forget those damn fool realists! The real is always hidden – isn't it? – inside a miraculously burning bush! Life is fantastic!" (174).

Here, Rushdie ventriloquizes Vasco Miranda to offer his own critique of realism, which he reduces to the representation of "boot-polish boys", "coolies" and "hydroelectric projects" – referring both to the pre-Independence writings of authors such as Mulk Raj Anand and to early post-Independence films such as those of Raj Kapoor and the iconic *Mother India*. Even within this somewhat polemical passage where Rushdie celebrates the fantastic over a putatively staid political realism, he remains significantly more ambivalent about Manto, whom he cannot place easily in either category:

> But even in [these writers'] work there were elements of the fabulous, for example in *Toba Tek Singh*, Manto's great story of the partition of the sub-continent's lunatics at the time of the larger Partition. One of the

crazies, formerly a prosperous landlord, was caught in a no-man's land of the soul, unable to say whether his Punjabi home town lay in India or Pakistan, and in his madness, which was also the madness of the time, he retreated into a kind of celestial gibberish, with which Aurora Zogoiby fell in love. Her painting of the tragic final scene of Manto's story, in which the hapless loony is stranded between two stretches of barbed wire, behind which lie India and Pakistan, is perhaps her finest work of the period, and his piteous gibberish, which represents not only his personal communications breakdown but our own, forms the picture's long and wonderful title: *Uper the gur gur the annexe the bay dhayana the mung the dal of the laltain*" (Rushdie 173-4).

Rushdie wants to redeem Manto from the scourge of realism here but formally, this description functions as a bulge or distention in what is otherwise a straightforward polemic celebrating fantasy over realism. On one hand, Rushdie wants to lump Manto with Premchand, Anand and Chughtai but at the same time he wants to distinguish *Toba Tek Singh* as distinct from the "committed realists" because of its innovativeness. He wants to put Manto in a different – I will say higher – category because of his exploration of the psychological realms of madness, which for Rushdie bespeaks a more profound engagement with the problem of the real. Yet, at the same time, in his passage he asserts the realism of the story twice: when he states that *Toba Tek Singh*'s madness "was also the madness of the time" and that the breakdown in his speech "represents not only his personal communications breakdown but our own".

Rushdie's simultaneous embrace and disavowal of realism is, I argue, a central, though repressed, aspect of his work as a whole. His jubilant and self-reflexive modernist style wants to distinguish itself from realism even as it wants to lay claim to a certain referentiality – which he believes is more profound than the simplistic material world of the realist imagination. However, as the examples of Premchand, Senapati and Manto show, the realist imaginary has never been simplistic but has always included a consideration of the way we know alongside actually conveying knowledge. Once this kind of self-consciousness is folded into our understanding of realism, the political stakes of the term change dramatically.

"His Own Family Put Him There"

Mohammed Hanif's 2011 novel *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti* takes up this question of realism, madness and social protest that Rushdie leaves open and unresolved in *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Contesting the linear narrative by which realism must necessarily be transcended by modernism, Hanif brings a deadpan, dark humor to his representation of Alice Bhatti, a Replacement Junior Nurse at the Sacred Heart Hospital in Karachi. The novel's mode is a gritty realism – where violence is represented without hysterics and without the usual invocation of pity or sympathy, even when describing the most brutal scenes of torture, violence and death. Characterization is also, for the most part, flat – we do not get to know the characters in all their dimensions and therefore, we do not particularly sympathize with them in the way we might in conventional realism. Rather, characterization is exteriorized – so the body becomes a key indicator of character, rather than interiority or the psyche. Take the following passage:

> Alice Bhatti first sits on the edge of the chair, feels dizzy, then fears that the chair might slip from under her and she will end up sprawled on the floor with her legs splayed in the air. She moves back in the chair, the chair squeaks and she puts the file in her lap, then picks it up and clasps it to her chest. Then realizing that she is making a spectacle of herself, she puts it back in her lap and thrusts her hands under her thighs, to stop them from trembling (Hanif 5).

This passage appears early in the novel; we know nothing of Alice yet. However, we learn a great deal from it nonetheless: about her own feelings of vulnerability as well as the culture of violence – in particular violence against women – which she inhabits; thus in her nervousness at the job interview she imagines herself "sprawled on the floor with her legs splayed in the air" as a perennially potential victim of sexual violence. Her fear of being a "spectacle" and her need to efface herself by hiding her hands in various recesses of her body register the effaced subjectivity of her womanhood on the surface of her body. Thus, although we never know Alice Bhatti, her body becomes an index to the social crisis – in Karachi, in Pakistan – at large.

There is another element to this description, which is the question of Alice's sanity, called into doubt by her dizziness, her trembling and her "fears that the chair might slip from under her". As any reader of Rushdie will notice, this is quite different from the kind of magical realism that allows Saleem Sinai to hear voices in his head or that prevents Moraes

Zogoiby from growing physically, leaving him a strange man-child. In contrast to these magical realisms, *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti*'s dark humor, its investment in dreams and its hint at the supernatural suggests clinical madness, exemplified by the *charya* ward of the Sacred Heart Hospital into which Alice makes an early foray, despite the fact that she is told "That's no place for a decent woman like yourself'" (30). Indeed, Alice's experience in the psychiatric ward is more than she bargained for. Besides seeing "occasional streaks of foam rubber remain[ing]" on the walls, "which makes it look like the walls have developed a skin rash" and "what appears to be a bird's nest in one corner" which is actually "a nest the size of a football made of grey human hair with a live rat at its centre." (33) – the inmates accost her with their quasi-mystical nonsenses: "*Dard aur, dawa aur, dard aur, dawa aur*" and "'She knows how we live and how we die. She knows. She knows.'" (33-5) and so on.

Although startling, Alice does not come away from the *charya* ward swearing never to return. Rather – and here we see clear echoes of Manto – the critique here is not of the mad but of the sane and Alice, herself potentially tottering on the edge of insanity (as all the novel's "sane" characters are), feels not different but a strange solidarity with those she meets inside. This is so much the case that although she initially sees Teddy Butt, who appears to rescue her from the inmates, as "the chief *charya*" (35) – a belief which is never disproven – she ends up marrying him. Thus is borne out what Sister Hina Alvi warns her about, which is not so much the exceptionality of the psych ward but its lack thereof: "the whole country is a nuthouse", she tells Alice. "Have you read Toba Tek Singh? Nobody reads around here anymore. Manto wrote about the nutters in a *charya* ward and then ended up in one himself. His own family put him there." (28-9)

Sister Alvi's statement is not so much a critique of Manto's sanity as of the whole society which Manto himself was criticizing – in which, as he makes very clear in "Toba Tek Singh", madness can quickly slip into sanity and sanity into madness. In his seminal study of madness, Foucault questions the idea that madness is antithetical to reason, suggesting instead that madness

> is a kind of reason in action. In short, under the chaotic and manifest delirium reigns the order of a secret delirium. In this second delirium, which is, in a sense, pure reason, reason delivered of all the external tinsel of dementia, is located the paradoxical truth of madness (97)… Madness begins where the relation of man to truth is disturbed and darkened (104).

Foucault urges us to see the imbrication of madness and reason not negatively – where madness is only the "breakdown" of truth – but as allowing for the emergence of new representations, including those "in which imaginary objects are taken for realities, or else real objects are falsely represented" (105) – in short, a new realism.

The representational mode of *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti* seems to confirm this possibility. Madness hovers just under the surface of the text in a number of forms, aside from the literal presence of the *charya* ward exerting a metonymic pressure on the entire world of Sacred Heart. Characters are constantly dreaming; their dreams often are starker imagines of reality than the absurd world they encounter every day. Dreams are the kernels where reason resides; everyday life is, by contrast, madness. Madness is banal; it has become folded into everyday existence. This means, of course, the madness of everyday violence – the daily harassment Alice faces, the perennial possibility of sexual violence, the daily oppression of being a Christian minority in Pakistan and additionally bearing the stigma of untouchability. This is a world where her lover Teddy can fire a lovelorn shot into the air which shuts down Karachi for three days, and where

> there was not a single day – not a single day – when she didn't see a woman shot or hacked, strangled or suffocated, poisoned or burnt, hanged or buried alive. Suspicious husband, brother protecting his honor, father protecting his honor, feuding farmers settling their water disputes, moneylenders collecting their interest: most of life's arguments, it seemed, got settled by doing various things to a woman's body (96).

Avoiding this fate involves an intense regimen of self-discipline, of control over her own body, which makes her earlier episode on the creaky chair look unremarkable by contrast.

> She avoids eye contact; she looks slightly over people's heads as if looking out for somebody who might come into view at any moment. She doesn't want anyone to think that she is alone and nobody is coming for her. She sidesteps even when she sees a boy half her age walking towards her, she walks around little puddles when she can easily leap over them; she thinks any act that involves stretching her legs might send the wrong signal…. She never eats in public. Putting something in your mouth is surely an invitation for someone to shove something horrible down your throat (98-9).

In a world such as this, how do we draw the line between insanity and simple pragmatism? Yet, following Foucault, Hanif mobilizes a dialectic concept of madness, which is not only presented as a loss or as something to be mourned; perennial madness also elicits moments of surprising tenderness, born in the "pure reason" that lies at the heart of madness. Teddy, for instance, is "a crime-scene cleaner, comforter, errand boy, towel holder, cheerleader, doorstopper, gun-cleaner, replacement court witness, proxy prisoner, fourth card player… and a companion for the passengers on their last journey" (101) – that is, to their death but it is he who elicits the only "tender moment" (81) in Alice's short life or who makes her feel when he ushers her with eyes closed out of a rickshaw for their surprise wedding that "she wishes for a lifetime of alighting from rickshaws with his hand on her back" (87). These are not moments of break from the larger madness but are enabled only by the twisted world of those conditioned by incessant insanity (who else would get married on a nuclear submarine?). Alice's earlier misrecognition of Teddy for a "charya" thus reveals itself not as misrecognition at all but as a moment of recognition, both of a world of everyday madness and as the possibility for love that lies within it. As Teddy tells her, justifying his line of work, "'We live in dangerous times. We live in a dangerous place. It's better to know the danger, to work with it, to tame it'" (162). This could be read as another form of madness – like Alice's paranoia, or even, at its extreme, Kulwant Kaur and Ishwar Singh's exuberant eroticism amidst Partition looting: a means of getting by, rather than battling the system. However, Hanif does not present it only as resignation – or, to be more accurate, it is a futurity that lies within resignation. It might not be a political protest or a battle but it is a means of invigorating the everyday with meaning.

This can have explicitly political implications; Police Inspector Malangi, in charge of police encounters and torture against suspected criminals, deliberately confuses his men on the way to a scene of encounter killing because "he doesn't want any of them to lose their mind in the future and come sniffing back to relive the memory" (124). Here, in its extreme, losing one's mind is presented as a means of exposing the violence of the state but more often, madness pervades the everyday to produce what might at its worst be called an everyday sociopathic, and at best, a means of getting by. Hanif's realist narration conveys that socio-pathology by refusing to flinch, describing scenes of the most graphic violence with a deadpan calm. This is a world in which you get "the news of a death before you can see it with your own eyes. A death before birth" (164); a "life [that] begins with a compromise" (181). This is the type of logic by which jail, for Alice, "was… [where] she first felt free" (115). These constitute the opposite of

modernist shock; they are not meant to present horrific scenes to shake readers out of their political apathy – they comprise, rather, an aesthetic of numbness but not without a political purpose. Through this numbness we see more clearly than ever the reality of everyday violence; we register it simultaneously as a breakdown of realism and a prerequisite for a new realist vision that emerges out of it. That madness is sanity and sanity is madness which is simultaneously bleak and reassuring – that was Manto's realist vision. Hanif's, too, is a realist vision branded by everyday violence – that is at once devastating and simultaneously optimistic.

Thus, we can read the novel's ending not as a strange recourse to the supernatural but a following through on the productive epistemologies of madness. The possibility of a vision of the divine perceived on the horizon is no more insane than a world of self-inflicted wounds, dead babies coming back to life or sweepers finding slime-covered peacocks in city sewers and where people count themselves "lucky enough not to have the worst job in the city" (64). This is the new realist imaginary.

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The Lost Art of Rawalpindi

Mariam Saleem Farooqi and Rida Arif

Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan exists today on land that has seen the glory and majesty of many powerful empires of the past. As a result, the history of this land has been shaped by a complex combination of numerous religions and cultures. Each of these cultures has left an enduring and tangible mark in the form of mosques, temples, churches and other places of worship – some grand, some small.

Unfortunately, today's Muslim-majority Pakistan is increasingly disconnected from the multicultural, pluralistic society that once thrived in these very lands. The blood-soaked and painful truths of the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 have fed this increasing intolerance. The deeply ingrained notion that, "Pakistan was made for the Muslims", has left no space for the "others" – Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and Jews – in the country's historical, cultural and religious narratives. In recent decades, fear of the "other" has resulted in some of the worst cases of religious persecution in the history of this part of the world.

Physical representations of religion are usually the first casualty of this unholy "holy war". Churches, temples, shrines, *mandirs* and *gurdwaras* have been systematically defaced, torn down and taken over even as their guardians have been forced to retreat deeper and deeper away from the public sphere lest they "threaten" the sanctity of the religion of the masses. The art and architecture of the past tell a story but the story of the Sikhs and Hindus of the land that is now Pakistan is one nobody wants to hear anymore.

This paper will discuss the history, art, architecture and current state of some of the few remaining symbols of Sikhism and Hinduism in the old city of Rawalpindi, in the Punjab province of Pakistan.

The city of Rawalpindi has a unique and diverse history that is unfortunately no longer known even to most of its own residents. After the subcontinent was divided in 1947, most of the Sikh and Hindu

population of Rawalpindi was forced to migrate to India, leaving behind their homes, material possessions and places of worship. As the Muslim migrants from India poured into the city, with no place to go, they started taking over the empty buildings left behind by the fleeing Sikhs and Hindus. Even today, deep in the heart of Rawalpindi, families reside in original buildings dating back to the pre-partition era, many of which still carry remains of carvings and decoration put in place by the original inhabitants. These old buildings are now in a state of disrepair and need proper maintenance and upkeep. However, city officials and sometimes the residents themselves, find it easier and more cost-effective to demolish and rebuild rather than take measures to preserve the integrity of the original structure and restore it.

The few Sikh and Hindu residents that remain in Rawalpindi now live deep within the heart of the city, forced to keep their identity quiet, their celebrations low-key for fear of becoming targets of the widespread persecution of minorities in present day Pakistan.

Kalyan Das Temple

Figure 1

Kalyan Das Temple, Kohaati Bazaar, Rawalpindi (Rida Arif 2014)

In the heart of Rawalpindi is located Kohaati Bazaar, a densely populated and bustling locality with narrow gullies and multi-storied modest houses. This is one of the areas of the city where the largest gatherings of Shia Muslims take place during the days of Ashura, observed on the 9th and 10th of Muharram – the first month of the Islamic calendar. With each year, the scale of the Muharram *majlis* grows but unfortunately, each passing year also marks greater damage and disrepair to the Kalyan Das Temple, once an important Hindu sight. Kalyan Das Temple is a

mid-19th century structure located on one of the slightly wider roads of Kohaati Bazaar within the gated compound of the Qandeel High School for visually impaired children.

History

Kalyan Das was a wealthy resident of Rawalpindi in the 19th century. He laid the foundation stone of the temple in the 1850s and it is believed that the temple was finally completed in 1880 with marble, stone and wood from the Diyaar tree. At the time of completion, the temple was said to have had over 100 rooms, spread over an area of 7 acres in a compound containing a large pool and the main temple structure.

The summertime Amarnath Yatra is an important event in Hinduism. This is an annual pilgrimage to the Amarnath Cave located in Jammu and Kashmir to honor the Hindu deity Shiva. Pilgrims would stop at Kalyan Das Temple in Rawalpindi to pray, bathe and rest for a night before continuing their pilgrimage onwards to the cave. This was where devotees made *niyaat* for the pilgrimage ahead. The remaining journey was undertaken barefoot by the most devoted – a trek from Murree all the way to the mountains of Kashmir.

After the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, Kalyan Das Temple was abandoned as the Hindu population fled the city. In 1956, it was taken over by the Auqaf Department which was responsible for overseeing places of worship in the city. It survived as a place of worship until 1958 when a school for the blind – Qandeel High School – started by Begum Farooqi, was shifted into the complex. At that time, most of the original structure was still intact. In 1974, the school was taken over by the Government of Punjab. A new building was erected for the school in the 1980s during the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq and the original buildings surrounding the temple, the rooms and the pond, were all demolished. In 1992, after the controversial demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, India, enraged mobs attacked many Hindu places of worship across Pakistan. The spires of the Kalyan Das Temple are bent and broken from such a mob attack. Fortunately, the school administration at the time was able to prevent any further damage. Unfortunately, time and neglect is now doing what an angry mob could not do. As the school grows, the temple area shrinks further and further. Though not visible to the naked eye, the school administration says the temple has started to lean in recent years and may eventually pose a danger to the school children. According to the school administration, the government is more likely to demolish the temple to increase space

in the school grounds rather than allocate funds to repair and restore it. If this is allowed to happen, it will undoubtedly become another nail in the coffin of inter-faith harmony in both Pakistan and India, for though the temple is no longer functional, it is still held in reverence by many Hindus. The Auqaf Department declined to comment on the matter when approached for the purpose of this paper.

Structure

The temple compound was built on three levels, each level accessible to certain castes only. The lowest level was reserved for the lower castes and higher levels for members of upper castes. The inner room inside the temple proper was accessible to the *pujari* (priest) only.

The school administration is very stringent about restricting access to the school compound for anyone other than students, their parents, school administration and the faculty. Journalists, researchers and even worshippers of the Hindu faith who may want to visit an old heritage site have to first seek permission from the District Government – itself a long, arduous and often fruitless process. Despite restricted public access, the temple shows signs of deterioration, decay and vandalism.

In Pakistan, even fully functional and relatively well-maintained historical structures like the Badshahi Mosque have been installed with shoddy electrical wiring and outlets in order to add lights and fans. In a forgotten structure like the Kalyan Das Temple, the jumble of electrical wires is not only an eyesore but also quite unsafe for an area occupied by schoolchildren.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is no historical monument in Pakistan that has not been defaced by graffiti at some point. This is a direct result of a lack of understanding and respect for history and the importance of one's heritage. In places of worship

belonging to minority religions, such vandalism is often spurred on by religious fervor by self-proclaimed "protectors" of Islam. Faces of statues and paintings are often deliberately broken or scratched off as many believe depicting human and animal figures is not permissible in Islam. Religious and racist slurs are also often painted on walls and ceilings of historical structures.

Fruit and vegetal motifs can be seen on the frescoes decorating the frieze level inside the temple proper. The frieze is divided into small sections, each section containing a fresco of a bowl of fruit, alternating with a vase of flowers. The entire frieze is bordered in a deep blue fresco with floral patterns. It is important to note that fruit, floral and vegetal motifs are similar in Sikh, Hindu and Muslim architecture; ample proof of the syncretic nature of the heritage of these religions and their cultures.

Many parts of the temple have been completely whitewashed. Whether this was done to clean the temple or to hide the paintings depicted is debatable. While unsightly amidst the beautiful surrounding fresco work, this whitewash has actually helped preserve some of the artwork. If removed with proper care, it is possible that the frescoes underneath will emerge fully preserved and in much better state than their counterparts which have remained exposed to human and natural elements over the years. The practice of whitewashing old monuments in an attempt to "beautify" them is common all over Pakistan.

Figure 3

Fruit and vegetal motifs seen in Kalyan Das Temple frescoes (Rida Arif 2014)

Figure 4

Floral motifs seen in
Kalyan Das Temple
frescoes (Rida Arif
2014)

The panels in the interior of the Kalyan Das Temple are all covered in
detailed frescoes in colors that are still vibrant even after years of neglect
and vandalism. These frescoes depict important scenes from Hindu
mythology. Figure 5 depicts blue-skinned Vishnu the Preserver, one of
the *Trimurti* – three principal deities of Hinduism. Brahma the Creator
and Shiva the Destroyer complete the *Trimurti*. This is a scene from the
time after the ending of one age of the world and before the start of the
next. Vishnu is seen reclining on the body of the multi-headed snake
commonly known as Shesha or Sheshanaga. Shesha is a primal being
of creation who survives *kalpa* (the end of the world). It is believed that
the universe dies when Shesha coils its body and is reborn when Shesha
uncoils. Shesha sings praises of Vishnu from all of its multiple heads.

Figure 5

Vishnu, Lakshmi and
Brahma seen in the
frescoes at Kalyan
Das Temple (Rida
Arif 2014)

Vishnu is shown wearing a gold crown, a symbol of his status as a powerful deity. In two of Vishnu's four hands he holds a conch symbolizing creation and maintenance of the universe and a *chakra* (disc) symbolizing spiritual existence. Near his head are shown two other objects which are usually depicted in the other two hands of Shiva, a mace symbolizing divine power and a lotus flower symbolizing spiritual liberation. At Vishnu's feet is the female figure of Lakshmi, his consort. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth, love and prosperity in Hindu mythology. The small figure of Brahma, another deity from the *Trimurti*, is shown emerging from Vishnu's navel. He is sitting on a lotus and has four hands.

Figure 6

Ganesha seen in the frescoes at Kalyan Das Temple (Rida Arif 2014)

Figure 6 shows a fresco depicting Ganesha – the widely recognized elephant headed god. Ganesha is worshipped by devotees of many religions including Jains and Buddhists. Ganesha is considered the remover of obstacles and the patron of arts and sciences. In this fresco, he is shown with four arms: one holding an axe, one holding a *chakra*, one holding a flag and the fourth holding a dish, the contents of which he is sampling with his trunk. Above his head is a *chathri*, widely recognized as a symbol of power and divinity in Hindu and Sikh iconography. Coiled amongst the crown on his head is a green snake, most likely known as Vasuki, a common feature of Ganesha iconography. Two female figures and two swan-like birds flank Ganesha in this fresco.

Krishna Mandir

History

In the Kabari Bazaar area of old Rawalpindi is located Krishna Mandir, one of only three functioning places of worship for Hindus left in the city. Built by Ujagar Mal Ram Richpal in 1897, today it is almost invisible among the congested streets of the busy marketplace. This invisibility is preferred by worshippers these days, most of who live in near constant fear of harassment, or worse, attack against their religion. The *mandir* is small, containing one large open space at the ground level with a small enclosed space containing representations of several Hindu deities. The upper level contains 3-4 small rooms and a balcony overlooking the worship area below. On a small terrace outside is the elongated single dome of the *mandir* now hidden among the jumble of higher surrounding buildings. The *mandir* is frequented by the few hundred Hindu families that still live in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. It is also a resting space for any Hindu families visiting from out of the city.

Celebrations

According to Jairam Pujari, the present caretaker of Krishna Mandir, neither the Evacuee Trust Property Board nor the Punjab Auqaf and Religious Affairs Department take much interest in the maintenance and upkeep of the *mandir*. Much of the day-to-day operational costs are fulfilled by donations. Despite these setbacks, the *mandir* and its caretakers celebrate Hindu festivals like Holi and Diwali with much pomp and celebration, even as the danger of attack remains a very real and present concern. It is worth noting that people belonging to other religions are always readily allowed to observe and participate in these celebrations.

Baba Dyal Singh Gurdwara

History

Baba Dyal Singh Gurdwara in Raja Bazaar was not only the site of the first Sikh wedding in 1885; it was also the birthplace of Dyal Singh's Nirankari Movement, which was a reformist movement against idol worship. This *gurdwara* was established during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's period in the 1830's. The *gurdwara* became non-functional at the partition of India in 1947. It remained vacant for 10 years until a non-governmental organization by the name of Shimla Islamia Anjuman established a

private school on the premises in 1957. The school was turned into a government school in the 70's, during Bhutto's regime. Today it lies nestled in the heart of a vast fresh produce and spice market.

Structure

Stepping inside the school compound, one finds only two rooms that are in their original condition. These rooms may be recognized by their marble structure that has verses carved from the Guru Granth Sahib. The remaining construction took place in 2011-2012 and was funded by the Pakistan government. It is important to note the stark difference in architecture between the old and the new buildings; it was rebuilt, not conserved.

The Principal's office is one of the two surviving rooms. Arabic verses have been added next to the verses from the Guru Granth Sahib. Beautiful floral motifs are carved into the white marble, a characteristic of Sikh architecture.

This room is known as the Darbar Sahib, or the prayer room, in which the Sikh holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib, is seen. The Guru Granth Sahib was kept on the marble structure behind the Principal's desk. This structure was damaged during the 2005 earthquake. The ceiling of the prayer room is also in desperate need of repair. A plaque with names of the main donors for the construction of the *gurdwara* is inside this room as well. A classroom with the original marble doorway sits right across the Principal's office.

The second room that is still in its original condition is the *langar* hall where free food was served by the Sikh community. Carved marble pillars may be seen at the entrance to this hall. The interior is still in its original condition. The hall is now used to hold classes.

Shruti Devi Gurdwara

A short walk away from Baba Dyal Singh Gurdwara is located another desolate *gurdwara*. Shruti Devi Gurdwara lies unnoticed and non-functional in the middle of one of the biggest wholesale markets of Rawalpindi. The only way of reaching the structure is to climb to the roof of one of the shops that surround its base. The lower level of the *gurdwara* is inaccessible as it is in use as a granary for local shop owners. The only part of the *gurdwara* that remains is a single elongated dome with some faded imagery, including figures of Guru Nanak and Ganesh, painted on the sides.
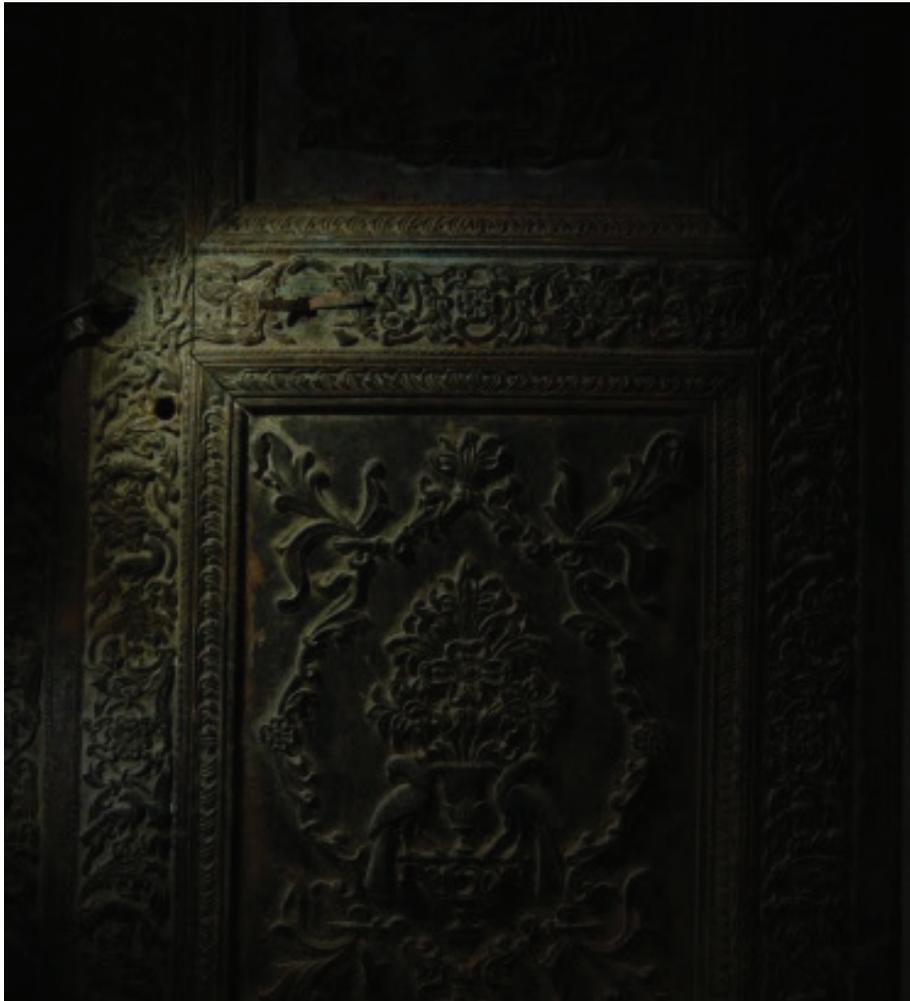
Sujan Singh Haveli

History

Sujan Singh was a businessman and a philanthropist whose family had been residents of Rawalpindi since the late 18th century. Situated in Bhabra Bazaar, Rawalpindi, the Sujan Singh Haveli was built in 1890. Sujan Singh died in 1901 but his family remained here till 1947, after which they migrated to India. The *haveli* was abandoned for some time before Kashmiri refugees moved in. 15 refugee families resided in this *haveli* from 1947-1980 and most of the damage to the building occurred during this period. In 1980, the government forced the Kashmiri families to evacuate the building. Most of these families eventually bought houses in the surrounding area of Bhabra Bazaar.

Efforts have been made in the past to preserve and restore the building. Abdul Qadir Khan sought to open a school in the *haveli*

complex but the plan never materialized. Later, Fatima Jinnah Women's University in Rawalpindi had planned to restore the *haveli* and open an inner-city campus of the university but once again due to lack of funds and insufficient planning, nothing came of this proposal. Finally, with UNESCO's support, the National College of Arts (NCA), in collaboration with the Boston College of Art, was given the task to restore the building in January 2014. NCA has acquired this *haveli* for two years, from 2014-2016. For the first time, a proper conservation plan has been developed. The buildings in the *haveli* complex have been surveyed and marked and it is hoped that conservation work will commence soon before the condition of the *haveli* deteriorates even further.

Figure 11

Carved wooden panel on a door in Sujan Singh Haveli, Bhabra Bazaar, Rawalpindi (Rida Arif 2014)

Structure

It is a double storey building made of red bricks and is divided into two parts. Sujan Singh Haveli has beautiful, intricately carved woodwork over its doors. Figure 11 shows one of the six panels on a door in the *haveli*. Each panel is carved with a different image.

The carved metal bust still survives on the exterior of this building, as well as wooden floorboards that are rotting away, leaving gaps in the floor in several of the rooms.

The ceilings of the main rooms have beautiful woodwork and paintings. The largest room in the *haveli* is now cordoned off due to rotten floorboards. The open windows have allowed birds to nest in the roof. Entire panels of the

ceiling have fallen due to negligence in earlier years. All the rooms contain grand fireplaces, with bats now residing in the chimneys. The rooftop contains two elevated square chambers, accessible through a narrow staircase. The wooden canopy of the *haveli* is erected on cast iron pillars. The outer walls of the *haveli* are plastered with political posters and advertisements and graffiti is visible on most of the walls.

Conclusion

At present, Sujan Singh Haveli is the only site in the old city of Rawalpindi where any proper and institutionalized conservation efforts are being made. Conservation and preservation are difficult endeavours in Pakistan. Though departments and specially appointed government bodies exist for this very purpose, most suffer from inefficient and inexperienced employees and a lack of funding. Even prominent places like the Lahore Fort and the tomb of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir are only given a cursory cleaning, usually when an official visit of government dignitaries is due. Lesser known structures and monuments are almost entirely forgotten.

Abandoned *mandirs* and *gurdwaras* are rented out by the Punjab Auqaf and Religious Affairs Department. A room inside Shimla Islamia High School has been rented out by Auqaf for a mere PKR. 1100 per month. Residents of the old city say that *mandirs* and *gurdwaras* are given on a 100-200 year lease by the Auqaf itself, with a payment of PKR 2000-3000 due at the end of every month. With regular money being made off these buildings, the departments in charge feel no need to expend time, energy and resources in restoration and preservation.

When it comes to structures associated with religious minorities, the matter becomes even more complicated. Will raising awareness about the dilapidated state of a Hindu *mandir* lead to its preservation or will it spur some religious extremists to mark it as their next target? The caretakers of *gurdwaras* and *mandirs* in Rawalpindi want more people to be aware of their dilapidated state, yet they are hesitant to disclose too much information to anyone due to security concerns. Encroachment, demolition, vandalism, extremism – there is no shortage of problems for heritage sites. The only solution left for caretakers is to limit access to these places of worship to only devotees of their own faith. While this may afford them some degree of protection (from vandalism at least), it

is yet another way Muslims and non-Muslims are being distanced. The less one knows about the "other", the more one becomes inclined to fear the unknown. When there is no respect for the sanctity of human life, mistreatment and neglect of structural heritage is only to be expected. As Pakistan slips ever more precariously into the grips of extremism and violence, and a narrative of dogmatic Islamic history, we must rediscover our lost cosmopolitan identity as a southern Asian nation, home to some of the world's most creative civilizations, boasting some of the most diverse and inspired art through the ages and forge an alternate, unifying and pluralistic identity in sync with our region.

The Pashtun Tribal Identity and Codes:
At Odds with Pakistan's Post-9/11 Policies

Ashish Shukla

Almost all ancient societies from Greek city-states to Indian kingdoms have disappeared from the surface of the earth but not before laying the foundation of modern civilizations. The strongest currents of modernity, scientific and technological revolutions, and most recently globalization, undoubtedly made a profound impact on humankind; yet due to a number of reasons, some of the tribal societies proved to be resilient enough to preserve their own distinct identity, culture and way of life. In the present South Asian region, the Pashtun, known for their love of freedom, codes of honor and hospitality are one such society. Estimated to be more than twenty-five million members, ethnic Pashtun constitute the largest tribal group of the world. There is no unanimity among scholars over the origin of Pashtun tribes,[1] yet many anthropologists are of the view that about a thousand years ago, ethnic Pashtuns moved from the area around Ghor to the present day Afghanistan-Pakistan border areas.
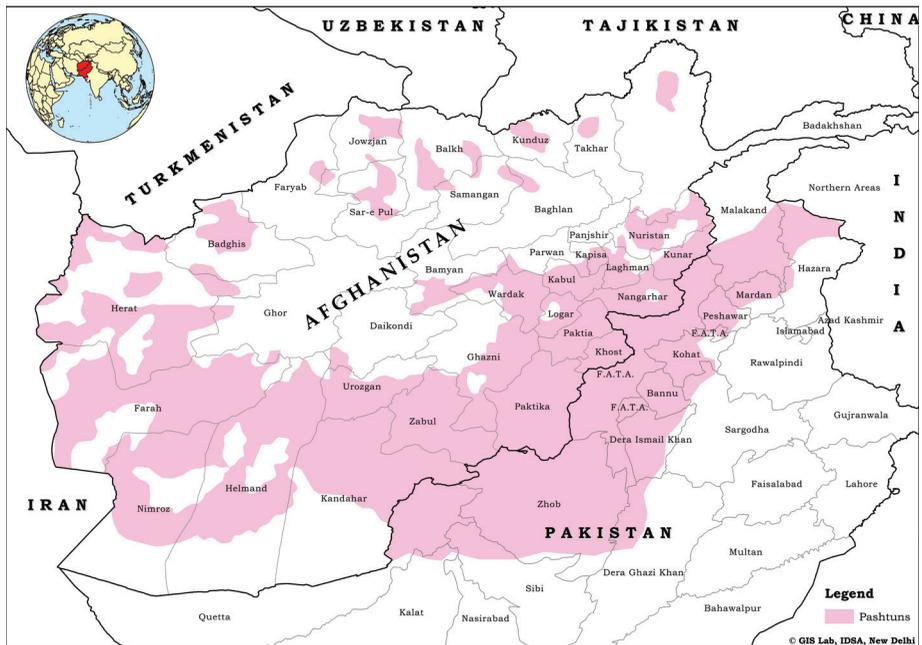
Figure 1

Pashtun Tribal Areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Source: GIS Lab, IDSA, New Delhi.

The Pashtuns are broadly categorized into two major groups — Nang and Qalang. The Nang (Highland Pashtuns) primarily reside in the mountainous regions, while the Qalang (Lowland Pashtuns) live in the fertile lowland areas. According to David B. Edward, Nang societies are "acephalous and segmentary in structure" and their codes of conduct are bound by traditional codes of honor. In contrast, Qalang Pashtuns are hierarchical and their social interactions are asymmetrical and structured primarily by the economics of patron-client relations.[2]

Qais Abdur Rashid, an Arab contemporary of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), is believed to be the ancestor of all Pashtuns. As per the oral Pashtun tradition, the four super-tribal confederacies — the Durrani (sometimes referred to as Abdali, are located in the south and southwest of Afghanistan as well as adjacent areas of Pakistan), the Ghilzai (are primarily based in the east of Afghanistan), the Ghurghust (reside at the southwest edge of the core Pashtun region and also in the east) and the Karlanri (located astride the Pakistan-Afghanistan border; a majority of them are based in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan) — trace their descent to four sons of Qais Abdur Rashid. Some scholars add one more major grouping called Sarbani into the list of super-tribal confederacies.[3] It is commonly believed that at least 350 tribes come under the above mentioned confederacies. These tribes are further divided into a number of clans or *Khels*.[4] These *Khels* are comprised of various *Kahols* — extended family groups — which are further divided into *Koranays* — nuclear families. The Karlanri Pashtuns are notorious for fighting for their honor and freedom. They include some of the fiercest and most warlike tribes such as the Afridis, Daurs, Jadrans, Ketrans, Mehsuds, Mohmands and the Wazirs.[5] Among these, the Wazirs of greater Waziristan are considered to be the most conservative and irascible, who proudly claim never having paid taxes to any sovereign.[6] The Hill Tribes, bordering Pakistan and Afghanistan, are fiercely independent in their nature and thus never thought of compromising their freedom for the sake of anything.[7] Akbar Ahmed compares these tribes with the thistle and argues,

> Love of freedom, egalitarianism, a tribal lineage system defined by common ancestors and clans, a martial tradition, and a highly developed code of honor and revenge — these are the thistle-like characteristics of the tribal societies.[8]

Pashtuns are one such society/ethnic group that not only preserved their centuries-old culture, tradition and identity but also effectively and, in most cases, successfully challenged every attempt of subjugation by mighty kingdoms as well as powerful modern states.

In late 1585, the great Mughal Emperor Akbar, with the aim of subduing the Yusufzai tribal confederation in Swat and Bajaur, sent his army under Zain Khan Koka. The mighty Mughal army initially forced many Yusufzai chiefs to submit to Mughal authority. However, a relief force, in difficult mountainous terrain, met disaster which resulted in the death of about 8,000 Mughal soldiers, including the famous court-wit Raja Birbal.[9] In 1672, Aurangzeb, another Mughal Emperor, sent his army to subjugate the Afridis. The Mughal army was ambushed in the Khyber resulting in the death of 10,000 soldiers, while about 20,000 were captured alive. The tribal assault was so deadly and brutal that only Amin Khan, Aurangzeb's governor along with four others barely escaped and returned to Peshawar.[10]

The British, who ruled over the Indian subcontinent after the Mughals, also could not establish the state's writ in the tribal areas, even at the height of their colonial empire. They suffered heavy casualties at the hands of deadly Pashtun tribes in most of their armed interactions. The tribal areas, during colonial times, were infamously referred to as *Ghair Ilaqa* — the alien land — because the British could never fully integrate the region into India. It is remarkable that during the First Anglo-Afghan war (1839-42), the British Army suffered a humiliating defeat and failed to capture Kabul. In early 1842, the army was ordered to retreat from Kabul. On its return journey, the deadly tribes, occupying the heights of the passes, massacred the entire British Army with the exception of only one soldier.[11] It was William Brydon, covered in blood with several deep wounds and a slashed open skull, who survived the onslaught and told his masters about the massacre.[12] Some scholars suggest that tribes deliberately let Brydon go so that he may tell the tale to others.

During the Soviet invasion (1979-1989), these tribes along with other *Mujahideen* fighters and warlords played an important role in driving out the Soviet Red-Army from Afghan soil. In their efforts to defeat the Soviets, they received substantial support from Pakistan, the United States and Saudi Arabia. At present, many of these Pashtun tribes, under the Afghan Taliban leadership, are engaged with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Some of the tribes under the banner of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are targeting the Pakistani State apparatus, partly for its role in helping Americans against their Afghan brethren and partly in order to establish a Taliban-style rule in Pakistan.

The Distinct Pashtun Identity and Codes

Ethnic Pashtuns are acephalous in nature and organized around a segmentary lineage[13] system. The Pashtun saying, "every man is a Malik", rightly captures their love of freedom and equality. In the early 20th century, Jaggar from Abdur Rehman Khel of the Mehsud tribe suggested to the then British administrator in Waziristan, Sir Evelyn Howell, "Let it be 'field' and blow us all up with cannon or make all eighteen thousand of us Nawabs."[14] The suggestion points out a very pertinent fact that Pashtuns prefer martyrdom over subjugation by outsiders.

Their identity is determined as per the "patrilineal pedigrees" and egalitarian character of their society.[15] In most cases, the tribes are named after their common ancestor. The fierce Wazir tribe is named after their ancestor Wazir, while the Yusufzai tribes are named after their ancestor Yusuf. More or less, it is the same with the tribal units in which they live. North and South Waziristan Agencies are named after the Wazir tribe, the Orakzai Agency after the Orakzai tribe and the Mohmand Agency after the Mohmand tribe.[16]

Pashtunwali — the Pashtun Way

Pashtun society is not entirely homogeneous. However, consensus exists on some core values which cannot be compromised in any circumstances. *Pashtunwali* is composed of two words --- Pashtun (the ethnic group) and *Wali* (pertaining to), thus, *Pashtunwali* means pertaining to Pashtuns or the Pashtun way. It is a set of unwritten codes to which every single Pashtun claims adherence. This uncompromising social code governs almost every aspect of Pashtun life — from birth to death. The importance of *Pashtunwali* is summed up in a proverb which says, "Pashtuns obey only one law—the *Pashtunwali*". It sets rules and regulations for social interaction among the Pashtuns. Distinguished scholar James Spain argues,

> Despite the fact that it has perpetuated the blood feud, [*Pashtunwali*] provides for what is probably the maximum amount of law and order in a society of warrior tribes. While it is true that for the most part it is the individual who acts on the code, the community at large judges with remarkable unanimity the righteousness of his action and supports it or opposes it. [*Pashtunwali*] is still by all odds the strongest force in the tribal area, and the hill [Pashtuns]…accept no law but their own.[17]

There are four vital components of *Pashtunwali* — *Ghairat* (honor), *Melmastia* (generous hospitality), *Nanawatey* (sanctuary or refuge) and *Badal* (revenge). In order to maintain a high sense of dignity and identity, all members of Pashtun society are required to give utmost priority to these codes. *Ghairat* is the most important component, which according to Ahmed Rashid, the noted journalist, "is maintained by constant feuding revolving around *zar* (gold), *zan* (women) and *zamin* (land).[18] Given the male-dominated character of the society, the weight of tribal honor rests on the shoulders of the male members of the community. Weapons are considered to be the only jewelry for these men. Traditionally, these weapons included a sword or dagger. In the present context, however, Kalashnikov assault rifles have become very common. Every male member carries a weapon with him which determines his status "as the protector of his community" in tribal society. The status of a Pashtun family sharply declines in society if the male members of the family are not able to uphold their honor. Such individuals are called *dauz* — a person without honor. In battles if an individual Pashtun retreats, he loses his honor; however, if a group, realizing the impossibility of victory, retreats it will not cause loss of honor.[19]

Melmastia requires the Pashtuns to welcome their visitors "without expectation of favor",[20] and provide them utmost care, protection and other facilities to maximize their comfort. Generally, the guests, while in the care and company of their Pashtun hosts, can neither be harmed nor surrendered to the enemies. However, if a foreigner, anyone other than a Pashtun, is the cause of war, he will have to leave.[21]

By invoking *Nanawatey*, anyone can ask for protection against their enemies. The code of *Nanawatey* is very flexible in nature. Among Pashtuns, requesting protection under *Nanawatey* is a sign of weakness and a kind of self-humiliation. However, once requested, the other party is obligated to honor the request, even if it comes from people who did considerable harm in the past. The party which grants *Nanawatey* protects the seeker, even at the cost of his own life. Although *Nanawatey* is granted temporarily, its time frame depends on mutual understanding between the protector and the seeker.

Badal signifies both revenge and exchange. It is worth noticing that revenge is much referred to rather than exchange. Revenge follows the principle of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". If one suffers dishonor — due to grievous acts by others such as murder, theft and rape — his family, sub-clan or clan is required to protect his honor by exacting revenge from the transgressor's family, sub-clan or clan. In Pashtun society this is

considered the only way of ensuring stability and correcting a wrongful act. Unlike modern societies where the slogan "justice delayed is justice denied" is common, in Pashtun societies it may take generations to settle scores. Like *Nanawatey*, there is no fixed time period to take revenge which is rightly captured in a Pashtun proverb, "I took my revenge after a hundred years and I only regret that I acted in haste". As far as the second meaning of *Badal* is concerned, it may be understood with an example: in a *Badal* wedding, suggest Johnson and Mason, two brides are exchanged, one from each family for a son of the other.[22]

The *Jirga* System

In order to avoid bloodshed and settle disputes and long-lasting rivalries between families, sub-clans or clans, there is a *Jirga* system. The *Jirga* system is closely associated with the *Pashtunwali*. Some suggest it is an element of *Pashtunwali* itself. The *Jirga*, an assembly of adult Pashtuns, is a customary judicial institution of conflict resolution in Pashtun society. Generally, a *Jirga* is called on to resolve serious issues pertaining to Pashtun society. During the *Jirga*, people sit in a large circle to discuss and deliberate on important questions related to specific matters. The *Mashars* or *Spin Giris* (white bearded elders), because of their knowledge of the codes and their experience, command great respect in society and play an important role in passing judgement. The system works on the principle of consultation and consensus and dispenses speedy justice. According to Barnett R. Rubin,

> *Jirga* includes all adult males and rules by consensus. In theory, a *Jirga* can be convened at any level of tribal organization, from the smallest lineage to an entire confederation. *Jirgas* are most commonly held at the lineage level but there are larger tribal or even inter-tribal *jirgas* as well, at least among eastern Pashtuns.[23]

Besides mediating in disputes, the *Jirga* holds the authority to declare war or work out a peace agreement between the conflicting parties. Given the egalitarian character of the society and a strong sense of independence, an overarching central authority could never be established. The *Mashars*, argues Akbar Ahmed, "rely on personal charisma, wisdom, bravery, knowledge of the code and other personal characteristics to lay claim to authority".[24] In most cases, estimated to be 95 percent, the *Jirga* succeeds in resolving the issue. The remaining 5 percent issues are settled by force. A Pashto proverb reflects the reality regarding the unresolved 5 percent cases: "What is not decided in the *Jirga* will be decided by bloodshed".[25]

Pakistan's Policy toward Pashtun Dominated Tribal Areas

The British, even at the height of their colonial power, realized that these Pashtun tribes could not be controlled and governed like the rest of India. To deal with the tribes, they devised a mechanism emphasizing "masterly inactivity" which required non-interference in tribal affairs. Thomas Barfield refers to this as the "Swiss Cheese Model" of governance. According to this model, the central governments

> expected their writs to run completely only in the most populated and economically prosperous parts of the country. The people in the poorer high mountains, steppes and deserts were left to fend for themselves as long as they did not challenge state authority. If they did, the state resorted to a range of weapons well short of direct rule to get them to cease. These included internal rivals, denial of access to vital urban markets and one-off punitive campaigns designed to emphasize the cost of resistance.[26]

On the Indian side along the Durand Line,[27] which divides Pashtuns between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the British created autonomous tribal agencies. The Frontier Crimes Regulations, introduced in 1901, combined the colonial legal framework with the traditional tribal customs and norms. It created the institution called the Political Agent with wide powers and

finance to secure the loyalties of various influential tribal chiefs. The loyalty of the tribal chiefs was ensured through regular subsidies,[28] thus the Pashtun-dominated areas enjoyed a semi-autonomous status.

On the Pakistani side, the Pashtun are primarily concentrated in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) which are comprised of seven tribal agencies — Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand, Bajaur, North Waziristan and South Waziristan. Johnson and Mason claim that the name of the area is a misnomer and cannot be considered federally administered as Islamabad could never maintain legal jurisdiction over more than 100 meters on both sides of the few paved roads in the tribal areas.[29]

Pakistan, after coming into existence in 1947, did not interfere with the system created by the British. Soon after the partition of British India into India and Pakistan, these bordering tribes pledged their allegiance to Pakistan and signed over thirty instruments of accession that cemented the ties between the unruly tribes and the new Pakistani government. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Quaid-e-Azam, on 17 April 1948, convened a Tribal *Jirga* at the Governor House in Peshawar and interacted with the tribesmen. During the interaction, Jinnah stated,

> Keeping in view your loyalty, help, assurance and declarations we ordered, as you know, the withdrawal of troops from Waziristan as a concrete and definite gesture on our part - that we treat you with absolute confidence and trust you as our Muslim brethren across the border. I am glad that there is full realization on your part that now the position is basically different. It is no longer a foreign Government as it was, but it is now a Muslim Government and Muslim rule that holds the reigns of this great independent sovereign State of Pakistan. Pakistan has no desire to unduly interfere with your internal freedom. On the contrary, Pakistan wants to help you and make you, as far as it lies in our power, self-reliant and self-sufficient and help in your educational, social and economic uplift, and not be left as you are dependent on annual doles, as has been the practice hitherto which meant that at the end of the year you were no better off than beggars asking for allowances, if possible a little more. You have also expressed your desire that the benefits, such as your allowances and *khassadari* that you have had in the past and are receiving, should continue. Neither my Government nor I have any desire to modify the existing arrangements except in consultation with you so long as you remain loyal and faithful to Pakistan.[30]

Thus, the semi-autonomous status of the area was not disturbed even

after Pakistan's creation. Allowances and *khassadari* to influential tribal chiefs continued as before. The army, deployed in the FATA region, was withdrawn. This allowed the three distinct power-centers to co-exist — Malik (the tribal elders), Mullah (the religious leader), and Political Agent (the federal government's representative). Maliks derived their authority from the lineage based system and *Pashtunwali*. Mullahs were appointees of tribal elders to provide Islamic education to children and lead the prayers in mosques, while the Political Agents received powers from the federal Pakistani government. It is important to note that the position of Mullahs was inferior to tribal elders in Pashtun society and they did not have a say in important matters. They were completely dependent on the tribal elders for their income and security of mosques.[31] They were also not a part of the *Jirga* system that would take important decisions pertaining to Pashtun society. Their job was to lead prayers, at every meeting, for the success of the *Jirga*. In special circumstances, when an invasion in the tribal areas seemed imminent, they took the responsibility of rallying tribesmen by giving a call for *Jihad*.

The first major attempt to introduce change in the tribal areas came during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's tenure. In the 1970-1971 General Elections, Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) emerged as the single largest party in West Pakistan (present day Pakistan); yet in two strategically important provinces — the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan — regional parties formed the governments. The National Awami Party (NAP) and Jamiat-ul-Islam (JUI) formed a coalition government in the NWFP, while the NAP alone came to power in Balochistan. Bhutto wanted to break the hold of regional parties in these provinces. He tried to cultivate tribal areas to check his rivals in the NWFP. For the first time, since the creation of Pakistan, the federal government attacked the privileges granted to tribal elders and promised adult franchise in these areas as well. The government established the FATA Development Council and the FATA administration was brought under the new Federal Ministry of State and Frontier Regions.[32] It is worth noting that these administrative reforms did not alter the prevailing system in the tribal areas. Bhutto's regime was toppled by the military before some of these reforms could take effect on the ground. On 4 July 1977, General Zia-ul-Haq took over as Chief Martial Law Administrator. In his first address to the nation, on 5 July 1977, he described himself as a "Soldier of Islam", and stated that "Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and it will survive only if it sticks to Islam".

Due to Zia-ul-Haq's policies, the Mullahs gained prominence in the

tribal areas. During the Soviet invasion[33] of Afghanistan, the Zia-ul-Haq administration excessively relied on the Mullahs to rally tribesmen and other Muslims for the "Holy War" against the Soviets. The bypassing of two important power-centers — the Maliks and the Political Agents — by the federal government altered the power-balance in the tribal areas. The Mullahs, earlier dependent on the Maliks for their income and protection, now had more than enough money and weapons with themselves. In the words of Akbar Ahmed, "Almost overnight, the Mullahs had been elevated to a primary leadership role in Waziristan in the most significant war in the region in living memory".[34]

The 9/11 Incident and Subsequent Developments

The September 11 terrorist attack on the United States, popularly known as the 9/11 incident, is considered to be a watershed in the history of international relations. It was the biggest challenge, in the post-Cold War era, faced by the United States — the sole superpower of the contemporary world — which guided structural changes in the international system.[35] The impact of this incident was such that a number of states of the international system had to make substantial changes in their foreign and security policies. It did not take much time for the US administration to determine that the Afghanistan based al-Qaeda, under the leadership of Osama bin Laden (now dead), was responsible for the gruesome attacks. To deal with the situation, the Bush administration decided to launch a "Global War on Terrorism" with the explicit aim of eliminating top al-Qaeda leadership, defeat the Taliban and dismantle the infrastructure of terror worldwide. US policymakers rightly concluded that in order to succeed in Afghanistan, Pakistan's support was essential, as it was the only country bordering Afghanistan, having close ties with the Taliban regime and situated beside the Indian Ocean. To get Pakistan's approval and support for "The Global War on Terrorism", the administration in Washington increased diplomatic pressure coupled with threat to brand Pakistan as a terrorist state and punish it accordingly. Richard Armitage, the then Deputy Secretary of State, had gone to the extent of threatening Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Chief Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmed that Pakistan would be bombed back to the "stone age" if it refuses to align with the US.[36]

General Pervez Musharraf, then the Chief Executive of Pakistan, found

himself in a tight corner and after thoroughly probing all the available options, decided to join the US in its "Global War on Terrorism" as a frontline ally. Before the commencement of Operation Infinite Justice (OIF), later renamed Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Musharraf made repeated attempts to persuade Mullah Omar to hand over Osama bin Laden and avoid an outright confrontation with the US. He assigned the job to ISI Chief Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmed who led a few delegations to the Afghan leadership in Kandahar. Instead of persuading Mullah Omar, as is widely believed, Lieutenant General Mahmood assured him of ISI's support.[37] In an interview given to Shuja Nawaz, he later said that he did not try to persuade Mullah Omar to do anything against his belief.[38] He stated, "I am a Muslim. Why would I go against another Muslim?" Mullah Omar, on his part, justified his decision of not handing over Osama bin Laden to the Americans by invoking the *Pashtunwali* principal of *Melmastia*. It is surprising that Mullah Omar did not face tough opposition, as he wrongly interpreted the *Pashtunwali* principle. Indeed, *Pashtunwali* is meant to protect the weakest members within the tribe. For outsiders, the rules are not the same. If an outsider is a "cause of war", he is required to leave.[39] It was against the basic ethos of *Pashtunwali* to invoke *Melmastia* in Osama bin Laden's case, as the noted terrorist was both a foreigner and cause of a war.

When attempts to persuade the Taliban regime to hand over Laden failed, the US launched a military operation in Afghanistan. In less than two months, under heavy bombardment from the coalition forces, the Taliban regime collapsed. In order to escape death, members of the Afghan Taliban along with al-Qaeda and other foreign elements decided to retreat from Afghanistan to the lawless tribal areas of Pakistan. Prior to the 9/11 incident, the area had been an important source of support for the Afghan Taliban.[40] In the post-9/11 period, it became critical for the physical survival and regrouping of Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters. It was natural for Pashtun elements, given the kinship ties and familial relationship, to find safe haven in the Pashtun dominated bordering areas of Pakistan. On the one hand, the government had no capacity to stop the terrorists due to the limited writ of the state in the bordering areas, and on the other, the Pakistani establishment had for long seen and nurtured such elements as "strategic assets" to be used in accomplishing regional objectives. Thus, under intense pressure, General Pervez Musharraf officially agreed to make Pakistan a frontline ally in the "Global War on Terrorism", and later sent the military to conduct operations in the tribal areas.[41]

Military Operations and Aerial Drones in the Tribal Areas

The Pakistani establishment was well aware of the situation in the bordering tribal areas. As mentioned earlier, Jinnah had ordered the withdrawal of the army from the tribal areas to preserve the semi-autonomous status of the area. It was only in the year 2002 that the army was allowed to enter all the tribal agencies for building roads and fostering economic development.[42] In a completely changed environment, due to the 9/11 incident and subsequent US retaliation, Pakistan knew how difficult it was to strike a balance between growing US pressure to act against the retreating terrorists and the semi-autonomous status of fierce Karlanri Pashtuns with ties across the border. The military establishment adopted a dual approach. To gain the confidence of the US and the international community, it decided to target, albeit halfheartedly, al-Qaeda militants responsible for the 9/11 attack; yet with the same token deliberately spared Afghan Taliban, especially the top leadership.

Under intense US pressure, the Pakistan Army entered into the tribal territory and on 22 June 2002, conducted its first ever operation against al-Qaeda at Azam Warsak in South Waziristan.[43] The operation was a failure as the locals were sympathetic towards the defeated Taliban regime and their al-Qaeda allies. Realizing this, on 27 June 2002, a number of army officers, including Brigadier Shaukat Hayat and Colonel Saeed Khan, approached a tribal *Jirga* and promised the elders that they would be given a chance to handle the precarious situation on their own before taking any future military operation against al-Qaeda.[44] Traditionally, the Political Agent, who knew the area and people better than any military officer, was responsible for this very job. Bypassing the office of the Political Agent was the first major mistake on the part of the military regime.

The Pakistan Army, on 2 October 2003, supported by 12 helicopter gunships, violating their own pledge, air-dropped approximately 2,500 commandos into the Baghar village near Angor Ada. The subsequent operation was led by Major-General Faisal Alvi which resulted in the death of several high-profile al-Qaeda commanders, including Abdul Rahman Kennedy.[45] The operation also left 31 Pakistani soldiers dead. Despite resentment among the Pashtun tribes, the Pakistan Army continued its small scale operation against the foreign terrorists who had been given shelter under *Pashtunwali*.

In March 2004, armed forces surrounded a house in Kaloosha

(South Waziristan) in which Tahir Yuldashev, the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), was residing along with his supporters. A deadly fight ensued when armed forces asked the terrorists to surrender. At this point, the rumor of Tahir Yuldashev's death reached the local tribes. Agitated by the news of Tahir's death, Zillikhel tribesmen surrounded the corps laying seige to the house. The deadly fighting left at least 80 Pakistani soldiers — South Waziristan Scout and Frontier Corps — dead.[46] This was a serious setback for the strongest institution of Pakistan. After regrouping, the Pakistan Army launched a major operation, known as the Kaloosha Operation, with full force. It was a conventional offensive in which heavy artillery, helicopter gunships and fighter bombers were used.[47] The operation was a complete failure because on one hand the army and local tribesmen suffered heavy casualties and on the other, it failed to dismantle the power and capabilities of the terrorists. Most importantly, the operation further alienated the local tribesmen. According to Imtiaz Gul,

> The Kaloosha Operation, undertaken jointly by the Scouts and the army to flush out foreign militants from a fifty-square-kilometer area near Wana, sowed the seeds of dissent among many locals, created a feeling of hatred for the army and laid the groundwork for a new concentration of militants in Waziristan under the leadership of the Taliban and al-Qaeda.[48]

Local tribesmen considered the Kaloosha Operation a betrayal on the part of the Pakistani state and army because it was launched at a time when the political administration was negotiating with the locals regarding the presence of foreign elements in the area. Imtiaz Gul quoted an Ahmadzai Wazir saying,

> We were stabbed in the back… We were promised dialogue and development funds but all the time plans for a military operation against our tribes was well underway.[49]

Since then, the Pakistan Army has conducted a number of military operations (both small and large scale) in the tribal areas and whenever the army suffered heavy casualties, they resorted to peace deals. The Army's operations, starting from 2002, included Operation Al-Mizan (2002), Operation Kazha Punga (2002), the Kaloosha Operation (2004), Operation Zalzala (2008), Operation Silence (2009), Operation Rah-e-Rast (2009), Operation Khwakh Ba De Sham (2010), Operation Brekhna

(2011), Operation Koh-e-Sufaid (2011) and Operation Zarb-e-Azb (2014). In most cases, after each intensive military operation, a short-lived ceasefire or peace deal was negotiated.

The first peace deal took place after the failed Kaloosha Operation in 2004. The Pakistani military officers, amid the mounting casualties and desertions in the Frontier Corps, approached Nek Mohammad Wazir for negotiating a peace deal. Under *Pashtunwali*, approaching for peace in your rival's territory is virtually considered as surrender. The final round of negotiation took place at a Deobandi *madrassa* near Wana on 27 March 2004. Nek Mohammad Wazir, Hazi Mohammad Sharif with eighteen other members including tribal elders and local *Ulema* (associated with JUI) participated in the grand *Jirga*.[50] The agreement reached at the *Jirga* is known as the Shakai Agreement.[51]

Lieutenant General Safdar Hussain, after signing the agreement, hugged and garlanded Nek Mohammad Wazir and said, "I congratulate Nek Mohammad and his colleagues on their courageous decision. You are our brothers and your allegiance pledge is exemplary."[52] It required Pakistan to release all individuals taken prisoner during the operation, pay compensation for casualties and collateral damage, not to take action against Nek Mohammad and other wanted individuals, and allow foreign Mujahideen to live peacefully in Waziristan.[53] On their part, tribesmen agreed that local Mujahideen would not take action against Pakistan and Mujahideen-e-Waziristan would not take part in any action in Afghanistan.[54] The other peace deals included the Sararogha Agreement (2005), the Miranshah Peace Accord (2006), the Khyber Agency Pact (2008), the Swat Agreements (2008) and others.

The United States, dissatisfied with the Pakistan Army's ground operations, started using drones to target terrorists in the tribal areas of Pakistan. There was a secret agreement between the military regime in Pakistan and the United States over the drone campaign. In many cases, Pakistanis provided the ground intelligence, while CIA conducted strikes. This was probably the reason that the Pakistan Army tried to cover up the initial strikes and took credit for killing the terrorists. On 17 June 2004, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) fired the first drone strike in South Waziristan which killed Nek Mohammad Wazir. The Pakistani authorities denied any US involvement and claimed that the attack was carried out by Pakistani forces.[55]

Emboldened by the accuracy of the target, the CIA launched another drone strike in North Waziristan on 5 November to kill al-Qaeda activist Abu Hamza Rabia. The attack was accurate and resulted in the death of 8 people including Rabia's wife and daughter, however, Rabia himself was fortunate enough to escape with a broken hand and a leg. He was finally killed in a drone strike on 1 December 2005. Pakistani authorities again tried to cover for the drone strike by claiming that Rabia was killed in an accidental blast from explosives inside the house. However, the shrapnel found at the site made it clear enough that it was a US guided Hellfire missile attack which killed him. The local people had seen the initials "AGM 114", "US" and "Guided Missile" on a metal piece which left no room for confusion.[56] The tribal journalist Hayatullah Khan, who broke the story of Rabia's death in a drone strike, was later abducted, possibly by Pakistan's intelligence agencies, tortured and killed. His wife Mehrunnisa accused intelligence agencies of the killing and also claimed that her husband met such a fate because he refused to backtrack on his report that Rabia's death was caused by a US Hellfire missile. A few months later, Mehrunnisa too was mysteriously killed and suspicion again fell on intelligence agencies.

When the use of drones by CIA came into the public domain, the military government changed its tactics. Now it started publically condemning the drone attacks, while privately providing ground intelligence. The top secret CIA documents and Pakistani diplomatic memos, accessed by the Washington Post, later revealed that "Despite repeatedly denouncing the CIA's drone campaign, top officials in Pakistan's government have for years secretly endorsed the program and routinely received classified briefings on strikes and casualty counts".[57] The most controversial part of drone strikes is that despite being precise and accurate, they indiscriminately kill people and cause collateral damage. There is no denying the fact that a number of high value targets were successfully achieved through drone strikes which included Haitham al Yamani, Abu Hamza Rabia, Midhat Mursi, Khalid Habib, Baitullah Mehsud, Hakeemullah Mehsud, Wali-ur-Rehman and many more. However, one cannot ignore the numerous innocent people who fell prey to the CIA drones. It is equally important to understand that everyone residing in the tribal areas is not a terrorist.

A report prepared jointly by a study of Stanford Law School and New York University's School of Law suggests that the number of "high-level" targets killed as a percentage of total casualties is extremely low — about 2 percent.[58] It is important to note that drone strikes

actually accelerated recruitment in the terrorist organizations. *Badal*, an important component of *Pashtunwali*, requires the relatives of the killed Pashtun to take revenge by killing the accused or his dearest ones. This very fact was underlined by Asfandyar Wali Khan, President of Awami National Party (ANP), in a lecture delivered in New Delhi on 21 April 2011. In an answer to a question, he stated that when the British were in the area, they respected the tribal culture and tradition and never tried to violate it but the problem with the Americans is that they do not respect the traditional way of life and thus, people oppose them and in some cases fight with them.[59]

Riding on the wave of growing anti-Americanism in Pakistani society and a feeling of revenge among Pashtun tribesmen, terrorist forces intensified their recruitment process which ultimately ended in increasing control of the tribal areas by the militant organizations. It was conceded by none other than the Taliban spokesman Muhammed Umer that although the CIA's drones created some difficulties, it guided the recruitment process and with the flow of new blood in the organization the Taliban became more powerful.[60]

Now given the history of the tribal areas, Pakistan's policies and post-9/11 military operations, the CIA's drone attacks caused great resentment among the Pashtun tribes who were sympathetic to the Afghan Taliban and their associates such as al-Qaeda and IMU. Various extremist groups (patronized, nurtured and trained by Pakistan to achieve foreign policy objectives) tried to exploit the situation to increase their power and influence in the region. This brought them in direct confrontation with the state of Pakistan, especially with the military establishment. Until 2007, various Pakistani Taliban commanders such as Baitullah Mehsud, Maulvi Nazir, Mullah Fazlullah, Maulvi Faqir and others had confined themselves to different tribal agencies and were loosely organized. However, as mentioned before, in the wake of a series of military operations coupled with CIA fired drones, militants (both local and foreign) felt the need for a central command figure that could transcend tribal regions. Baitullah Mehsud,[61] the Taliban commander in South Waziristan, was found to be a unifying force. Various local commanders, with active help from foreign terrorist outfits, accepted Baitullah Mehsud as their leader and in late 2007 announced the formation of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.

The principle objectives of this Pakistani version of Taliban are — uniting disparate pro-Taliban groups active in the FATA and NWFP

(Now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), assisting the Afghan Taliban in its conflict across the international frontier and establishing a Taliban-style state in Pakistan and perhaps beyond.[62] Nobody in Pakistan knew at that time that the group would prove to be the most dangerous outfit in Pakistan. In less than a year after its formation, as per various reports, it was found involved in most of the incidents in the tribal belt which included abductions, targeting of officials, military convoys, government infrastructure and such. Once the TTP consolidated its position in the tribal areas, it started mutating the very basics of *Pashtunwali*. Although it did not spare anyone opposing its ideology, program and vision of an Islamic state (based on selective interpretation of verses from the Quran), tribal elders were the prime target, as they had considerable power and influence in the traditional structure. As per some estimate, more than 1,000 elders who did not approve TTP's program and style of working have been brutally killed so far. The TTP's way of achieving its organizational goals has led people to believe that "*Maliks* have gone, *Jirga* is ineffective and *Pashtunwali* is dead".[63]

Endnotes

1   A tribe is a socio-cultural-ethnic entity or an association of kindred groups which are composed of various families. For details, see Sahlins, Marshal D. (1961), The Segmentary Lineage: An Organization of Predatory Expansion, *American Anthropologist, New Series*, 63 (2): 322-345.

2   Edward, David B. (1998), Learning from the Swat Pathans: Political Leadership in Afghanistan, 1978-97, *American Ethnologist*, 25 (4): 712-728.

3   Johnson and Mason talk about five loose groupings — Durrani, Ghilzai, Sarbani, Ghurghust and Karlanri. For details, see Johnson, Thomas H. and M. Chris Mason (2008), No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier, *International Security*, 32 (4): 41-77.

4   Some larger *khels* are also divided into sub-*khels*.

5   Johnson, Thomas H. and M. Chris Mason (2008), No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier, *International Security*, 32 (4): 41-77.

6   Ibid.

7   Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Khudai Khidmatgars are considered an exception in this regard. Under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in 1929 thousands of Pashtuns non-violently mobilized to oppose the British Colonial Empire. It is believed that around 100,000 Pashtuns joined the movement and pledged to serve the people in the name of God. For details, see Kurtz, Lester (2009), *The Khudai Khidmatgar (Servants of God) Movement: Badshah Khan and the Northwest Frontier in British India (1933-1937)*, [Online: web] Accessed 11 December 2014. URL: http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/movements-and-campaigns/movements-and-campaigns-summaries?sobi2Task=sobi2Details&catid=17&sobi2Id=15

8   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), *Thistle and Drone*: *America's War on Terror or War on Tribal Islam*, Lahore: Vanguard Books, p. 5.

9   This was the greatest disaster of Mughal arms during Akbar's tenure. For details, see Richards, F. John (2001), *The Mughal Empire*, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 50-51.

10   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 57.

11   Fair, C. Christine (2014), *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 106.

12   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 155.

13   Pashtun society is based on a distinct type of kinship structure which is referred to by anthropologists as a segmentary lineage system. In such a system, a particular society is divided into various segments. Members of each segment are ideally descendants of a common ancestor. At a higher level, principally all the Pashtuns are descended from a common ancestor. For details, see Trainter, Joseph A. (2001), *Pashtun Social Structure: Cultural Perceptions and Segmentary Lineage Organization*, [Online: web] Accessed 26 August 2014. URL: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1934940

14   Howell, Sir Evelyn Berkeley (1931), *Mizh: A Monograph on Government's Relations with the Mehsud Tribe*, London: Oxford University Press, p. 96.

15   Berrenberg, Jeanne (2003), Beyond Kinship Algebra: Values and the Riddle of Pashtun Marriage Structure, *Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie*, 128 (2): 269-292.

16   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 20.

17   Spain, James W. (1963), *The Pathan Borderland*, Hague: Mouton, p. 68.

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24   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 20.

25   Rahi, Arwin (2011), *Effectiveness of Jirgas in Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in Pashtun Societies*, [Online: web] Accessed 26 August 2014. URL: https://www.academia.edu/5505833/Importance_of_Jirgas_in_Pashtun_Societies

26   Barfield, Thomas (2010), *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 337-338.

27   In 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand and Abdur Rahman Khan, the Amir of Afghanistan, reached an agreement regarding the limits of influence of British India and Afghanistan. The line which divided British India and Afghanistan is known as the Durand Line.

28   Haqqani, Husain (0000), *Afghanistan's Islamist Groups*, [Online: web] Accessed 27 August 2014. URL: http://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1326/haqqani_vol5.pdf

29   Johnson, Thomas H. and M. Chris Mason (2008), op cit.

30   Rafique, M. Afzal (1996) *Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1911-34 and 1947-48),* Lahore: University of the Punjab.

31   Nawaz, Shuja (2009), op cit.

32   Khan, Ijaz (2014), *Challenges Facing Development in Pakistan's FATA*, [Online: web] Accessed 28 August 2014. URL: http://www.qissa-khwani.com/2014/02/challenges-facing-development-in.html

33   Contrary to general understanding that Pakistan became involved in the "Holy War" in the wake of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, Zia-ul-Haq deliberately trapped — first Soviets to intervene and then Americans and Saudis to finance the Afghan jihad. Indeed, a low level insurgency against Afghanistan was prepared during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's regime which Zia expanded after taking over.

34   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 66.

35   Shukla, Ashish (2014), Afghan Endgame: Possibility of Regional Consensus?, *Exploring History*, 6 (1): 61-74.

36   Musharraf, Pervez (2006), *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*, London: Simon and Schuster, p. 201.

37   For this very reason, the ISI Chief was later sacked by General Pervez Musharraf along with another, Lieutenant General Usmani, who had spoken against his decision in the high profile meeting at Chaklala. Lieutenant General Aziz was promoted to the ceremonial post of Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff. For details, see Jones, Owen Bennett (2002), *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 25-26.

38   Nawaz, Shuja (2008), *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, It's Army and the Wars Within*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, p. 543.

39   Nawaz, Shuja (2009), op cit.

40   Fishman, Brian (2013), The Taliban in Pakistan: An Overview, in Peter Bergen (eds.), *Talibanistan: Negotiating the Borders Between Terror, Politics and Religion*, New York: Oxford University Press.

41   Although officially General Pervez Musharraf agreed to cut off all the ties with the Afghan Taliban, in reality Pakistan never fully abandoned the most important strategic asset through which it enjoyed "strategic depth" (1996-2001) vis-à-vis its arch-rival India. The Pakistani military still holds the same view and wants to have a pliant regime in Afghanistan so that it could pursue its regional objective without much difficulty. For details, see Shukla, Ashish (2011), Pakistan's Quest for Strategic Depth: Regional Security Implications, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, 15 (3): 81-104.

42   Musharraf, Pervez (2006), *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*, London: Simon and Schuster, p. 264.

43   Shahzad, Syed Saleem (2004), Unlearned Lessons from Waziristan, *Asia Times Online*, [Online: web] Accessed 28 August 2014. URL: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/FG22Df01.html

44   Ibid.

45   Shahzad, Syed Saleem (2011), *Inside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban: Beyond 9/11*, London: Pluto Press, p. 26.

46   Gul, Imtiaz (2011), *The Most Dangerous Place: Pakistan's Lawless Frontier*, New Delhi: Penguin Books. Pp. 21-22.

47   Lalwani, Sameer (2013), Pakistan's Counterinsurgency Strategy, in Peter Bergen (eds.), *Talibanistan: Negotiating the Borders between Terror, Politics and Religion*, New York: Oxford University Press.

48   Gul, Imtiaz (2011), op cit., pp. 23-24.

49   Ibid., p. 24.

50   Jones, Seth G. and C. Christine Fair (2010), *Counterinsurgency in Pakistan*, Pittsburg: RAND Corporation, p. 51.

51   This very *Jirga* was a clear violation of tribal traditions. Under *Pashtunwali*, a *Jirga* is held in public places with no participation of religious leaders - Mullahs. For details, see Shukla, Ashish (2013), *Deadly Connection: The Cost of Becoming a Frontline State*, Delhi: Vijaya Books, p. 114.

52   Hussain, Zahid (2010), *The Scorpion's Tail: The Relentless Rise of Islamic Militants in Pakistan - And How It Threatens the World*, New York: Free Press, pp. 71-72.

53   PIPS (2011), *Analysis of Peace Agreements with Militants and Lessons for the Future*, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies: Islamabad.

54   Ibid.

55   Hussain, Zahid (2010), *The Scorpion's Tail: The Relentless Rise of Islamic Militants in Pakistan - And How It Threatens the World*, New York: Free Press, p. 73.

56   *Evidence Suggests U.S. Missile Used in Strike: Shrapnel Bearing American Markings Found at Blast Site in Pakistan*, [Online: web] Accessed 29 August 2014. URL: http://www.nbcnews.com/id/10303175/ns/world_news-terrorism/#

57   Miller, Greg and Bob Woodward (2013), Secret Memos Reveal Explicit Nature of U.S., Pakistan Agreement on Drones, *The Washington Post*, Washington, 24 October 2013.

58   *Drone Strikes Kill, Maim and Traumatize Too Many Civilians, US Study Says*, [Online: web] Accessed 30 August 2014. URL: http://edition.cnn.com/2012/09/25/world/asia/pakistan-us-drone-strikes/

59   Khan, Asfandyar Wali (2011), *A Vision for Pakistan in the Twenty-First Century*, Lecture delivered on 21 April 2011 at Jamia Millia Islamia: New Delhi.

60   Maqbool, Aleem (2010), *Mapping US Drone and Islamic Militant Attacks in Pakistan*, [Online: web] Accessed 5 October 2010. URL: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-10728844

61   Time magazine in its May 2008 issue had included Baitullah Mehsud in the 100 most influential individuals of the world. There were only two entries from Pakistan and Baitullah Mehsud was one of the two.

62   Kronstadt, K. Alan and Kenneth Katzman (2008), *Islamist Militancy in Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Region and US Policy*, CSR Report for Congress.

63   Ahmed, Akbar (2013), op cit., p. 54.

Representation of the Poor and the Marginalized in Pakistani Painting: From Romanticism to Social Realism and Political Activism

Sadia Pasha Kamran

Introduction

'Art and Aesthetics' have been considered to be the commodity of the rich and the powerful. For the poor, art is a luxury that is not only out of their reach but also out of their priority list that is dominated by the provision of bread and butter, better versed as *roti, kapra aur makaan*. However, this does not mean that the people who live under the poverty line have no business with the extravagance that is known as Fine Art. Ironically, the poor and the marginalized often occur as an important subject of art and such representations happen to decorate the avenues of the rich where the physical presence of the poor is absent. This study, while defining the term 'poor' in Pakistan's socio-cultural context, aims to analyze the purpose and the impact of paintings that take up the poor and the marginalized as their subject matter. It also probes into certain aesthetic theories and artistic trends that trigger off or support the production and reception of artworks that are populated by the powerless and unimportant people of society. From a long list of Pakistani artists, who take up the poor and issues related to them as their subjects, a few have been chosen to be compared with Western artists and art movements in an effort to understand the phenomenon of representation of the poor in Pakistani art.

To be poor is to be lacking in something, to be deficient in some way, to suffer from insufficiency and to fail to meet a minimum requirement of something.[1] Interestingly, this "minimum requirement" or "poverty line" is subject to what is known as "socially acceptable", that is, it emerges out of the historical circumstances of a particular society and is thus relative to a particular place and time. Keeping this in mind, the term 'poor and the marginalized' has an additional connotation when linked to the socio-political, economical as well as the literary traditions of the subcontinent. Here, the word 'poor' not only means the economically deprived, unfortunate, disfavored or unacknowledged, it also refers to someone who is historically disconnected, culturally disengaged or futuristically bewildered. Moreover, in our culture, advocates of

morality will find the words 'humble' and 'pious' synonymous to the word 'poor'. Last but not the least is the Urdu poetry tradition which designates the love-stricken, loafers and even travelers and traders of foreign lands with the same status of being poor. From this perspective, 'the poor' have been profusely represented in Pakistani art though with varying purposes and in different styles. These representations, based on the intention of the artists and on the reception of the artwork, are broadly categorized into three groups: art produced by the romanticists, the social realists and the political activists.

The Romantics

The first group comprises painters who depict the poor with a notion of romance. Romance is the genre that refers to the Hellenistic novel tradition.[2] It also deals with narrative fiction.[3] In music, it is a type of ballad and lyrical song.[4] This notion of romance, at some point, matches the ideas of Romanticism. Romanticism is a late 18th century[5] intellectual movement which originated in Europe as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution. Apparently, it concerns the socio-political and economic history of the era. As a matter of fact, Romanticism incorporated many fields of study not only the arts and humanities but also 19th century science.[6] In its broad scope, Romanticism deals with matters of psychology, religion and common belief. It means that a romantic is someone who glories in the relationship between the energies of men and the wild forces of Nature. Romanticism introduces the concept of the single-minded group and produces the oppressed, collectivized and regimented nation.

Historically, the problem in hand during the Romantic era, in Europe, was to create a new world on the ruins of the old one. During the 18th century, due to the revolutions[7] and Napoleonic wars, it was impossible to think, act, paint or write. Artists and writers needed a new philosophical thought to follow, which was provided by the ideas of Romanticism. It is this constructive and creative aspect of Romanticism which is common to the first category of Pakistani artists who chose the poor as their subject. Once agreed upon, those thinkers, who believe in will power, hero worship and the divine right of people, are Romantic: artists such as Ustaad Allah Bux, with his oil paintings about the common people of the new homeland, can be associated with this group. The narratives of migration that we find in Allah Bux's work document the homeless and hapless migrants who were

historically detached and futuristically bewildered. These paintings share the ideologies of Eugene Delacroix in *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) or even William Turner when he paints *The Slave Ship* (1840). Allah Bux also idealized village life and its naïve, simple and common people who are unaware of the amenities of life. History tells us that the Romantics were not men of one idea or one book. Romanticism supported a social makeover which was the need of 18th century Europe. A similar situation was prevalent in Pakistan in 1947. Such a massive reconstruction needed energy, morality and genius. So Allah Bux, while romanticizing the poor, basically defended himself and his fellows from being escapists, neurotics, tender-minded dreamers, dangerous egoists and traitors to social order, thus earning respectable grounds for the poor in social history. His work glorifies the homeless sitting under open skies without basic human needs of food, shelter and health, physically tired and emotionally drained but passionately charged, psychologically satiated, perceptively clear and thoughtfully considerate and in doing so he changes the definition of the poor for his time and place. In other works he has paid homage to the laborer but instead of distress and scarcity he has highlighted the greatness of the hands which are tanned with toil.

Next are artists who simply highlighted the charisma and beauty hidden beneath the tattered clothes of the poor and the marginalized. Mostly, these are portraits of young women but beggars, homeless and wise old men

Figure 1

Village Folk, Allah Bux, Oil on Canvas (1985-1978)

also appear to celebrate the innocence and piety of such poor. *The Nomad of Thar* by Athar Jamal, the *Range-Sehra* series by S. Noori and the sensuous feminine figures of Moazzim Ali are some examples. In the Thar series, Athar has documented the costumes, homes and customs of the Thar region of Pakistan. Focusing on the poor dwellers of the desert as subjects of his paintings, the figure studies are dramatic renderings of color and shades.

On the other hand, Thar women painted by Moazzim Ali are representations of beauty and sensuality; the exhibition was titled *Indus Feminine Saga* and was reviewed in newspapers as paintings of "hot subjects". He himself recognizes these poor women as "symbols of continuity and life" and admits that nature with its limitless diversity glories and graces his imagination.

Abbas Ali in *Gurd Baad* (Dusty Wind) paints "the present of the poor - the day they live and nothing beyond". Abbas captures with heartfelt feelings their moment to moment existence. He believes that "they live at the mercy of nature, which brings about drought, famine and rain governing their way of life. They keep on moving under the direction of weather conditions, finding new shelters in search of food and water."[8] Thus, as a typical Romanticist, "he glories in the relation between the energies of men and the wild forces of Nature."[9]

Next are the ones who painted poor people but neither the character nor the disposition of the poor is their main concern. These artists are in love with the artistic intricacies and simply romanticize the notion of art-making with the exploration of medium and style as their priority. Examples are Ahmed Zoay and Nahida Raza.
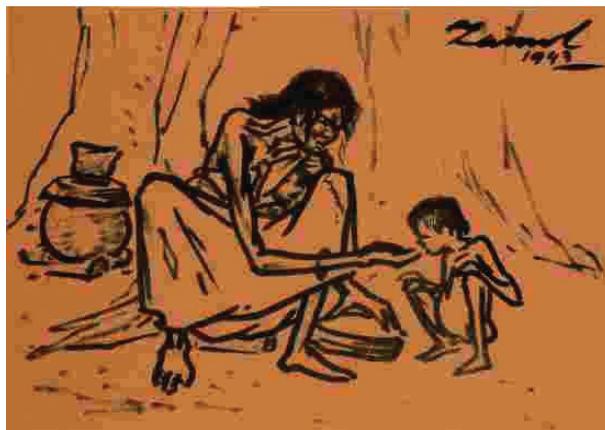
Figure 2

Gurd Baad (Dusty Wind), Ali Abbas, Water Color, 2011

The Social Realists

The Realists borrow their philosophy of art-making from an international art movement, Social Realism. Social Realism originated in about 1930 as a trend in American art and refers, in its narrow sense, to paintings treating themes of social protest in a naturalistic or quasi-expressionist manner. It may or may not manifest socially critical comment. In common understanding, it refers to the work of artists who draw attention to everyday conditions of the working classes and the poor and who are critical of the social structures that cause these conditions. While the movement's artistic styles vary from nation to nation, it almost always utilizes a form of descriptive or critical realism.[10] In such context, Social Realism is traced back to 19th century European Realism. Realism in art sought to convey a truthful and objective vision of contemporary life. Gustave Courbet, who is known as the founder of the movement, considered painting as "an essentially concrete art which can only consist in the representation of real and existing things." It is probably the first time in the history of art that the poor were depicted in art for the sake of the poor. Following this trend, other artists like Jean-François Millet executed scenes of rural life that monumentalize peasants at work in *The Gleaners*. Similarly, Honore Daumiere's *The Third-Class Carriage* documents the pitiable condition of an anonymous crowd of working-class men and women. The contribution of these Realists was to bring the poor and the marginalized to the avenues of Art. Artists who share the ideology of depicting the truthful and objective vision of contemporary life as favored in Realism are many. Zainul Abidin, with his famous famine series and paintings of village life, pioneers the list here. Anna Molka was also fond of depicting the poor and we find beggars and poor villagers in her work. Iqbal Hussain painted the 'doomed' prostitutes who titivate the nights of many but disappear in the predestined quarters of shame and silence during the day and by doing so he paid tribute to these marginalized 'dancing girls of Lahore'. Similarly, Salman Toor is an

Figure 3
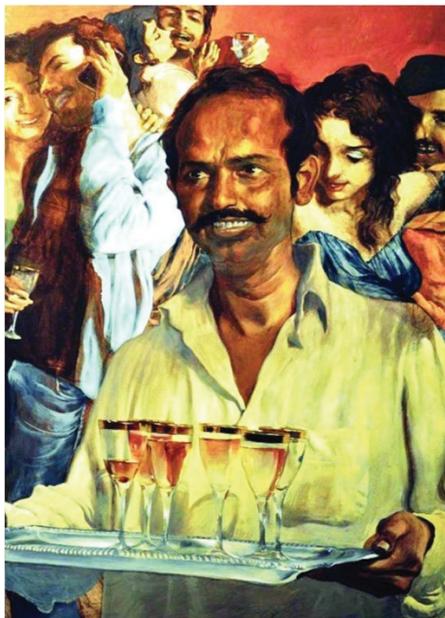
Famine Series, Zainul Abidin, Oil on Paper, 1943

artist who paints the working class engaged in their everyday duties.
These are the compositions which exhibit people from real life and as far
as these characters are concerned, they are busy in the ultimate reality
of earning bread for their loved ones. The reality of life along with
conviction of character is the epitome of Salman's paintings. At first
glance, these paintings are warm and familiar. They evoke the comforts
of bourgeois life in Pakistan.
We experience the pleasures of
riding in the back of a chauffeur-
driven car; we share an affluent
girl's bemused indifference to
a beggar's face in her window
but almost immediately we are
ambushed by irony. Salman sums
up his concerns in these words:

In our world, as well as in the
West, there have been niches in
the history of visual art in which
poverty has been fetishized, not
only made holy but delicious, as
though for consumption. I like that
contradiction. Look at the 16th and
17th century Mughal miniatures of

princes showing themselves holding council with poor sages and dervishes and look at European paintings of peasants and beggars, every filthy detail so endearingly painted, framed thoughtfully and sold to be put up in a household that can afford it.[11]

The Political Activists

Art in Pakistan has a long established tradition of being a medium of the avant-garde. The military dictatorships and staged democracies forced artists to come up front and play their role in raising voice when the basic human rights of expression and free speech were suspended. A. R. Nagori pioneers the lists of artists who used art as the visual discourse of an activist. Nagori was an expert in exposing the dark themes of the lives of the poor. Known as "the voice of the downtrodden and victimized", he became a public personality as a "provocateur". He frequently exposed the wretched situation of the *Haari* women of Sind. Activism in art involves a social critique with the hope of evoking the emotions of the viewer to such an extent where he or she will stand up to take action for or against a certain issue. In a speech in 1996, Nagori said,

> Some artists are interested in solving the problems of style and techniques, while others use style and technique to express their social and political views and in the process undertake 'artistic responsibility'. For the latter, art does not exist merely to entertain and gratify the senses only. It plays a role in the improvement of our collective existence. They argue that as long as there are socio-political wrongs to be righted and as long as an unjust and ugly condition requires change, art must participate through visual education and [lead] people to awareness for a better society.

Jimmy Engineer also had an activist's agenda when he recreated the horrific scenes of migration – the emotionally drained, physically exhausted and financially bankrupt people adorn the surface of his canvases. His series of pencil sketches qualify the category of portraits of the poor, highlighting their timid characters and frail status in society. He prefers to be acknowledged as a simple mortal who cares for the human kingdom with a passion. That passion has been waging a war within him for over twenty five years, alternately translating into colored imagery or humane deeds to support miserable souls. Jimmy's many 'walks-for-a-cause' have earned him a special standing amongst Pakistan's philanthropists as he has undertaken long, arduous journeys on foot to create awareness for many human rights issues.

Conclusion

The poor and the marginalized are well represented in Pakistani art which on one hand proves the importance of this class in society and authenticates Pakistani art on the other. The different approaches towards the subject elicit the competency of the artists in recognizing various economic, social, political as well as cultural issues which identify a healthy social structure. One does not know how effective the recognition of these stratifications between the poor and the rich is but it definitely indicates a living, healthy society.

Endnotes

1   Keith Griffin, (2005). *Problems of Poverty and Marginalization*. Working Paper Series, Volume 51, Political Economy Research Institute. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.

2   Five ancient Greek novels survived from antiquity: Chariton's *Callirhoe* (mid-1st century), Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* (early 2nd century), Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* (2nd century), Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesian Tale* (late 2nd century) and Heliodorus of Emesa's *Aethiopica* (3rd century). S. A. Stephens and J. J. Winkler, (1995). *Ancient Greek Novels: The Fragments*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

3   Chivalric romance is a type of prose and verse narrative that was popular in the aristocratic circles of High Medieval and Early Modern Europe. They were fantastic stories about marvel-filled adventures, often of a knight-errant portrayed as having heroic qualities. Originally, romance literature was written in Old French, Anglo-Norman and Occitan and later, in English and German. During the early 13th century, romances were increasingly

written as prose. In later romances, particularly those of French origin, there is a marked tendency to emphasize themes of courtly love such as faithfulness in adversity. During the Gothic Revival, from c. 1800 the connotations of "romance" moved from the magical and fantastic to somewhat eerie "Gothic" adventure narratives. Gothic fiction is a genre or mode of literature that combines fiction, horror and Romanticism. Its origin is attributed to English author Horace Walpole with his 1764 novel *The Castle of Otranto*, subtitled (in its second edition) "A Gothic Story." The effect of Gothic fiction feeds on a pleasing sort of terror, an extension of Romantic literary pleasures that were relatively new at the time of Walpole's novel.

4   Applied to narrative ballads in Spain, it came to be used by the 18th century for simple lyrical pieces, not only for voice but also for instruments alone. The *Oxford Dictionary of Music* states, "Generally it implies a specially personal or tender quality". Beethoven: two violin romances (*Romanzen*) for violin and orchestra. Mozart subtitled the second movement of his piano concerto No. 20 in D minor (K. 466) *Romanze* and his Horn Concerto has a *Romance and Rondo*.

5   Europeans whose birth falls between 1770 and 1815 are Romantic, though this timeframe is subject to exceptions in the case of Goethe and Blake.

6   In contrast to Enlightenment mechanistic natural philosophy, European scientists of the Romantic period held that observing nature implied understanding the self and that knowledge of nature "should not be obtained by force". They felt that Enlightenment had encouraged the abuse of the sciences and they sought to advance a new way to increase scientific knowledge, one that they felt would be more beneficial not only to mankind but to nature as well. Romanticism advanced a number of themes: it promoted anti-reductionism (the whole was more valuable than the parts alone) and epistemological optimism (man was connected to nature) and encouraged creativity, experience and genius. It also emphasized the scientist's role in scientific discovery as understanding that acquiring knowledge of nature meant understanding man as well; therefore, these scientists placed a high importance on respect for nature.

7   French Revolution and Industrial Revolution

8   In an interview published in *Pakistan Art Review 2001*. Retrieved from http://pakistanartreview. net/2nd_Issue/2nd_Page_1.html

9   Jaque, Barzun, (1975). *Classic, Romantic and Modern.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

10   Todd, James G., (2009). Social Realism. *Art Terms*. Museum of Modern Art.

11   In an interview published in *The Friday Times*. Retrieved on 6 October, 2014 from http://www. thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20130524&page=24#sthash.PPlfkIhs.dpuf

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Barefoot Architects: The Habitat of the *Moodah*-Makers of Farrukhnagar and the Weavers of Chanderi

Bharti Sikri, Komal Potdar, Nimmy Namrata and Sugandha Jain

Introduction

Crafts in the Indian sub-continent, as also elsewhere in the world, are a product of culture in addition to community interaction with ecological, social, economic and cultural forces, enabling the craftsperson to produce objects of daily utility for ritual use, festive occasions or for sheer aesthetic pleasure. The production of crafts is also intricately linked to the habitat in which they exist and which nurtures the production of such objects of contrasting finesse and utility. This may be a simple *moodah* made out of wild *sarkanda* grass found in the surrounding forests in Farrukhnagar or the highly refined silk *saree* weaving tradition in Chanderi which connects trading centers in various parts of India dealing with silk, cotton and gold threads and the markets for sale of the final product.

Paradoxically, even while historic cities and towns continue to be repositories of crafts and craft skills, both crafts and the craftspersons have been marginalized and live on the fringes of society, literally and metaphorically. It is noteworthy that even in their frugal existence, deprived of basic amenities, they continue to assert their identities through very distinct habitats, shaped by the activities they foster. Their habitat responds very sensitively to the needs and demands of the processes of the craft where the architecture and its spatial qualities work symbiotically with the craft production and help sustain it. As 'barefoot architects', these craftspersons have designed their own habitats in highly responsive environments to the needs and demands of their crafts.

This paper is a study of two such settlements of historic crafts and craftspersons: the *moodah*-makers of Farrukhnagar and the weavers of Chanderi. The two cases of these historic crafts are a study in similarities and contrasts. Both these crafts have been important contributors to the economies of their respective towns since historic times. Chanderi *saree*s till today form the economic backbone of the town. However, in the

case of Farrukhnagar, the emergence of other occupations has caused a decline in the practice of the craft and consequently its economic contribution. Along with the economic importance they hold, their built environment also exhibits a traditional wisdom of habitat design. The two case studies contrast in the state of craftspersons, with those in Chanderi having shaped themselves to improve their economic status, while the *moodah* makers continue to exist on the fringes of society. However, irrespective of their significance, their habitats have not been acknowledged as being of any significance.

Settlements throughout history have emerged and evolved owing to various reasons: trade routes and patronage being two of the most important reasons. The walled town of Chanderi is a picturesque medieval settlement dating back to the fifteenth century when it flourished under the patronage of the Mandu Sultans. The Chanderi region was under various dynasties such as the Mauryan Empire (322 BC-185 BC), the Sunga Empire (185 BC -75 BC), the Naga and the Gupta Empires (320 AD-600 AD) and the Pushyabhuti Empire. The region had been in the close vicinity of the Dakshinapatha trade route since the Mauryan times. The city of Chanderi was captured, lost and recaptured by Babar in 1528 and Akbar in 1561. Under the reign of the Mughals, the city became a *Sarkar* of enormous economic resources in the Malwa *suba*. Abul Fazal, in Ain-e-Akbari, speaks of "14,000 houses for its population of two *lakhs*, its 360 caravan *serais*, 12,000 mosques and 384 market places". Chanderi became a thriving settlement sitting on an important trade route, connecting it to the port city of Surat in Gujrat.

In another part of the country, Farrukhnagar, a small town about 60 kilometers from Delhi, owes its existence to trade routes and patronage. After the decline of the Mughal Empire at the death of Aurangzeb, the first Late Mughal Emperor, Farrukhshiyar (1713-1719) granted a very fertile piece of land to one of his trusted nobles in the court, Fauzdar Khan. The location, being on an important salt trade route connecting Delhi to Ajmer, facilitated a thriving trading settlement. They were turbulent times with constant threats from the Rajputs in the west and the Marathas in the south. As a result, the settlement had a fortification around an octagonal plan form which connected to five major cities at that time through five gateways: Delhi gate, Patli gate, Khurrampur gate, Bashirpur gate and Jhajjari gate.
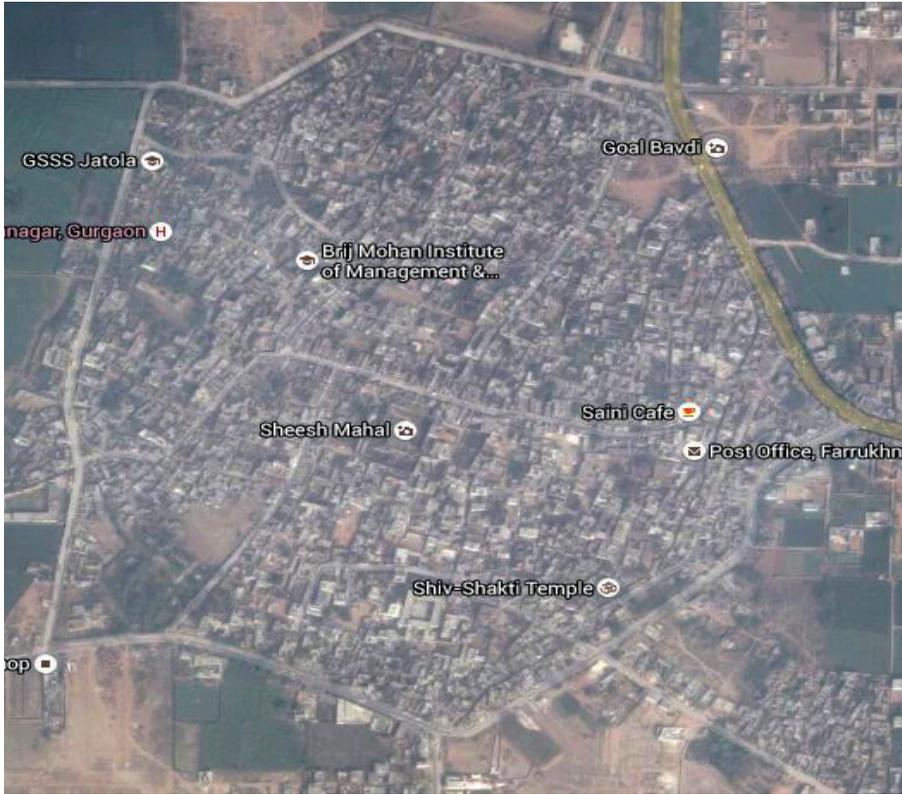
The traditional water systems surviving in the form of an octagonal step well, the richly decorated *havelis* and the Sheesh Mahal sitting at the heart of the settlement are a testimony to its historic past.

The communities and their occupations in both these settlements have been responsible for the spatial planning and layout of the town. In Farrukhnagar, the traders, economically stable, occupy the town center with grand *havelis* of late Mughal architecture, while the marginal residents relying on livestock, potters and goat leather shoemakers occupy the fringes. The *moodah* makers belonging to the Dhanak community were also positioned on the fringes of the settlement in the Dhanak *mohalla*. The stark hierarchy in the settlement pattern also gives rise to a variety of architecture – from grand *havelis* with private open courtyards to small scale, self-constructed houses with mud plaster and thatched roofs.

Figure 2

Royal *havelis* of traders in the town centre of Farrukhnagar. Source: Authors

Figure 3

Dwelling units of craftspersons on the fringes of the town of Farrukhnagar. Source: Authors

A similar town structure was also seen in Chanderi which was a very important weaving center. The morphology displayed the typical layout with the palace complex in the center and the localities of the artisans, merchants, priests and weavers occupying distinct *mohallas* in the settlement.

The morphology of the settlement conveys a very functional layout. The streets in Chanderi are living spaces and also places of work. There is limited vehicular traffic as the streets are designed for pedestrians. Activities flow out into the streets, weavers stretch yarn along them,

platforms are built outside houses and encroach upon the streets to provide additional work areas. Most buildings are clustered around public open spaces or have fairly direct access to them. The *mohalla* is identified territorially by the public open space it encloses. As in the case of streets, the public open space is also used as an extension to the house activity and these spatial expansions are generally consolidated in the form of platforms or at times as walled enclosures. From the variety of such instances, it is difficult to predict either the form or extent of this encroachment, except to suggest that over a period of time a balance was achieved between the imperatives of the traffic moving through the public

open space and the need for extension into the street for household activities pertaining to the weaving craft. Such accommodations were accepted and added to the quality of life and experience in these spaces. It was also tempered by a moral code of conduct, which emerged from mutually beneficial obligations and prohibitions. The urban design quality of these spaces was enhanced by this symbiotic existence. This represents the advantages of a complex yet accommodating urban development process, as opposed to one which is privatized, monocultural and deterministic. Open spaces in the town occurred at an intimate scale in relation to the housing unit and spatial needs of the individual. The concept of a public open space exclusively for recreational activity was not found in the town. It was the web of functionality which accommodated several functions through the day. These elements of open space are a significant outcome of the craft and its needs.

Craft often emerges from a lifestyle which is intricately yet very delicately linked with the surrounding nature and in the course of time becomes deeply embedded in the culture of a community, giving rise to both skills and more routine day-to-day practices. It ranges from a functional and utilitarian commodity to a high end luxurious possession. The contrast is aptly demonstrated by the two crafts; the Chanderi *sarees* exemplify the high end craft which is affordable by the elite only while the *moodahs* of Farrukhnagar are a craft of daily use by the common man.

The emergence of this everyday craft of *moodah*-making can be traced back historically to when the Dhanak community was allowed to live in the fortified town of Farrukhnagar. The women of this community were employed traditionally for nursing and secondary help during child births. Consequently, the men, who basically did not have a designated occupation in the town, started making *moodahs*, an art which they learnt from their Muslim associates who were already practising the craft.

The craft of *moodah*-making emerged from the presence of *sarkanda*, a wild grass that grew in the nearby forests. This grass was dried and used as raw material for making small seats, locally known as *moodahs*. Though, with time a lot of things changed in Farrukhnagar, the Dhanak community remained in the city, passing on their skills to future generations. Hence, a skill that emerged as a mere day-to-day activity became the craft of the community.

Most crafts are an excellent expression of the deep bond humankind shares with nature, as well as the skilled use of resources that nature provides. This is proved by the fact that, in the process of *moodah*-making, each and every part of the *sarkanda* is put to some use. It consists of three basic components: the stem, leaf sheath and seeds.
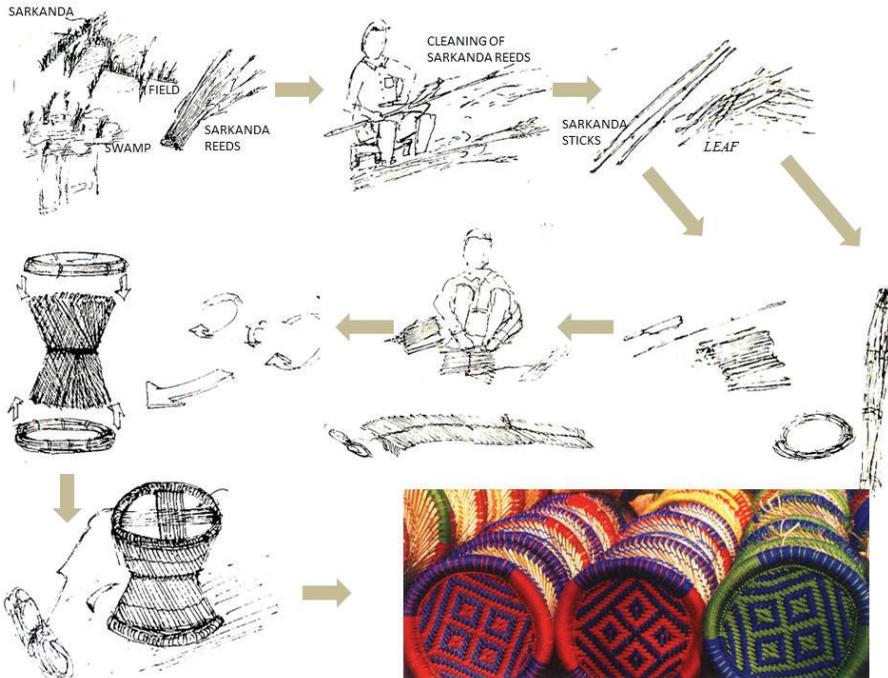
Figure 6

The process of making a *moodah*. Source: Authors

The stem has an external layering of fodder and an internal stem with high tensile and compressive strength. This stem is used to form the cylindrical base of the *moodah*. It is cut into pieces of desired length (as per the required size of the *moodah*), placed radially at regular intervals and tied together with a rope to take a cylindrical shape. Two such similar arrangements from the stem are made and placed over each other to form a longer, double-layered, hollow cylinder. This arrangement of stems allows the *moodah* to bear the vertical load that acts on it which is then balanced by the compressive strength of the stem. The seat of the *moodah* which is placed above the cylindrical base is made by weaving a dense net of ropes. These

ropes are made by beating the seeds and the leaf sheath together and then tying them. The seat and the base are held together by tying the ropes onto the stems of the base. The external sheath of the *sarkanda* stem is used as a covering for making thatched roofs.

Deriving from the process of *moodah*-making, which needs larger spaces for cutting the stems and tying them together, the habitats include use of both built and open spaces. The craft is being practised in the organically evolved *mohalla* at the periphery of the settlement. The small-sized dwellings of the craftspersons are the work spaces which are semi-built with *kuccha* materials and they spill out onto the streets and the community open spaces. Work spaces also include those sections of the streets which are part of the circulation network, *chowks* and tree shades. There is a shift in the activity pattern of these spaces throughout the day. The daylight hours are spent in *moodah*-making, while the evening is dedicated to communal recreational activities. The *moodahs* produced are stored in the temporary sheds of the houses.

Similar to the everyday art of *moodah*-making, the high-end luxurious craft of Chanderi *saree*-weaving is also intricately linked with nature. This can be seen in the housing form of the weavers of Chanderi. It is a fine example of a functional unit with considerations of social and environmental aspects, where various communities have various responsibilities to carry out the process of *saree*-weaving based on the hierarchy of the castes. This is also

reflected in the morphology of the town and the allocation of *mohallas.* In order to understand the principles underlying the housing form, several housing *mohallas* of the weavers were studied. The house form varies in scale from the Raj Mahal located at an important focal point in the city layout, to the *havelis* of the noblemen and merchants, to the modest dwellings of the craftsmen and artisans, with the distinctive pattern of rooms grouped around private and semi-public open spaces where much of the daily household activity takes place. It is in these humble houses of the weavers that we see, the integration of functional usage and social purpose with the built form. The strict discipline of economic necessity and acting within a cohesive social structure has produced, over generations of slow evolution, an easily comprehendible yet complex environmental order. The spatial organization becomes a reflection of the family structure. The pattern of human activities defines the functional parameters. The arrangements for water supply and drainage, combined with the location of trees and vegetation and the .provisions for keeping animals, constitute the infrastructural matrix. The decoration and surface treatment of the houses hold symbolic meanings which are commonly understood, enriching the environmental quality.

The rudimentary dwellings are the habitat within which the delicate Chanderi *sarees* are woven with a skill carefully nurtured over generations. The process of *saree*-weaving requires a number of steps to generate the best quality silk with desired texture and color woven in traditional designs. Chanderi *saree*s were woven using the hand-spun cotton thread, silk thread and *zari,* all of which were originally procured due to its location on the trade routes of South India and Gujarat. These threads are dyed in organic dyes according to the required color. After dyeing, the threads are disentangled and stretched to make them tighter, using the process of reeling with a *charkha.* The bundles of threads are then converted into small rolls called bobbins. These bobbins are converted into long rolls of 15 feet to 20 feet by the process of warping using bamboo sticks and wooden logs. The warped thread is woven on looms to produce the *saree*.

Each step in the process of *saree*-weaving requires a sensitively designed space with appropriate lighting and ventilation. The residences are designed to suit these requirements. The houses have a front open space where the dyeing and drying of the threads is carried out. The threads are dyed in a tub of hot water and then sun-dried to make the colors fast. The pit looms are positioned with great care in the ensemble of rooms which constitute the house. The room with the loom is the most public part of the house and is often located directly next to the street to attract customers. The north lighting is effectively used to ensure natural light and ventilation as direct sunlight damages the loom. As is the case with most rooms in

RAW MATERIALS
(Looms, Charkas, Cotton, Silk, Zari, Dyes)
Carpenters, Disributors, Co-operative societies, Merchants)
Traditional looms - Chanderi, Jaquard & Flyshuttle -
Banglore & Delhi, Silk - Chamundi, Cotton - Surat

↓

DYEING YARN
Dyers (and their family members)
Residences, Workstations

↓

YARN OPENING WITH CHARKHA
bobbin makers, workers (and their family members)
Residences, Workstations, streets

↓

WARPING
weaver, family members and sometimes neighbours)
Workstations, streets, open spaces around residence

↓

ON LOOM FRAME FOR WEAVING
Weaver
Residence

↓

WEAVING
Weaver
Residence, Workstation

DESIGN INPUTS
Master Weaver, Self, Fab India

↓

CUTTING / PACKING OF SARI
Weaver /family members
Residence , workstation

MARKETING
Weaver (self help groups), Master Weaver ,Merchants,
Co-operative societies/ NGo's

these houses, the loom room is a multipurpose space, serving also as a bedroom and quite often having a kitchen in one corner. The quality of the interiors is as complex and attractive as the composition of built volume and open space so characteristic of the housing *mohallas*.

Drawing from the practice of two contrasting crafts, what is common to both is the extensive use of open spaces for practising the craft, drawing one to conclude that the non-built environment is as important as the built fabric. The open spaces act as multi-functional community and work areas which are under constant transformation with various activities at different times of the day. During the day, these spaces are used for loading looms and dyeing threads in Chanderi and for cutting the stem of the *sarkanda* and tying the *moodah* in Farrukhnagar. By evening, these spaces are transformed into play areas for children and community interaction spaces for adults. The quality and usability of these spaces is enhanced by the existence of certain elements like trees, which provide shade for working as well as for social interaction.

In spite of sensitively designed habitats and work spaces, these traditional craft forms are under threat due to various reasons such as detrimental habitat conditions, threat to the housing fabric and decline in markets and profits. The changing role of the communities is also leading to changes in the craft patterns, which is proving unfavorable for its survival.

In the case of Farrukhnagar, the habitats of the *moodah*-makers face an inadequacy of basic physical infrastructure like water supply, drainage, toilets and tidy workspaces. Modern planning and development aspirations of communities have led to privatization of common open spaces which has altered the practices of collective activity. On the economic front, the craft of *moodah*-making is facing a threat of non-availability of materials and exploitation from the traders. The raw material which used to be locally available in earlier times is now being brought from Agra, increasing the

Figure 9

The poor infrastructure of the living spaces of craftspresons. Source: Authors

transportation cost. This has led to the emergence of middlemen for the procurement of raw materials. Due to the absence of State initiatives and policies for nurturing these crafts and craftspersons and the absence of an organized market, the dependence on traders leads to exploitation, diminishing the profits of the *moodah*-makers significantly.

On the other hand, Chanderi is facing issues of another kind. The traditional designs and patterns of *sarees* inspired from flora and fauna and indigenous architecture are being lost to serve the current market demands for modern designs. Also, a shift in the designs of habitats and workspaces and alterations into faceless and anonymous plotted developments, is leading to loss of open spaces which were an integral part of the original habitats and the related craft. 'Modern' planning paradigms are leading to a shift in designs not sensitive to the highly evolved traditional habitats designed by the craftspersons themselves. They do not address the craft requirements; this ultimately affects the workspaces and the craft.

To cater to social, environmental and economic issues, which both the crafts are facing, a plan with a vision to strengthen the craft and the craftspersons needs to be laid down. This requires an effort from the State and the local authorities to collectively tackle the issue. Proposals to make the craft of *moodah*-making profitable may include a policy to revive the local availability of raw materials by replanting *sarkanda* in the surrounding forests, thus reducing the production cost and increasing the profit margins. Chanderi weavers are economically stable since they have organized themselves into co-operatives, whereas the *moodah*-makers continue to be exploited by the traders. Unless the Government recognizes the potential of a market for this craft, it will be lost. A proposal for the creation of a Government body to employ these craftspersons will lead to lesser exploitation by middlemen, better markets and flourishing economies. Tourism may be a tool to promote not only the historic settlements but their crafts as well.

Conclusion

Craft is not a standalone practice but is entirely dependent on the habitat in which it is practised. Therefore, if one wants to find continuity in historic craft traditions like Chanderi *saree*-weaving and *moodah*-

making in Farrukhnagar, it would be appropriate to find relevance in the traditions of their built habitats. In the face of new development, paradigms of design have shifted to paradigms of numbers and densities in the process, losing out on the qualities they originally fostered. Contemporary planning has ignored moral and natural elements in the development of urban environment, which referred to the individuals' temporal adjustments with societal imperatives. There is much to be learnt from these traditional habitats of the craftspersons.

Acknowledgement

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Glossary

Chowk   Open space created by the intersection of two roads

Haveli	A grand dwelling
Kuccha	Crude
Mohalla	A cluster of houses
Moodah	A seat designed out of wild grass
Serai	A resting place
Saree	A traditional Indian garment for women who drape a six-yard length of cloth in prescribed regional manners
	Sarkanda A type of wild grass
Zari	A type of embroidery

Urban Graffiti: Art of the Marginalized

Syed Faisal Sajjad

Introduction

This research aims to explore urban graffiti as the medium of expression of the marginalized urban communities of Lahore. It also explores the role of graffiti in the rendering of urban spaces and its impact on the urban character of Lahore. Another aspect of this research is focused on the newly introduced idea of legal and government sponsored street art as opposed to urban graffiti that is declared illegal and a criminal act.

Historical Origins and Overview

Graffiti emerged as an urban phenomenon in the 1960s. There are no references of this form of expression in history. It is a particular form of communication and expression that emerged in the West. It is culturally and politically linked with the urbanization that took place after World War II.

As far as writing and drawing on walls is concerned, it may be vaguely linked to the rock etchings and carvings of prehistoric times but those had a very different purpose of that recording and documentation. Those were more of a document of cognition of the world and nature. Later carvings from ancient religious societies like the Buddhists were of a symbolic nature. The Jatka carvings on the religious monuments were more about the journey of spiritual awakening. The Egyptian hieroglyphics on the external walls of the pylon (monumental gateway) temples were mythical and symbolic in nature and represented religious and social hierarchy. In Mesopotamia, during the time of the Acadian ruler, Hammurabi, we witness a completely different use of writing on the city walls. Hammurabi, considered to be the first law giver, had his law code engraved on steles (a stone or wooden slab) and a number of these steles were placed in the public spaces of the city. We find a similar approach and purpose of law steles in medieval Europe.

In the oriental world and the subcontinent under Muslim rule, building crafts really flourished. A major component of these crafts was surface decoration using calligraphic motifs. This was done in inlay work, glazed tile mosaic and fresco. However, this form also falls under

the discipline of decorative building crafts and is very different from graffiti in nature.

Modern graffiti as writings and drawings on the city walls of Lahore started in the 1960s. This was a time of political activism in France. The left wing politics were gaining popular support. Graffiti appeared as a medium of political expression during the protests of May, 1968 in Paris. Graffiti slogans such as 'Boredom is counter-revolutionary' and 'Read less, live more' began to appear on city walls. This event opened new possibilities and mediums of expression for activists belonging to anti-consumerist, anti-war and feminist groups.

Role and Purpose of Urban Graffiti in the Present Times

As mentioned above, urban graffiti is a fairly recent phenomenon that began with a purpose. It is very often connected with the process of urbanisation and urban expansion, which is why graffiti finds its best and most relevant expression in the populated urban centres. It is about communication and expression. The marginalized urban communities that do not have a voice on any medium of expression find urban graffiti a possible medium for their expression. This is one particular reason that the tone of graffiti is very often aggressive and anti-establishment. The Berlin Wall is one prominent example in history. The west side was full of colorful graffiti messages whereas the east side was blank because of the political and administrative control.

Urban graffiti has also served as a medium of expression for subcultures. Camden town in north London is a living example of subcultures finding the most suitable expression in this alternative medium that is anti-establishment in its very nature. Camden town is full of punk graffiti and is undoubtedly the most vibrant and visited quarters of London. One will find more locals as well as foreigners in Camden town than in any other historical place or art gallery in London.

In certain societies it is also the individual versus society, especially when the dynamics of a certain society start working against individual freedom of thought, speech and action. It happens mostly in hegemonic societies. Urban graffiti in this context becomes a satisfying individual act.

Urban graffiti in a way is about freedom of expression in an environment of oppression and control. Graffiti on the West Bank wall in Gaza is an

expression of Palestinian nationalism amidst extreme Israeli oppression and violence. In this example, graffiti serves as a form of political and intellectual resistance and as a medium of promoting nationalist identity.

It is not always the economically marginalized who indulge in graffiti; it is also the culturally, socially, politically and intellectually marginalized communities who find their creative expression in graffiti. Urban graffiti is still not an acceptable form of expression, though it has acquired the status of art in urban subcultures as an alternative medium for the new avant garde. Bombing is a term that has very different meanings in certain parts of the United States. It is colorful graffiti on the walls of the city. Since there is a candid anonymity in the works of urban graffiti and the identity of the artist is never revealed, it has emerged as the medium of the underdogs. For these very reasons, urban graffiti is considered as vandalism and a plague in most societies. It is legally a punishable crime.

> Graffiti writing breaks the hegemonic hold of corporate/governmental style over the urban environment and the situations of daily life. As a form of aesthetic sabotage, it interrupts the pleasant, efficient uniformity of "planned" space and predictable urban living. [1]

Graffiti and Public Space

The presence of urban graffiti in public spaces has always been a debatable issue. It is rather looked at as damaging and criminal -- an aesthetic sabotage of public space. It works against the idea of planning and maintenance because it happens suddenly in an unplanned way and it purposefully works against the established aesthetic order in order to be effective. It disrupts the uniform urban character. From an established conservative point of view urban graffiti is considered aesthetically repulsive.

Urban graffiti in a way is a takeover of urban spaces by the masses, those whom we have excluded from our system, our cities and our spaces. They probably still exist somewhere in anonymity, hiding in some corner. Then they suddenly appear on walls with the same anonymity. Urban graffiti becomes a constant reminder of the voids and ruptures that exist in our society and system. This act is very close to an expression of anarchy, like a subculture taking over a public space; it becomes an act of subversion.
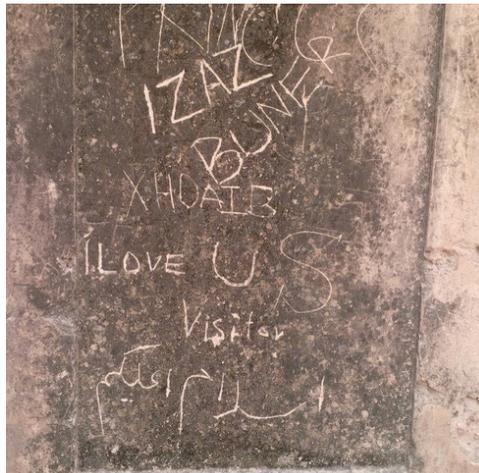
Various Forms of Urban Graffiti in Lahore

The case of Pakistan and Lahore is peculiar in the sense that this area has remained iconoclast since the Arab invasion of the subcontinent. The tradition of image-making present in oriental culture in the West and the Buddhist and Hindu tradition in the East did not have much influence after the Arab and Afghan invasions. This tradition of image-making only exists in pockets in the Hindu communities of Sindh and subcultures in the art institutions of the country. Urban graffiti, generally in the country and in Lahore, exists in a very different form and expression due to the iconoclasts. It is mostly in the form of wall chalking. Since a large section of urban society belonging to the working class cannot read or write because of the low literacy rate, the written script is not widely understood. Urban graffiti, here, does not serve the same function and purpose as in the West or more literate societies. It serves as a medium used and misused by political parties during elections, for cheap advertisements on the walls and by the religious and extremist groups and parties to communicate their ideologies and slogans to the public at large. Urban graffiti does not really carry the message and expression of the truly marginalized in our society. It, therefore, hardly serves as an alternative medium of social and cultural change because neither the image nor the text on the walls serves as an effective medium of communication.

One form of urban graffiti that we find everywhere in Pakistan is names and messages inscribed on historical buildings and monuments. This

Figure 1

Graffiti on historical buildings. Source: *Lahorenama*. Retrieved from https://lahorenama. files.wordpress. com/2014/03/wall.jpg

form has appeared as some sort of deep-rooted psychological desire to leave the mark of existence in history. From the maintenance point of view, however, it is a nightmare for the Department of Archaeology and Monuments. This form of graffiti appears as almost a uniform texture on the historic walls of the city. The only buildings that are safe from this act are the mosques and shrines of saints, probably out of fear or respect.

The other form of urban graffiti that stained the walls of Lahore for decades was political wall chalking. This was a routine feature of election campaigns. After the elections, this wall chalking would become a permanent feature of the urban experience. In 1992, this wall chalking was banned through an act of parliament.

The advertisements of medical quacks, aphrodisiac medicine and practitioners of black magic in the form of wall chalking are still very much a feature of our most populated public places. These images are an insight into the subconscious of our society, a society deprived of basic education and health facilities and fatalist due to lack of resources; a society obsessed with cultural constructs about masculinity and power related to male potency. It is interesting to note that these advertisements are mostly in the lower middle and low income areas. It may be clearly observed in Figure 3 that the wall is somewhat of a palimpsest because of overwriting and the half clear posters pasted on the wall.

The walls of Lahore are covered with obscene graffiti that is not considered obscene due to its frequent occurrence. On the other hand, these writings are an indication of lack of public amenities and facilities in public spaces.

Welcoming graffiti responses from a certain section of society bearing fundamentalist and extremist views towards movements that have started outside Pakistan is also common on walls.
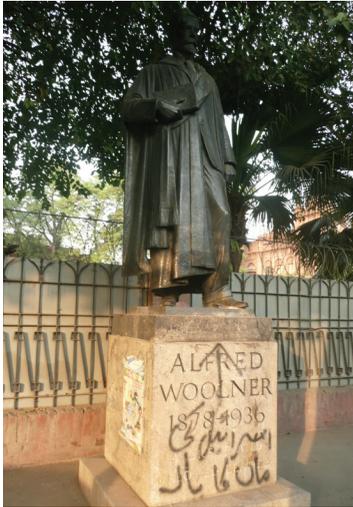
Figure 6 shows a graffiti message on the pedestal of the only surviving public sculpture of Lahore, that of Alfred Woolner who was a professor of Sanskrit. The message is full of hatred and skeptical in nature.

Figure 7 shows graffiti on a sign board at the Shadman roundabout, Lahore. This is the very place where the legendary Bhagat Singh was executed. This *chowk* has been given many names. The recent one is Chauhdry Rehmat Ali Chowk. The left wing activist groups want this place to be attributed to Bhagat Singh.

Street Art versus Graffiti - The Case of Lahore

In 2010, the Government of the Punjab along with the City District Government, Lahore, launched a street art competition. The sponsors were Nippon Paints and Master Paints. The competition was carried out in the areas of Gulberg and Johar town. Students from various art institutions of Lahore participated in the competition. The government issued a No Objection Certificate (NOC) allowing the students to paint on city walls. The idea was to paint over the existing wall chalking to get rid of the imagery that they considered to be ugly and replace it with aesthetically pleasing imagery taken from the local material culture and constructive messages about peace and environment. Figure 8 is an image of a traditionally decorated truck seen on highways and a popular slogan in Punjabi that is most commonly found on these trucks. Figure 9 shows the portraits of prominent folk singers from this region. One can clearly see the paradox in these projects because of being propagandist in nature and based on a certain value judgement on the part of the government regarding the aesthetics. The other paradox lies in legalising a certain act that is otherwise considered illegal and criminal, only because of the portrayal of desired imagery that is considered positive.

Figure 8

Graffiti of a truck, Street Art Competition, Lahore. Source: *Literary Pakistan*. Retrieved from https://literatypakistanblogs.files.wordpress.com

Figure 9

Graffiti of popular classical singers of Pakistan, Street Art Competition, Lahore. Source: *Literary Pakistan*. Retrieved from https://literatypakistanblogs.files.wordpress.com

Discussion and Debate

In the above research and examples, it is interesting to note that all the urban graffiti and wall chalking that is declared illegal and a punishable offence is present in the lower middle and low income areas of Lahore. The legal and patronised street art competitions were held in the posh areas of the city. This is an indication of how the city of Lahore, even in the case of imagery and expression is divided. The politics of image selection and making has a paradoxical divide. A drive through the streets of Lahore will give you an interesting insight into the minds of people and authorities that are dealing with this issue. These images are banal and kitsch, yet they are meaningful and expressive of the various bents of minds that exist in a society, from the fundamental and most conservative to the relatively liberal and at times anarchist. They tell us about the deep and often dark obsessions of a society and serve as a mirror to it.

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Mohannas of Manchar Lake, Sindh: An Indigenous Cultural Tradition Pushed to the Edge

Prof. Anila Naeem, PhD

Introduction

Sindh, climatically categorized as an arid zone, should ideally hold sacred the sanctity of its meagre freshwater resources. Yet, ironically a series of erroneous federal and provincial decisions have had devastating results on the region's natural resources and ecosystems, adversely affecting the lives, livelihood and cultural traditions of associated indigenous communities. The callous mismanagement of Manchar Lake[1] is a case in point where decades of draining untreated agricultural and industrial effluent has converted this fresh water reservoir into a cesspool of toxins, contaminating the water beyond human consumable limits and destroying the natural habitat it offered to a rich variety of aquatic flora/ fauna and migratory bird species as their winter abode.
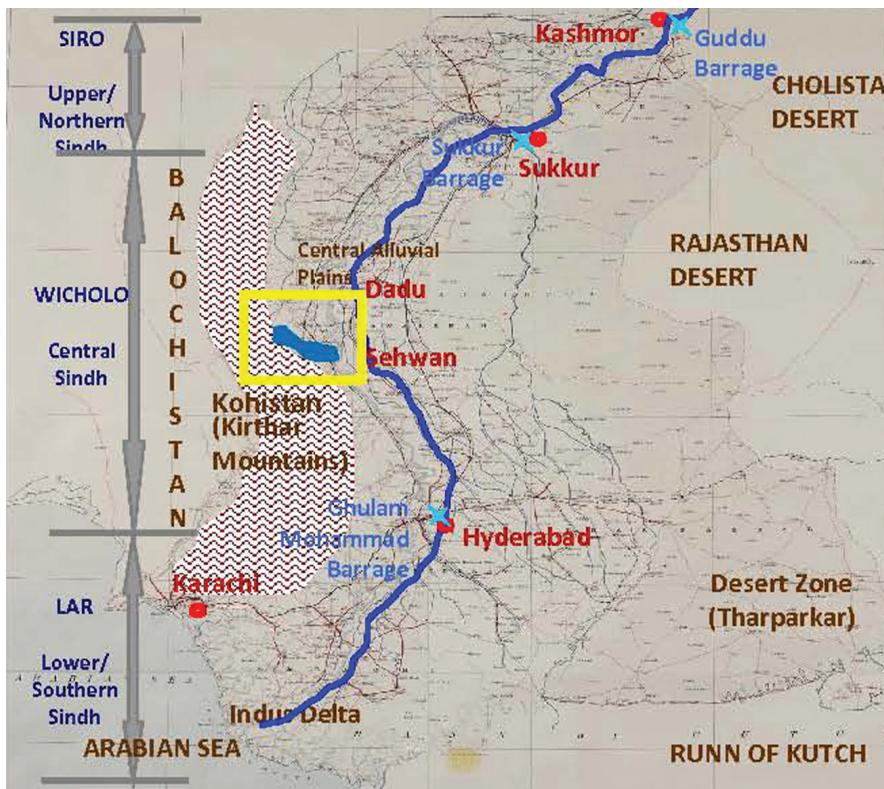
Figure 1

Map of Manchar Lake and environs

Manchar Lake is an inundation freshwater lake formed at a natural depression at the western edge of central Sindh, hemmed-in westward by Kirthar Hills, south and south-eastward by Lakhi Hills and flood embankments along north-eastern sides. Hewitt (1977) defines Manchar Lake as 'a marvellous gift of water for the arid piedmont and plains of western central Sindh'. This huge wetland is reputed as having sustained human habitation for at least five millennia; the resident *Mohanna* community is believed to have roots in pre-historic times and considered as descendants of those who dwelt during the Indus Valley Civilization, based on a striking similarity between their boats and those found on Indus seals (Lambrick, 1964; Hewitt, 1977; Sehrai, 1997; Hasan and Dawani, 1997). For centuries, this natural wetland and its rich ecosystem thrived on an annual freshwater flow from hill torrents and monsoon inundations. This delicate balance of nature's system offering bountiful endowment of sustained resources started being tampered with during the early decades of the twentieth century and has ever since been gradually pushed to the present state of devastation through a series of ill-conceived development policies. The victims of consequent sufferings are resident indigenous communities, which for centuries appreciated, respected and understood nature's intricacies and blended in their environment with perfect equilibrium achieved through ancestral wisdom.

The narrative of this paper attempts to voice the dilemma of Manchar Lake and its *Mohanna* boat dwellers, raise awareness about the lifestyle and intrinsic values of this unique indigenous community and ring an alarm of urgency for taking appropriate measures to prevent the demise of a material culture placed among those having ancient roots. State inflicted atrocities on this community are not just confined to unfair seizure of customary rights on natural resources but also extends to deprivation from the basics of human existence. The situation calls for a movement to extend humanitarian support to this marginalized community, impoverished through dispossession of inherent livelihoods – fishing, water-fowling, boat building, seasonal cultivation and commercial river navigation. A campaign for ensuring the continuity of their cultural traditions needs to be initiated on grounds of human rights and sustainability of natural/environmental resources and provide systematic means that enable putting forward concrete measures for economic revival/uplift of the community and its associated material culture.

The Indigenous Community and Its Associated Cultural Traditions

Along the banks of the Indus and its many tributaries or *dhunds* (lakes), exist pockets of habitation belonging to *Mohannas*, the most primordial of fishing communities which primarily live on 'boat-houses' in addition to having village clusters on river banks, lakes and islands. The largest *Mohanna* concentration lived on Manchar Lake, up till recent times, when water contamination levels reached life threatening state, hence forcing high percentage of the lake's resident community to abandon their ancestral territories and livelihood in search of alternate means of survival. *Mohanna* boat dwellers traditionally thrived on fishing as their primary livelihood, seasonally indulging in water-fowling and selling water plant species consumed as a food source or fodder (*Bhi* (lotus*)*, *Naro* (reed), *Loar* and *Kum*). A segment of the community, distinguishing themselves as *Mirbahrs* meaning 'lord of seas', inherently excelling in traditional skills of river navigation, undertook activities of river transportation.[2] A clan within the *Mohannas* specializes in the art of building native flat-bottomed boats -- a skill handed down from generation to generation through conventional practice. During their heydays, part of Manchar Lake residents also benefited from seasonal cultivation.[3] Most unique *Mohanna* trait is their special connection with birds; not just the ability to communicate with various species of exotic birds but also training and domesticating them to assist in fishing.

Manchar Lake's precincts are dotted with village clusters called *mianis* or *paras* comprising of simple huts built with mud, reed, thatch and tamarisk. Sahrai (1997) mentions sixteen big villages existing around the lake, built on high mounds and calls these 'pile villages' or *Thalo*.[4] Nevertheless, the primary abode of original Manchar Lake inhabitants is their boat-house, docked at the banks in groups; a fleet of up to twenty or thirty houseboats and other varieties of smaller vessels comprise the core of each village cluster, defined through a system of extended family structure and clanship, forming the crux of the family's dwelling space and property. These mobile boat-villages traditionally settle in the heart of the tallest grasses and when the water recedes during the dry season, nearby banks become the community's extended habitation, where temporary huts are erected. Various *Mohanna* clans[5] have their individual chiefs, however, through mutual consent one person is appointed as *Changa Mursa* - most venerated headman of the entire community, invested with full powers to administer justice, major decision making and other matters of the community (Burton, 1851; Pelletier, 2003).

Roots of these tangible physical expressions of a material culture and indigenous lifestyle date back to ancient times; a fact endorsed through archaeological evidence found at sites in and around Manchar Lake (Majumdar, 1934). Burton (1851) records *Mohannas'* own account of their origin as offspring of Prophet Suleiman from the time of exile from his kingdom. According to Thornton (1844), *Mohannas* formed a considerable portion of the population. Burnes (1834) estimated a thousand boats employed on Manchar Lake alone. Ondatje (1996) describes the *Mohannas* as an "extraordinary colony of people who transport wood and other produce into the Punjab and back, trading by water" commenting that "not much has changed in hundred and fifty years since Burton was here" for the "…more than 7000 *Mohannas* [living] in [the] isolated colony, which stretches along the west bank [near Sukkur] …for about a mile". Population estimates by Pelletier (2003) indicate 3000 families with 50,000 people residing in Manchar Lake during 1960 - reduced to only 200 families and 15,000 people; whereas, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum indicate the lake population as having dropped from 60,000 to less than 25,000 in recent years (Hussain, 2004; Sanghar, 2012) and continues to dwindle due to migrating families left with no other choice but to abandon their ancestral way of life for the sake of survival.

Figure 2

Manchar Lake showing the link canals and archaeological sites identified by Majumdar (1934). Source: Google Earth

Indus Boats – An Abode and an Agency of Traditional Livelihood

A variety of boats ply on the Indus and Manchar Lake, distinguished by various sizes and shapes as suited to their specific function, such as the house-boat (*dhoondhi* or *choplandi*), cargo-boat (*doondah* or *zohruk* or *hara*), ferry-boat (*kauntal*) and game/fishing-boat (*dundi* or *beddi*)[6] (Thornton, 1844; Ross, 1883; SSI, 1908; Postans, 1843; Hasan and

Dawani, 1997; Sahrai, 1997). In an interesting description of native boats used for commercial navigation on the Indus, Hamilton (1744) writes that "they are flat-bottomed and on each side, cabins are built from stern to stem, that overhang about two feet and in each cabin is a kitchen and a place for exoneration, which falls directly into the water. These cabins are hired out to passengers and the holds, being made into several cabins, are let out to freighters so that everyone has a lock on his own cabin and apartment in the hold and has his goods always ready to dispose on at what places he finds his market ...indeed in all my travels I never saw better conveniences of travelling by water". Due to construction of dams, the scope of commercial navigation for *Mirbahrs* is now confined to short distances in small pockets, serving mostly the domestic purposes of the fishing community and carrying wood for fuel from jungles along the river banks and in recent years fetching drinking water for communities residing in the lake's vicinity. The commercial vessels of Hamilton's description are no longer seen on the Indus, however, other varieties mentioned in historic texts have managed to elude extinction and even today remain in use by the *Mohannas*.

The design ingenuity of native crafts has been proved through their sustained existence, outlasting fancy steam powered vessels introduced by the British during late 19th century for commercial navigation on the Indus.[7] The peculiar flat-bottomed design of Indus boats evolved in response to navigating shallow and turbulent waters, resist impact of running ashore and lessen the violence of shock when it runs against sandy banks – a common accident on the Indus (SSI, 1908; Thornton, 1844; Ross, 1883; Hasan and Dawani, 1997; Sahrai, 1997). Commending the sufficiency of its design, Postans (1843) writes that the "shape of this boat is little to be altered in its adaptation for the peculiarities of the Indus", however, criticizing its construction as "exceedingly fragile" due to rude detail. The reason perhaps was affordability and availability of quality timber, such as teak[8], fir, cedar (*dayar*), mahogany (*shishm* or *talli)* and such which in earlier times was either floated down the Indus from the Punjab and Northern Areas or transported from the Malabar Coast. According to Hughes (1876), the *Mohanna* built his vessel with "wood of the country such as *ber*, *babul*, *karil*, etc". Traditionally, cane or wooden plugs were used, instead of nails, in construction. For maintenance, the boats were painted with fish oil (dolphin oil was conventionally used as a timber preservative); oiling and repair activity was usually undertaken during the dry season. The average life span of the boats extends to fifty years (Sahrai, 1997), however, Hughes (1876)

mentions it to be only seven to ten years. Among *Mohannas*, the Sheikh caste is known to be expert boat building craftsmen; their workshops are located on the banks of Danister Wah, near Bubak.

House-boat (*dhoondhi or choplandi*): The floating houses of the Indus are built in various sizes depending on the number of family members; they provide spaces required for working, sleeping, cooking and storage. Having a length between 30 feet – 60 feet and width between 10 feet – 15 feet[9], the *dhoondhi* possesses a central cabin and is always closed on the rear-side, whereas the remaining three sides are opened or shut as desired with straw mats. The front is equipped with a clay stove and used for cooking and washing and the aft part is used for storing equipment and for navigation. A small platform covered with reeds, mats or rugs or alternately a small boat, attached to the *dhoondhi*, serves as the toilet. Other small boats (*batilo*) tied to a house-boat are used for running errands or visiting one another. A *dhoondhi* with a long steer is called *kande berri* or *lang berry*; depending on size, the central cabin can hold 6 to 15 people for the night, additionally people can sleep on the roof if the weather permits (Sahrai, 1997; Hasan and Dawani, 1997; Pelletier, 2003). Possessing rudders, steer, sails, mast and bamboo or flat wooden oars, *dhoondhi* of all kinds may be used in any season.

Figure 3

A platform attached to *dhoondhi* and covered by quilts and reeds to serve as a toilet; suspended wooden platforms also serve for washing clothes and dishes. Source: Author

Among all Indus boats, *dhoondhi* is the most richly ornate, having elaborate carvings (both internally and externally), intricately carved hulls, colorful painted motifs, inlaid mirror work and glazed tile inserts. "Internally, carving is always on dark mahogany doors to the storage area in the hull of

Figure 4

The boat-house or *dhoondhi* is the most ornate of all boats on the Indus, decorated with intricate carvings, mirror work and glazed tile inserts. Source: Author

the boat …[which] stands out in sharp contrast to pale *dayar* planks that form major part of the boat' (Hasan and Dawani, 1997; p. 820-821).

The cost of house-boats has doubled in the past decades; Sahrai (1997) mentioned the average cost of a large house-boat to be around PKR.70,000/-, whereas that of a small one as PKR.30,000/-. However, more recent figures by Sanghar (2012) are PKR.150,000-300,000/- for large boats and PKR.50,000/- for smaller ones, requiring 25-30 days and 10-20 days respectively by a team of eight boat building craftsmen to be ready.

Figure 5

Detail of wood carving on a house-boat. Source: Author

Cargo-boat (*doondah* or *zohruk/ zoruck* or *hara* or *saurak*): These are used by *Mohannas* for transporting goods and range between 40 feet – 80 feet in length and 10 feet – 16 feet in width. They are described as flat-bottomed and having three distinct parts - two sides and bottom, the underside is rolled up at either end sloping inwards and strengthened with joints or ribs. The bow is a broad inclined plane at an angle of about 20 degrees with the surface of water, whereas, the stern is similar in form but at double the angles with water and somewhat higher than the other part; having a slight decrease in breadth at its extremities. This peculiar form with a slight convex inclination is well suited, both as regards stowage of cargo providing additional facility of easily getting off sand-banks and for navigation of such a river as the Indus; when forced end-on against the river bank, it spins round on its centre and has a greater chance of giving way to the force of current as compared to completely flat-bottomed vessels. Another advantage of a sloping front is the possibility of running in on banks when required to *lugao* (fasten to shore). Its low gunwales make it easy to load livestock, camels, lumber and other produce. Having the capacity to carry around 60 tons of cargo, these vessels draw 4 feet of water when laden and are steered with either a long curved oar or a clumsily arranged large rudder operated with a complicated system of ropes and poles working outside the stern and a double tiller (Postans, 1843; Hughes, 1876; Ondatjee, 1996; Hasan and Dawani, 1997). The mast is stepped very far forward on strong cross-beams and removable with ease. There is a large oblong or lateen shaped sail of lightest material stretched between two thin poles and hoisted behind the mast. The construction is of small locally available wood pieces, fastened together with bamboo pegs, iron being used to secure ribs and knees. Postans

Figure 6

Wooden logs on a cargo boat. Source: Author

(1843) describes a *zoruck* as "having no elevation at the stern, is rounded off a little fore and aft but does not taper in at those points ...more fragile ...in its fastenings, which consist of small iron cleats outside".

Ferry-boat (*kauntal* or *kowtil*): These are used for carrying horses. These were built with great beams and sailed faster (Hughes, 1876).

Game/fishing-boat (*dundi/ dundo* or *beddi* or *kuggur*): These are small, varying in size between 10 feet – 26 feet in length and 6.5 feet – 10 feet in width, generally constituting a two member crew (Hughes, 1876; Hasan and Dawani, 1997). One person steers the boat with an oar or a long bamboo/timber pole and the other assists by creating sound effects to scare fish towards the net or collecting the catch from the net or shallow waters. The boats have a small hold in which the catch is stored. Sahrai (1997) mentions a variety of fishing or game boats known as *batelo*, *hurro*, *galliyo* and *katar* (this last variety is not

Figure 8

Fishing or game boats. Source: Author

flat-bottomed and runs faster in comparison) and gives their average cost to be around PKR. 15,000/-.

Intangible Cultural Assets -- Traditional Techniques of Fishing and Water Fowling

For centuries, *Mohannas* have sustained a livelihood based on fishing and water fowling using age old techniques that are sophisticated but little changed owing to access to modern tools, using not only nets and hooks but also employing trained fish catching birds and in earlier times river otters[10] as well to assist in rounding up a larger catch (Ross, 1882; Hewitt, 1977). Sahrai (1997) has listed thirteen fishing and four fowling[11] methods traditionally practiced by *Mohannas* at Manchar Lake, including techniques of collective community effort as well as individual attempts.

Hughes (1876) gives account of a novel and peculiar method used by *Mohannas* for catching *Pallo*[12]. Equipped with *matti* – a large earthen vessel having a wide aperture, a kind of dagger knife and a forked pole of 15 feet having a net attached at its end, the fisherman places his stomach on the aperture of *matti* in a manner that prevents any water getting inside and paddles out into the stream and thrusts his net into the water. By means of a check-string from the net tied to his girdle, he becomes aware of captured fish. The net is then drawn, fish killed with knife and consigned to *matti*. The fisherman then continues to float

Figure 9

A group of *Mohanna* fishermen busy fishing for *Pallo*, using the earthen vessel called *matti*. Source: British Library, Oriental Collections

down-stream, lands and walks on the river bed back to the spot where he began and launches into the water to proceed the same way again (Hughes, 1876; p 270).

A documentary by Pelletier (2003) captures the life of *Mohannas* as 'The Bird People': birds as their 'blood brothers', their 'allies', their 'sole reason to live - singing the same songs, speaking the same language'. The synchronized connection between members of the community, young or old, male or female, and their birds is fascinating. From their cradle to their death, *Mohannas* and their birds are inseparable, comrades, companions and playmates – members of Manchar Lake family. Some species live on boats: the finch helps keep inaccessible nooks and corners of the boat-house clean, the sultana bird (swamp hen) sets off an immediate warning at slightest suspicious movement or an approaching intruder and a live duck is the ideal playmate for children. The sensitivity to love and respect birds is inculcated in *Mohannas* by the women of the family since early childhood and while growing up they are taught by elders the tricks and traits of their ancestors and the social code that must be observed for being accepted in the world of grownups. Pelicans, egrets, herons, cormorants, spoonbills and purple herons – each with its own temperament and nesting preferences has to be tamed and trained with different methods, thus becoming an accomplice in fishing as well as fowl catching. Learning to communicate with birds and to care for them is the education imparted to *Mohannas* in their 'bird school' conducted by community members having expertise in this art.

Almost every *Mohanna* has on his fishing boat one or more birds trained to fish or just for company. A woven straw string placed round the bird's neck hinders swallowing the fish. Cormorants, rendered subservient to their owners' word, dive at command and swiftly pursue fish under water. After having caught their fill, they rise to the surface and return to the boat. When two birds are in the field simultaneously, they act in concert in catching large fish (Ross, 1882). Pelicans not being divers are not of much service for fishing; nevertheless, they are trained and kept as an object of show. The feathers on its breast and under parts were used for making muffs and its oil is in demand for treating rheumatism. Being a protected species, pelicans may fetch a fortune in illegal markets; however, *Mohannas* claim never to take part in such activity.

The only bird *Mohannas* eat is *aari* (coot) whose arrival in large numbers is eagerly awaited during winters when fish catch is at its lowest; these birds provide a respite from starvation. The beginning of coot-hunt season is marked with an annual Gaddi Shah Mela at Shah Hassan, where the entire *Mohanna* community re-unites -- a gesture of reassurance to kinship. In recent years, when water contamination has destroyed the natural habitat, both fish and coot have become scarce.

A *Mohanna* with his birds as companions on the boat navigates through channels in Manchar Lake. Source: Pelletier, 2003

© Pelletier (2003)

Destruction of a Cultural Landscape and Natural Habitat

Manchar Lake's indigenous community and its associated cultural landscape today stands at the brink of destruction inflicted as a consequence of failed governance, ill-planned development policies and complete disregard to customary rights. Located in a region precariously dependent on sporadic patterns of rainfall, this natural resource historically survived through severe spells of nature's wrath, including the dry spell of 1975 when the lake bed dried up completely and the continuous drought cycles from 1996-2009. *Mohannas*, however, faced these hardships of nature with resilience, managing to bounce back to their ancestral ways. The return of displaced *Mohannas* in large numbers after the 2010 super-flood, when Manchar Lake completely replenished after the Indus flood-waters broke its breaches and inundated the lake, is a testimony to their bond with nature. Nevertheless, poor decision making and uncaring attitudes by administrative authorities has caused the worst of damages leading

to hazardous health consequences and loss of life while damaging connected ecosystems and impairing livelihoods that for centuries sustained indigenous resident communities, hence driving them towards abandoning their ancestral ways.

Mohannas, for centuries, contributed in maintaining a balanced ecosystem at Manchar Lake, ensuring long-term sustenance of resources. Ancestral law and conventional ways give *Mohannas* the sensitivity and complicity to live in step with nature, understanding the fragility of its equilibrium, thus harmonizing their needs and deeds with seasonal changes. Manchar Lake -- the first stop-off on the Indus Flyway that hosted over 25,000 Siberian migratory birds and water fowl in 1998, is recorded to have received only 2,800 in 2002; where the fish catch was 2300-3000 tons per annum in 1950s is now reduced to only 50 tons per annum; which boasted of 200 different fish species in 1930 now has only 60 species and 14 species are already extinct (IUCN, 2004; Wikipedia, 2009; Sanghar, 2012). This gift of nature was not only a universe for *Mohanna* fishermen but also the lifeline for wildlife from adjoining rangelands of Kirthar and Lakkhi Hills. The calamity of Manchar Lake's intentional poisoning has implications that go beyond national borders.

Right Bank Outfall Drain (RBOD) and its Catastrophic Impacts
Manchar Lake was originally fed by two sources – storm water and hill torrents from Kirthar mountains and inundation canals from the Indus, namely Aral Wah and Danister Wah. Of these, Aral Wah has the unique characteristic of flowing two ways, that is, towards the lake during summer monsoons when the river is inundated, whereas draining out the lake water towards the Indus during winter months when the river flows at a low ebb (IUCN, 2004; Hussain, 2004). A third inlet, the Main Nara Valley Drain (MNVD) was added in 1932, originally as an inundation canal but later remodelled to take sewage from towns of upper Sindh and central Punjab. By the 1980s, it was additionally used to carry off industrial and agricultural effluents and by the 1990s, further expanded under the Right Bank Outfall Drain (RBOD) Scheme -- a megaproject initiated with the support from World Bank (WB) and Agriculture Development Bank (ADB) to drain out industrial and agricultural effluent directly into the sea; however, it was left incomplete to drain into Manchar Lake (IUCN, 2004).

Located in an arid climatic zone, the reduced freshwater supply due to frequent drought cycles and additionally the excessive drawing

of lake water for irrigation during winter seasons, already stressed Manchar Lake's natural ecosystems. Extensive dumping of untreated waste without arranging for sufficient freshwater supply to maintain a balanced equilibrium only supplemented to the catastrophe. The disastrous results of this mismanagement are apparent from figures on range of salinity and toxic particles that have reached to 4000 ppm and 8000 ppm respectively against the desirable limit of 500 ppm and 800 ppm considered as acceptable for human consumption (IUCN, 2004).

Prior to proposed RBOD, indigenous communities of south-eastern and deltaic regions of Sindh already suffered heavily from the implications of Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) project during the 1980s, hence, RBOD from its proposal stage did not go un-criticized by community support groups. Even though subject to approval after Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports endorsed no harmful impact on environment or any cultural heritage assets[13] or communities, however, these assessment measures proved ineffective. Feedback from local communities prior to initiation of project execution remained overlooked. First phase of the project, carrying effluent from Punjab to MNVD/RBOD, went ahead, whereas the execution of latter phases has for over two decades remained a victim of red-tape politics between the Federal Government responsible for release of funds and the Provincial Government responsible for execution of works. Meanwhile, the incomplete RBOD continues to drain out toxic contaminants into Manchar Lake; as a consequence its resident communities are suffering from chronic diseases and ills of inflicting extreme poverty. The biggest irony is that a community living on a freshwater lake today has to bring drinking water from 4 km away on donkey carts and transport it to boat-houses on small boats at a cost of PKR. 20 per drum.

In 2010, a suo motu case was filed in the Supreme Court, addressing the 'right of life and liberty' issue in the light of article #9 of the Constitution, which was decided on 30th September, 2010 after assurances from Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), Sindh Irrigation Department and Government of Sindh that early solutions will be sought to prevent further contamination of Manchar Lake. These, till present time, remain just lip-service without any efforts on the ground.

Prevailing negligent attitudes towards the wellbeing of communities and natural resources instigate thought provoking questions that challenge the effectiveness of existing systems and processes for

decision making and governance. Federal schemes and megaprojects funded by international loans and donor agencies are often forced on local governments without consent. Even though required to follow well developed pre-approval assessments and monitoring tools, yet in Pakistan these have failed to protect the interests of local communities and provide for betterment of their socio-economic prospects. In fact, they just add to the national debt. Lacking sufficient pre-execution consultation and information exchange with local communities results in irreversible damages, leaving no way to seek complete roll-back; whereas completion is jeopardized due to conflict of interest. Responding to raised criticism, repeated revisions and redesigning attempts are made but remain unsuccessful in providing long term solutions to ensure protection of natural resources and their connected ecosystems. Proposed alternates like the Indus Link option being considered to divert the drain outfall from Manchar Lake to the Indus are more like approaches for re-directing the hazards from one location to another.

Unique Cultural Settings – A Paradigm of Economic Growth

Since the 1980s, the notion of 'cultural landscapes'[14] emerged as a dominant paradigm in conservation philosophy, broadening[15] heritage value systems to embrace within their scope ordinary everyday places reflecting living history, intangible values and community involvement as its integral component. This perception establishes a strong nature-culture interconnection, formalized in 1992 when three categories of cultural landscapes were outlined for World Heritage (WH) purposes and further strengthened in 2005 when cultural and natural criteria were merged in WH Operational Guidelines (Taylor, 2012; Taylor 2013). 'Cultural landscapes' now enjoy an acknowledged status as having outstanding heritage values, manifesting the interaction between people and their environment; pivotal to this concept is the realization that "places, traditions, and activities of ordinary people create a rich cultural tapestry of life" where both "tangible physical identity and intangible identity related to the distinctiveness of our lived-in world and human experiences are inextricably interwoven with place meaning and significance for people and the symbols, images and meanings associated with places and landscapes" (Taylor, 2013; p 193).

'Landscape as a cultural construct' enables envisioning human-nature relationship in a holistic manner; a concept drawn from traditional

communities and indigenous people worldwide, where intertwined nature-culture relationships support biological diversity and sustainable land use (Taylor and Lennon, 2012: Taylor, 2013). Shaped by the dynamics of human interaction with nature over time, these are "created and cared for by indigenous peoples and local communities" through "sophisticated knowledge systems and practices" that traditionally evolve to encompass encountered ecological settings, reflecting on human ingenuity to understand and adapt (Brown and Kothari, 2011 quoted in Taylor 2013). Recognizing the value of 'time-honored traditions' is fundamental to ensuring the well-being of cultural-natural resources; this concurrently addresses issues of 'human rights' by giving indigenous communities their rightful custodianship (Taylor, 2013). Endorsing these fundamental concepts, the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity acknowledges cultural systems as role models to help shift dangerous patterns of over consumption in modern concepts and practices of development; the 2001 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity attempts protecting rights of indigenous people and the 2009 UNESCO Hoi An Protocols identify intangible aspects as essential and integral elements that authenticate meaning and sense of place (Taylor, 2013). UNESCO's six principles for effective management of cultural landscapes include considering associated people as primary stakeholders, guiding management and governance through inclusive dialogue and agreement of related communities, keeping people-environment relationship as the focus of management decisions, guiding change to retain identified cultural values, integrating cultural landscape with its larger context and ensuring sustainability of the society (UNESCO, 2009: p. 35). Today, the role of customary law is recognized as a crucially important tool for maintaining essential ecosystems and developing policies that recognize cultural landscapes not as mere museums but as living, changing entities requiring acceptable levels of change for the benefit of associated communities (Taylor, 2013).

As a member state of UNESCO and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), as a contracting party to international conventions on wetlands (RAMSAR[16]), migratory species (Conservation of Migratory Species - CMS), biological diversity (Convention on Biological Diversity - CBD) and trade of endangered species (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - CITES) and under the framework of its own national/provincial laws or policies[17], Pakistan has a responsibility to ensure the well-being and protection of its natural/

cultural landscapes. The shameful oppression of *Mohannas* through spoliation of their ancestral livelihood is a direct consequence of callous government policies. The dwindling presence of *Mohannas* at Manchar Lake is proof of their forced displacement resulting from severe damage to natural resources that sustained this community. There is thus an urgent need for immediate measures to rectify past mistakes and compensate the community's losses through investments and real commitments that would help revive the ailing cultural landscape of Manchar Lake, prevent further loss of traditional knowledge-base and ensure long-term sustenance of *Mohanna* community and its associated material culture.

Conclusion

The cultural landscape of Manchar Lake and its *Mohanna* boat-dwellers is unique and an invaluable representation of traditions that evolved over centuries. *Mohannas* enjoyed customary rights on natural resources of the Indus, its lakes and tributaries as a means of sustained traditional livelihood. This has, however, been disturbed by developments that played havoc with lives and livelihoods of these indigenous people who in the quest of survival became displaced, seeking alternative means of economic sustenance. The result is rapid disappearance of cultural traditions that for centuries remained a key to sustained use of natural resources. Existing systems and frameworks within which international donor agencies work have proved to be ineffective in protecting the rights of local communities, thus arising a need to identify loopholes that result in decisions adversely affecting the environment and its associated communities, particularly when dealing with countries having a weak political, ethical and economic background. Keeping in view the economically impoverished and vulnerably insecure communities and inadequacies/limitations of existing governing systems, ways should be sought for mobilizing indigenous communities to claim their customary rights on natural resources that for centuries sustained under ancestral wisdom, understand the importance of customary laws or conventional practices that contribute in maintaining balanced ecosystems and incorporate these in development approaches – ensuring that landscapes and cultural traditions of indigenous communities are protected and promoted through programs of socio-economic uplift.

Endnotes

1   Manchar Lake, having the shape of a long oval pointing north-west and north-east and its deep and permanent side abutting hills on south-west, is recorded to spread over 189-200 square miles (250-125 square kilometres presently) during monsoon inundations and shrinks to 7.5-14 square miles, varying in circuit between 30-50 miles. The annual expansion is towards north and north-east and depth in the deepest being 16 feet Manchar Lake and Aral Wah merely formed a 'loop' of the Indus, formerly used by boats proceeding up-river during inundation to avoid the strong currents of the main stream. Postans (1840) reported on the advantages of this route for river steamers from April to September (Postans, 1840; Thornton, 1844; Smyth, 1919; Sorley, 1959). Smyth (1919) describes it as having a "forest of towering grasses …meadows of floating lotus leaves …myriads of water fowl….human inhabitants in their floating habitations catching its fishes and shooting its fowl with their blunt arrows".

2   Prior to the development of proper road networks and railways in Sindh, the Indus was the major highway for the region, continuing to serve its purpose till the latter half of the 19th century. The unpredictable nature of the river made it difficult to navigate, however, the indigenous boatmen had worked out ways and means to tackle the moods of their river. According to figures quoted in gazetteers, an average traffic of 1000-1500 boats was recorded on the Indus in 1855-68 and a peak figure of 5,555 boats has been recorded in 1865-66, indicating that a considerable traffic of native boats plied on the Indus prior to the introduction of steamers after which their numbers gradually started to decline.

3   The level of Manchar Lake used to rise after inundation and monsoon season, going up to 113 feet towards the end of September and reduced to 106 feet in October, uncovering 20,000-26,000 acres of richest cultivable land yielding bumper crops of wheat, oil seed, chick peas, peas and grams. The extent of cultivable area, however, largely depends on the levels of annual inundation, reducing significantly in the years of dry spell, as recorded by Smyth (1919) as being only 9,950 acres in 1915-16. Continued droughts, reduction of freshwater supply from the river and a high level of toxic discharge into the lake water have resulted in deprivation of this agricultural revenue base from indigenous lake communities (Sorley, 1959; Sahrai, 1997; IUCN, 2004; Hussain, 2004).

4   Existence of lake-people living on pile-dwellings in Manchar Lake is also endorsed by Majumdar (1934), whose archaeological discoveries from around the region also prove the surrounding hilly tracts as being significantly populated.

5   Sahrai (1997) mentions as many as thirty sub-castes of *Mohannas* living in Manchar Lake and others in Keenjhar Lake, Indus River and its tributaries.

6   Various authors have recorded varying local names for specific types of boats.

7   In 1835, the first steamer 'Indus' was put on the river (Hughes, 1876; Ross, 1883; SSI, 1908). From 1843-47, the Indus Navy Flotilla with a fleet of ten steam vessels of iron construction operated from Karachi to Multan, primarily carrying government goods and troops. By 1852, a portion of this flotilla was made available for passengers and goods traffic. In 1856, a second company by the name of Oriental Steam Inland Company was established but it hopelessly collapsed by 1867 and its assets were auctioned in 1869. In 1859, another flotilla company was established in conjunction with the Sind Railway and finally amalgamated with it in 1870. For forty years, experimentation was done on the Indus with various types of steamers and steam trains, during which many vessels met with accidents and proved to be inappropriate for navigation on this river. After suffering from heavy losses, the Railway Flotilla was abolished in 1882-83 (Hughes, 1876; SSI, 1908). The reasons for these failed attempts were a combination of wrong choices of vessels and conflicting vested interests, as reflected through official documents related to Indus Flotilla. In particular, two letters written to the court of Directors of the East India Company are of interest. One letter points out to the inappropriateness of granting a government guarantee for navigation to just one company (Sind Railway Company), creating its virtual monopoly. In addition, the same paper identifies the strong lobby with political support for the railways, which saw steam navigation as a powerful competitor that would diminish its prosperity (Officer, 1858). The second letter comments on the wrong choice of vessels proposed for

use by Sind Railway Company and the disadvantages these had with respect to the nature of the river and the challenges of its navigation and also suggests alternate choices that could have been more successful (Clarke, 1858). In the midst of all the criticism, the railway flourished, putting the steam vessel navigation completely out of business within forty eight years of its initiation.

8   "Teak …preferred by boatmen for its great strength to all other woods …is too expensive for ordinary builders" (Postans, 1843; p. 126). It was mainly employed in construction of State Barges of the Mirs known as *Jhamptis*, described as "large and commodious …120 feet in length, with a beam of 18 and half feet …had four masts, two large open cabins and drew but two and a half feet of water; …mostly [built] at Mugalbhin and Karachi (Hughes, 1876; p. 271). "Propelled by six enormous oars on a side, requiring about twenty men to each, the decks were crowded with retainers, in many-colored floating vests and the pavilions covered with scarlet cloth, flags also streaming from the stern …in the foremost [pavilion] …princes reclined when they visited the hunting reserves …steersman, or pilot occupied a prominent position on the top of stern-most pavilion" (Postans, 1843; pp. 128-129).

9   According to Hasan and Dawani (1997), the house-boats are known as *choplandi* having lengths ranging between 26 feet – 33 feet and widths between 8 feet - 11.5 feet.

10   River otters (*loodhar*), presently an endangered species, were once common on the banks of the Indus. Otters were trained by the *Mohannas* to catch fish and drive them in shoals towards the nets and "seen near the fishermen's boats in twenties and thirties, tied round the waist and secured to stakes, playing in and out of the water with children and dogs" (Ross, 1882; p. 45).

11   Fowlers use a "*chatti*' cap of stuffed bird skin as a decoy; fitted on their heads they tread in less deep parts of the lake and catch unaware birds, pulling them down by legs. A large scale coot-hunt, known as *poee*, requiring 200 hunters and 40 boats, follows technique based on the fact that coots take shelter in tall grasses to protect against cold night air. The area is netted off at 4 am to prevent birds from escaping and the hunt starts at 5 am. Trapped in vegetation, the birds are unable to take off and are collected by hand" (Sanghar, 2012; Pelletier, 2003).

12   *Pallo* (*Hilsa/Shad/Carp*) is the finest flavored and once most plentiful fish of the Indus. It swims against the sea currents between February-September. *Matti* and *masak* (inflated hide) were also frequently used by natives in the upper and lower Sindh for crossing the river (Thornton, 1844; Hughes, 1876).

13   Construction of the RBOD has also caused a damaging impact on an important archaeological site - Amri, which was barely spared major destruction due to timely intervention of civic society groups that campaigned for its protection and forced revisions in the original design of this channel to reduce its damaging impact on the site (Ahmed, 2007).

14   The term 'cultural landscapes' is defined as geographic areas "where human interaction with natural systems has, over a long time, formed a distinctive landscape" (UNESCO, 2009; p. 5), including "both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values" (Birnbaum, 2004; p. 433).

15   Today, the wide spectrum of cultural landscapes is understood to include "residential gardens, community parks, scenic highways, rural communities, institutional grounds, cemeteries, battlefields, zoological gardens …composed of a number of character determining features which collectively or individually contribute to the landscape's physical appearance as they have evolved over time … including vegetation and topography, water features (ponds, streams, fountains), circulation features (roads, paths, steps, walls), buildings and furnishings (fences, benches, lights, sculptural objects)" (Birnbaum, 2004).

Attempting to make a broad categorization of this vast variety, the National Park Service (NPS-28) – Cultural Resource Management Guideline (1994) suggests four general types (Birnbaum, 2004), including Historic Designed Landscapes - consciously designed or laid-out on established design principles, recognized style or tradition; Historic Vernacular Landscapes - evolved through use

by people, hence shaped by their occupancy, that is, social or cultural attitudes reflecting on the physical, biological and cultural character of everyday lives and function; Historic Site - being significant for its association with a historic event, activity or person; Ethnographic Landscape - containing a variety of natural and cultural resources defined as a heritage resource by its associated communities (NPS, 1994).

However, according to UNESCO's Operational Guidelines, 2008 (Annex-3), cultural landscapes are categorized into three groups for the purpose of WH classifications: the clearly "defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man …embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons …often …associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles; the organically evolved landscape, further sub-divided in two categories; the relict (or fossil) landscape where evolutionary process came to an end; the continuing landscape that retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life and where evolutionary process is still in progress and the associative cultural landscape justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence" (UNESCO, 2008).

16   Pakistan signed the RAMSAR convention on 23rd November 1976 and as of 2014 has 19 sites protected under this convention – 10 of these are located in Sindh. Ironically, Manchar Lake in spite of being the largest freshwater lake in Pakistan has not been nominated for inclusion in the list and thus remains unprotected under this convention.

17   For over two decades, the decisions pertaining to Manchar Lake have been in contradiction to Federal and Provincial laws enacted through Sindh Wildlife Protection Act (1972), Environmental Protection Act and policies drawn through National Wetland Committee (established in 1995) recommendations and Pakistan Wetland Action Plan (2000), both of which remain un-implemented.

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Sustainable Cultural Development of Ethnic Tea Garden Workers, Bangladesh

Shaila Islam and Istiaque Ahmed

Introduction

Bangladesh is the 10th largest tea producing country in the world which directly employs 133,000 people and indirectly involves 500,000 people. At present, the country has a total of 166 tea gardens. The laborers who keep the tea industry alive are not locals. Uprooted from their origin, having no land of their own, this indigenous community serves the economy. The tea estate authority allows them to live in a single built form at the tea gardens with negligible payment for their hard work. Within these unsatisfactory living conditions, they practise their age-old traditional art and culture. The new policy of the estate provided built form development has put such practice under question as it is directly focused on the financial benefits of the authority. The authority completely ignores the age-old patterns of living as well as the construction techniques of the ethnic workers' community because of durability and maintenance matters. This study attempts to investigate two interrelated issues, 1) settlement patterns of ethnic tea garden workers' community focusing on the age-old patterns of their living and 2) the impact of imposed built form construction policies on traditional living. The main research question posed here is, "What can be possibly a sustainable approach of built form development for this ethnic community with respect to cultural connectivity?" In finding the answer, their living patterns by origin and 150 years of living practice in labor lines has been analysed to figure out a comprehensive proposal for built form and settlement development.

Background

The first commercial scale tea garden was established in 1854 at Malnicherra, Sylhet, in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh, by the British on government land. The British companies brought the laborers from various states of India about 150 years ago. A number of people from the lower castes of the Hindus like Oraon, Munda, Nunia, and Bonaz from Assam, Bihar, Madras, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh

and other states of India were enticed with the promise of a golden job opportunity in tea gardens in this region. The misfortunes of these indentured laborers began with their journey; one third of the workers died during the long journey to the tea gardens and upon arrival, these laborers were given new identities as coolies and were turned into the property of the tea estate authorities. These workers belonging to many ethnic identities cleared jungles, planted and tended tea saplings, planted shady trees, and built luxurious bungalows for the tea planters. However, their destiny was tied to their huts in the labor lines (residential space) that they built themselves on land provided by the authority. Since then, the tea industry has gone through a few historical inversions; among them the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and the Independence War of Bangladesh in 1971 are notable. Through these historical changes, the ownership of tea gardens also changed hands. However, the system of tea gardens remained unchanged and still follows the rules practised by British companies. The social and economic distance of the tea workers from their managers or supervisors is unparalleled. The workers came here with a four-year contract and that was the beginning of their servitude. A century and half later, four generations of servitude have passed. They continue to remain people without choice and entitlement to property. Being citizens of Bangladesh, they remain untouched by the local people of the Northeast districts where 132 gardens exist within 166 tea gardens in Bangladesh. Detached from their origins as well as abandoned by the local people, their life in captivity with the estate is miserable. They are born in labor lines, continue their life in labor lines and finally end their life in labor lines.

Methodology

This study has been conducted mostly with primary data; hence physical surveys have been emphasized. Existing social, economic, cultural and physical conditions have been found through extensive surveys among tea gardens in the Northeast region and some surveys about the origin and previous conditions of workers have been collected from secondary data. In the light of problem-discussions, this research intends,

- To identify the living pattern, cultural practice within captivity and communication among communities.
- To come up with possible recommendations for a single homestead development concerning cultural connectivity.

The detailed methodological framework which has been followed to conduct the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

Existing Scenario of Tea Workers' Community

Economic Condition

Each worker is paid on a weekly basis. The daily pay (*hazira*) differs according to the grade of the tea estate (A, B or C) where a worker at an "A grade" tea estate usually earns 48 BDT, which is almost half of a US dollar with a conditional leaf picking of 23 kilograms from 8 am to 5 pm. After picking 23 kilograms, the payment is doubled per kilogram. However, after 25 working days and debiting festival allowance and provident fund, the net monthly income remains within 1050-2300 BDT.

Demographic Condition

Worker Types	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total (%)
Male	84.2	15.8	100
Female	82.9	18.1	100
Adolescent	72	28	100
Child labor	60	40	100
Total (%)	80%	20%	100%

Family Type	Description	Amount
Completely Nuclear	Parents with unmarried son and daughter	50%
Lineally Extended	Single father/mother with married son and daughter	30%
Extended	Grandparents living in their son's/daughter's house with their children	20%

Ownership Pattern

The houses in the labor lines are the tea estate authority's property. The tea garden workers do not own the house or the land. Workers get a single room house with a kitchen, which was supposed to be maintained by the authority. However, generally the workers themselves do the maintenance and repair. When a worker's child is appointed as a permanent laborer for the estate and also gets married, only then is he allowed to apply for a house of his own which is actually owned by the estate. Getting a house in the same labor line with their family is difficult and so in several cases the family ties are cut.

Socio-Physical Condition

Land Use and Infrastructure

The land use pattern and the infrastructure is developed in an organic manner. In the past, when there was much land available for settlement development, authorities chose and arranged the housing units in a linear arrangement which was later termed as the labor lines. Each labor line is numbered and so, to some extent, gives the workers an identity and allows them to develop their own neighborhoods.

Figure 2

Land Use map of Shomshernogor Tea Estate and Zareen Tea Estate, left to right respectively.

Legend
- Tea Garden
- Settlement
- Factory
- Bungalow
- Water body
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
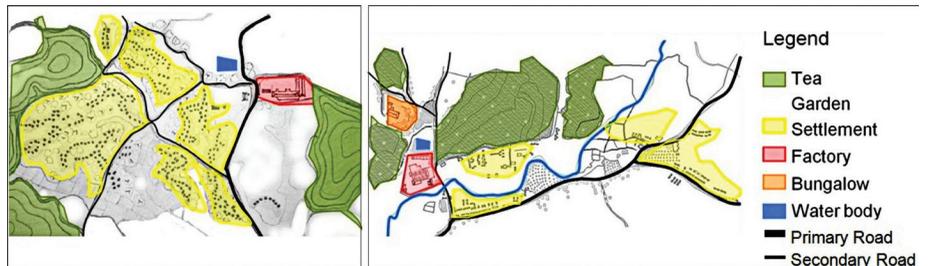
Settlement Pattern

Organization Layout: Linear
Orientation of House Unit: East – West facing

The water supply zone is situated either in the middle or at the starting points of a settlement, where the linear circulation path arranges the common facilities, homestead as well as processions during festival periods.

In the labor lines, house units developed facing linear circulation and other religious and community activities also took part within

this circulation. Thus, a simple linear circulation became multidimensional and turned into a native space for its users. The built environment of a labor line changes with time and necessity.
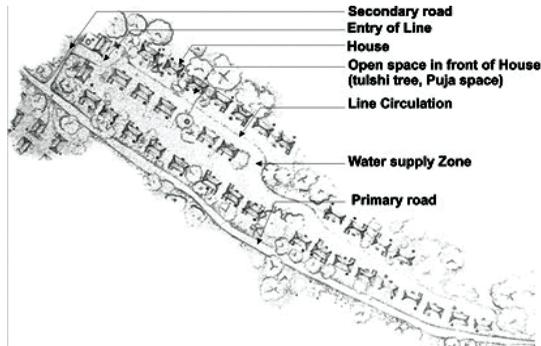
Time \ Space	Activity	Line circulation	Open space (in front of house)	House
Morning		✓ Community activity (water supply zone)		
Noon		✓ Children play		
Afternoon		✓ Chatting/relaxing ✓ Community activity (taking shower, collecting water, cleaning clothes etc.) ✓ Child play	✓ Puja/ prayer ✓ Chatting/relaxing	
Night		✓ Chatting/relaxing	✓ Drinking ✓ Chatting/relaxing	✓ Sleeping
Vibrant scale		Most active space		

Built Form

The management provides each permanent worker a house. If both the husband and wife are working in the same estate, they will get only one house. Children inherit that house after their parents' death. The single room with kitchen is constructed by the workers themselves under the direct supervision of the estate authority. However, the area is fixed sometimes and varies between 220-222 square feet with mud walls and tin or straw roofing.

	Category A		Category B		Category C		All categories		
Room Size(sq. ft)	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Both
	238	234	220	222	200	210	219.3	222	220.6

New Housing Policy of Estate Authority

- Building is to be constructed by masons.
- The construction material is brick, concrete and tin to make it more durable.

Circulation in front of built form   Built form   Plan

- The functional layout is fixed; sleeping space, kitchen and cattle are catered for under one shade.
- A combined house is proposed for two different families under one roof sharing the same partition wall.
- No chance of accommodation for the next generation near parents' house.
- Linear circulation inside labor line loses its connectivity.

Circulation
in front of built form   Built form   Plan
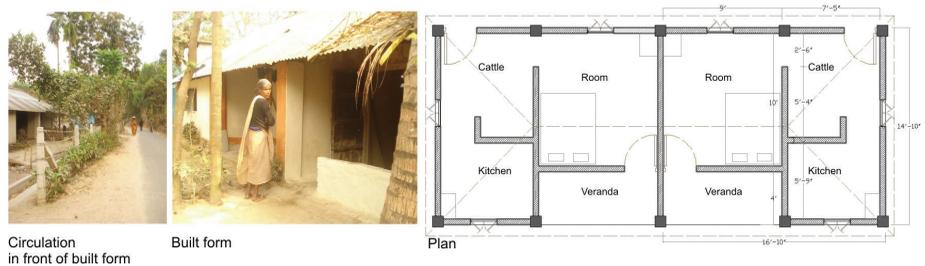
Comparative Analysis

While an indigenous built form that is rich in art and culture may not satisfy durability issues, on the other hand, the contemporary practice of new policies may be suicidal in terms of cultural connectivity of these ethnic communities. To understand these issues, the root causes of modifications to the house units have been studied. In other words, as the present built forms are built by the users it may be possible to trace the sectors they willingly allowed to change with respect to climatic or authority imposed policies. By tracing the causes of these changes, a sustainable solution may also be found for the new built form construction practice. Based on the housing policy, layout plan, appearance, sequence of spaces and material, the following analysis has been conducted.

	Origin	Present Condition	New Practice
Housing Policy	Built area: Area is not fixed

Construction: By themselves

Functional layout: According to owners' choice

Extension: 2nd generation houses within same homestead

Sharing: Individual homestead. | Built area: Area is almost fixed

Construction: By themselves

Functional layout: Flexibility in functional layout

Extension: Very rare chance within the same line or same homestead

Sharing: Individual houses | Built area: Area is fixed

Construction: By masons

Functional Layout: Fixed

Extension: No chance of extension within the line

Sharing: Roof and wall sharing between 2 houses |
Layout Plan			
Appearance			
Space Sequence			
Material	Plinth: Mud
Envelope: Mud
Structure: Bamboo
Roof: Straw
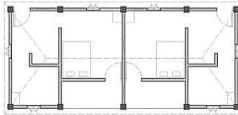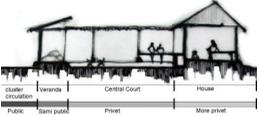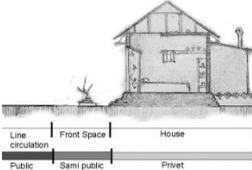
Decoration: Colorful clay | Plinth: Mud
Envelope: Mud and Bamboo
Structure: Bamboo
Roof: Tin and Straw

Decoration: Colorful clay | Plinth: Brick with earth fill
Envelope: Brick
Structure: Concrete
Roof: Tin

Decoration: Clay with color |

Table 5

Comparative analysis of the built form.

Observation and Findings

• Linear circulation inside a labor line has become the heart of the settlement. Connecting all the houses with common facilities, this linear circulation changes its character with time and necessity like socializing or *Puja* or marriage ceremony.

• The courtyard of the original settlement has turned into a small open space in front of the house in the present condition. The courtyard, for hot, dry climate, changed its position and character due to the warm humid climate and topography of the northeast part of Bangladesh. The open space where the workers say their evening prayer and relax after work is no more according to the new policy.

• As the authority owns the houses and lands, the laborers' sense of belonging exists in building their houses themselves. The new practice does not allow this.

• When they built their own houses, the laborers had flexibility of functional arrangement within a limited given area. The new policy does not allow this option so the valuable art and cultural practices like decorative wall paint, yard decoration and others may become obsolete.

• The statistics say that about 50% of the families are living in a joint family system while 30% of the families are bound to live as a nuclear family as it is difficult to find a space for the new house within the same homestead.

• Those families who have a chance to live together with their second generation have a more familiar environment in their courtyards.

• In previous times, local building materials such as straw, mud and bamboo were used, making it a sustainable practice. To increase durability and reduce maintenance costs, the estate authority's new policy prefers modern construction techniques with materials such as brick, concrete and tin which are unfamiliar to the people and the context.

• The individual identity of each house is under threat due to the new policy by which the authority accommodates two different families under one roof with a common wall.

• The ornamentation of the built form remains the same as the original.

Figure 6

Art and cultural practice from origin to present days.

Wall art (Traditional house) Wall art (in present) Use of spaces (in Tradition) Use of spaces (in Present)

Proposals

The proposal of further development should understand the living pattern, maintain the family bond and preserve their rich art as well as make it sustainable.

Settlement Level
As linear circulation has become the most vibrant place as well as the connection line of all functions, any new proposal or development policy should respect the fact.

Homestead Level
A homestead should make the workers feel comfortable. They want to live together with their second generation and if possible, within the same homestead. This will keep the environment healthy and bond stronger.

The development of a homestead may be done in three phases.
-   A homestead will be defined for a single family and their children. In the first phase, one house may be permitted while the space of the other may be used as a tree plantation space, benefitting the estate.
-   After 18-20 years, when the first child becomes a permanent laborer and eligible to avail of a house, the family may be allowed to build a second house on the plantation space inside the same homestead.
-   In phase 3, other children will get rooms with the extension of the parents' house. After the parents' retirement, they may stay with their grandchildren.
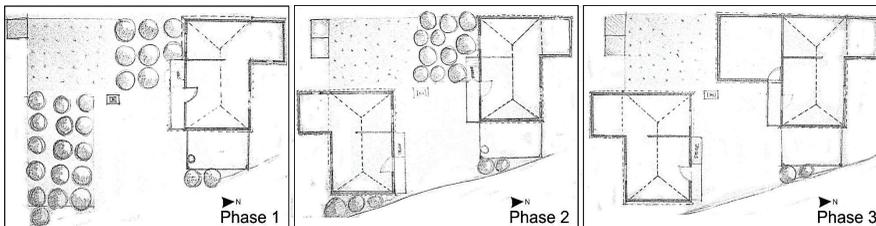
Figure 7

Phase wise development of a homestead.
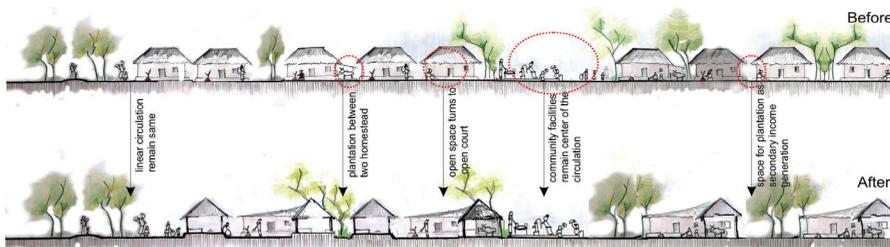
Figure 8

Linear sections through a labor line (before and after scenario).

Conclusion

Sustainability in terms of cultural connectivity may be achieved only when the workers' rich cultural practices are understood and valued for further development. Involvement and participation of the laborers in the case of construction will create belonging with the house unit. In this regard, this study is an attempt to add to the deeper understanding of the settlement and the built form of the ethnic tea garden workers. These communities are amongst the vulnerable communities of Bangladesh. Originating in India with a rich art and culture, these people have become local and due to the topography and climatic conditions the traditions and cultural practices have been transformed into a new dimension. Since, we, the people, cannot provide better socio-economic conditions to them, we can at least make them comfortable by ensuring their connection with their own art, culture and architecture.

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Innovative Use of Space Underneath A Flyover of Dhaka

Sahjabin Kabir and Tanzia Islam

Introduction

The aerial views of the flyovers[1] in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, explicitly represent the technological advancement of urban and transport planning of the city, however camouflaging the life underneath. The flyovers, delivering distant communities to their destinations - home or work - at high speed and in less time, become a destination for the marginal[2] people in the city for carrying out their economic and social activities. The distant communities passing over the flyovers neither acknowledge the communal life underneath nor interact with it. The formal institutions of the city target the flyovers for serving transport facilities for the middle to high income groups and separate them to a different level to enjoy a fast ride, avoiding the public life slowly roaming underneath. The marginal people, who cannot afford the expensive urban land in Dhaka city and are in continuous contest over public space to carry on their social or economic activities, find their fortune under the umbrella of these grade separated roads. What is most promising about these marginal people is that they find innovative ways within the flyunder[3] voids to invest on their self-generated array of activities that in turn attribute multiple meanings to the unattended flyunder design by the formal institutions. The flyunder examples from different case studies in Dhaka indicate how they become meaningful (at the neighborhood scale through the spatial practices of marginal population in the area) through the use of space for economic, social and recreational activities. The economic activities act as a sponge that absorbs large numbers of surplus laborers, especially women.

Background

Dhaka is characterized by large slums, poor housing, excessively high land prices, traffic congestion, water shortages, poor sanitation and drainage, irregular electric supply, unplanned construction, increasing air pollution and poor urban governance, which results in growing

problems of law and order (World Bank, 2007). In recent years, Dhaka has become one of the most densely populated megacities of the world. According to the Demographia World Urban Area Report (2012), 15 million inhabitants live in Dhaka city, within an area of 337 square kilometers (km^2) and based on these statistics, the population density of Dhaka city stands at 44,000 inhabitants per km^2. 37 percent of the urban population are squeezing into slum areas with population densities reaching 220,000 inhabitants per km^2 (Hackenbroch et al., 2009). The prevailing urban conditions in Dhaka with such a density continuously fail adequately to meet the social or economic needs of the marginalized community. Being the capital of the county with its economic, education, health and other benefits, an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 new migrants - mostly poor - enter Dhaka city every year and contribute to its high population density. However, due to rising land prices and spatial confinement, these migrants struggle for space not only for living but also for social and economic activities. They often lack spaces for carrying out their social activities whether it is in their house or in their community. Though they support a considerable percent of the overall population, they remain invisible during the planning process of the city.

Planners and designers build projects with futuristic and western vision that often lacks contextual needs. Absorbed by technology, they only ponder the structures and aesthetics. Their lack of foresightedness in planning and design creates urban voids, of which the flyunder is one example. In most cases, the flyunder voids are used as a dead storage space or with withering, neglected landscaping. However, scarcity of spaces in the city has made the flyunder voids a precious resource for poor urban households. Interestingly, the flyunder voids, left as vacant parcels by the formal institutions, are embraced by the marginal people for their need of public spaces in the city. The spontaneous use of flyunders by these marginal populations comes before the formal institution's understanding of the potential of these voids. To synthesize both aforementioned cases, this study paper has envisioned some design propositions that may enhance the flyunder's role as a public space through the accommodation of some social and recreational activities for the marginal people in Dhaka city.

Objectives

Considering the above facts, the objectives of this study were: (1) to investigate how the flyunder blighted spaces are perceived, produced and inhabited by the marginal community evolving from the breach in the formal planning and design of flyovers in a densely populated mega city like Dhaka, (2) to re-think flyover projects in Dhaka city in terms of those socio-spatial practices - by the marginal occupants - with design intervention that includes the participation of these invisible people. This study has chosen the Tejgaon Flyover site due to the presence of a large number of marginal people underneath and their diverse activities. Moreover, the flyover site is next to a residential and industrial area and there is no heavy traffic circulation underneath which creates an opportunity for the flyunder to be used as a public space.

Site Analysis
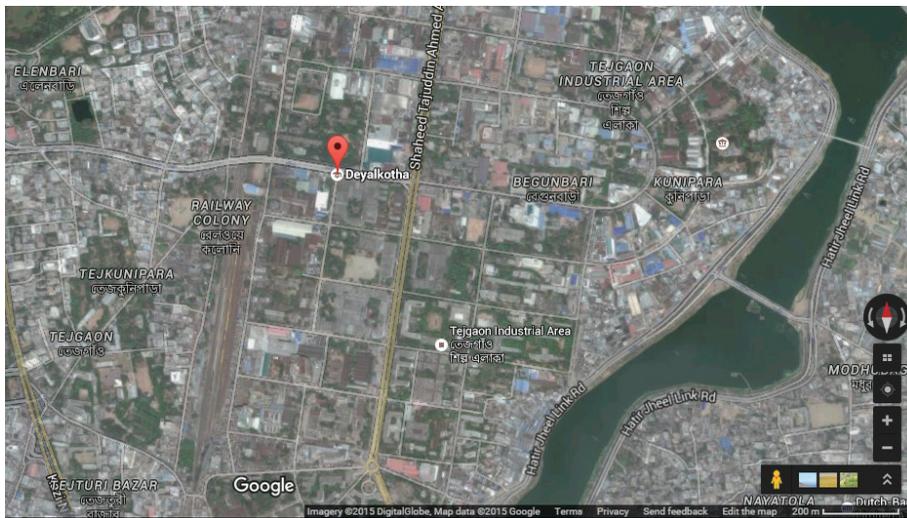
Figure 1

Tejgaon Flyover Site Scenario. Source: Google Maps

From the development of industrialization in Dhaka city, Tejgaon has been the industrial zone and several slums were formed surrounding the area by these industrial workers. A large number of these people have developed slums, parallel to the railway track from Mohakhali to Kawranbazar area. Therefore, when the Tejgaon Flyover was built over the same railway track and trespassing the area, the flyunder became a new shelter for them. Low-income people who could not afford

expensive urban land, started to utilize these empty spaces as a way of either living or earning their living. In part of the flyunder section, neighboring the residential area, small scale businesses evolved, which varied from farmers' market to accessories' shops; in other parts, next to the industrial area, small scale slums were formed. Kabir (2014) has investigated the spatial practices of the marginal population at the Tejgaon Flyunder sections and her research shows that the marginal community has adopted the flyunder voids for their diverse activities and different actors employ them at different times and locations.

The flyunder at Tejgaon site gives insight into an array of multiple, unplanned flyunder usages: the flyunder section on the west side of the railway track is vibrant with informal markets; street vendors spring up in the mornings, selling from tea to chicken, fish to fruit; food stalls and shops are set up in the late evening. Often women can be seen active in such activities which however is not the situation in the case of this particular site. Children occupy part of the space after school to play cricket, badminton, *ludu*[4], carrom and other games and some even brought their laptops during the World Cup Football to watch the match and share it with the community. The east part of the railway track is more quiet with slums and parked cars and trucks. One side of the two-way driving lane along with the divider has been permanently occupied by slums and part of the driveways are temporarily filled with parked vehicles during office hours. The pedestrians seem to walk on the driveway due to the dilapidated sidewalks. However, a few tea stalls have developed at different corners of the sidewalks. Domestic activities are generated in some parts of the flyunder. Women were found cooking and knitting during their leisure time. Their children were found either playing or roaming in the area.

A survey has been carried out in the flyunder area between Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and Shaheed Tajuddin Saroni, covering around a 500-meter radius. According to the site survey, there are around 160 families living in small shanties. This area particularly serves the industrial zone workers close by. 80 percent of the women work in the ready made garment industries. The men are mostly rickshaw pullers and some of them also work in nearby factories. However, the ratio of rickshaw pullers is around 65 percent in this area. On average, each family has 4 children and many of the families stay for particular months in the city only, going back to the countryside during the rest of the year.

Case Studies

The Flyover School, Delhi

> Their classroom is outdoors in the heat and dust; its roof a rumbling metro line, blackboards are painted onto a rough concrete wall but for some children of Delhi's migrant population it is the only school they have.   White, 2013

A free school for the impoverished children living in the nearby slums is being run under a metro bridge in New Delhi, India, by a private citizen. The school has nearly 40 students. Children sit on mats under the flyover and the blackboard has been painted on a building wall opposite the flyover.

Figure 2

A school under the metro bridge in New Delhi. Source: *School Under Bridge*, 2012

Folly for a Flyover, London

> Folly for a Flyover was a temporary project that demonstrated the potential for a disused motorway undercroft in Hackney Wick to become a new public space for the area. For 9 weeks, this neglected and unwelcoming non-place was transformed into a host space for local residents and visitors alike – attracting over 40,000 visitors in the course of one summer. (…) Capitalizing on the success of the Folly, the London Legacy Development Corporation invested in providing the permanent infrastructure which has allowed the site to continue as an events and cultural public space.
>
> Folly for A Flyover, n.d

Under a motorway flyover in London, a non-profit organization has constructed a temporary theatre, staging a series of movies and performances. The structure encloses a cafe, bar and cinema stalls and was locally hand-built from bricks of clay and wood supported by scaffolding.

Figure 3

Folly for a Flyover Project. Source: *Folly for A Flyover*, n.d.

Fly the Flyover, Hong Kong

> Since its opening as an informal cultural and performance venue, the place has held more than 40 different kinds of activities by various groups, including street dance competitions, band performances, running events, photography workshops, outdoor film shows, carnivals, art and craft workshops, architecture exhibitions and seminars.

<div align="right">Energising Spaces, 2014</div>

Fly the Flyover was a kick-off project with the aim of opening up the fenced-off lands underneath the Kwun Tong Bypass for public enjoyment. An open-style design was adopted for creative arts and cultural performances and was constructed by the industrial elements in Kwun Tong. Various activities such as music, dance, exhibitions and sports events were organized through different groups. A performing stage, a dressing room, general lighting and toilets were provided at the venue.

Proposition

Considering the existing flyover scenario with its pros and cons and looking into the contextual and community needs, this study has synthesized a platform for the flyover underneath space in Tejgaon Flyover: (1) a Folk Theatre[5] and (2) a Learning Center.

Folk Theatre

The marginal people in the flyunder slums at Tejgaon are mostly migrant workers, who came from villages in search of work in the city. Most of them work in the nearby industries; some of them are rickshaw pullers and van drivers and some of them are small vendors. With their income or salary scale, they can barely meet the basic needs of life and are victims of want and deprivation. In such cases, it is almost impossible for them to spend on any recreational activities and there is little provision for their recreational activities in the city. More and more money generating commercial buildings are being built replacing the public parks and green spaces in the city, mostly to serve the upper and the mid-income people who spend time and money at a movie theatre or cafés and restaurants as part of their recreational activities. This diminishes even the few opportunities the marginal people have in Dhaka city. Therefore, it has become urgent to provide recreational facilities for these marginal people to ensure their equal right in the city

and the flyunder void offers a good prospect for such facilities. Using the voids for a folk theatre can allow the flyunder to become a public space for the marginal people and enhance the existing economic and social activities.

> Folk theatre has been prevalent in this region for thousands of years…. Usually performances were delivered in the open area or a courtyard with minimal equipment to assist.… Usually the audience is seated around the open stage. The area is covered by a canopy for better acoustics. A few chairs are set on one side of the stage, which are used as a throne and for other seating purposes.… Lights are usually installed on four corners of the stage so that shadows of the performers are not produced. However, like modern theatre it is not customary in the folk theatre to create special scenic effects by lighting control.
>
> Islam and Hasnain, 2006

In recent times, folk theatre is becoming extinct in urban areas and is being usurped by the modern movie theatres. According to Islam and Hasnain (2006), modern theatre in Bangladesh has always been the pursuit of a few middle class people centered around Dhaka city. At the same time, television and satellite cable has attracted many people toward international culture, which sometimes leads to social violence. Therefore, this paper suggests promoting folk culture among the marginal people living in the slums.

Figure 4

Folk drama performance, Bangladesh. Source: *Drama and Cinematography*, 2014

Learning Center

Most of the marginal parents living under the Tejgaon Flyover demonstrate a strong willingness to send their children to school but are limited by financial constraints. Even though the government has the country-wide Compulsory

Figure 5

Night school at Tejgaon Flyunder. Source: Authors

Primary Education Program and the Food-For-Education (FFE) program mainly in rural areas, little attention has been paid to sending the slum children to school and meeting their learning needs. There is no government school near the Tejgaon Flyover area and the few private schools nearby charge high admission and monthly fees. A night school for these education-deprived children was being run by some local university students as a volunteer service. However, they do not have a school setting; children sit on a mat spread over the road and due to lack of any partition wall the children are often disturbed by the surrounding people.

There is also no provision for any daycare center for the marginal people in the proximity of the Tejgaon Flyover and therefore they have to leave their children alone at home. As a result, these children wander around in a filthy environment with other children of various ages which engenders violent social issues such as child abuse and child crime. They are also prone to health matters such as diarrhoea, malaria, cholera and others. Therefore, this paper proposes an academic learning center along with awareness programs of the above-mentioned circumstances through video documentation and training. Besides, paintings, drawings, songs and dramas will be accommodated for enhancing the people's creativity. There is little or no scope for the above-mentioned activities due to lack of space in the informal settlement. However, the flyunder void has under occupied spaces which may be renovated as a learning center for carrying out after-school programs or extra-curricular activities for marginal children.

Conclusion

The marginal population in Dhaka city regularly suffer from lack of proper urban facilities. As urbanization requires more and more infrastructure for housing, business and transport networks the demand for such development in Dhaka is causing it to lose its valuable urban lands. The rise of new transport infrastructure including flyovers are namely for the urban rich and often do not consider the marginal people during their design and planning. This research was conducted with the aim of bringing these circumstances into the public realm with design intervention involving the marginal people and addressing the institutions involved in the design and planning of new flyovers in the city. The outcome of this research may

guide in future planning and design of flyover constructions, which can ensure a better spatial environment for the marginal people in the localities as well as in the city. It is expected that this research will help the stakeholders - city authorities, policy makers and potential funders, including the local and international NGOs to take appropriate steps in improving the quality of life of the disadvantaged population in the city through social, economic and recreational activities.

Authors' Remarks: In 2015, the authors were awarded the Edward Kennedy Small Grant to implement this following idea into a reality for a short period of time. The team created a platform as proposed which was based on local community demand, a class room and a learning platform. The project is a pilot project known as 'Deyal kotha' where currently 30 children attend preschool in order to join the conventional school. This platform is also occassionaly now in use for performances like puppet shows, musical events, art competetions and such.

Endnotes

1   The term 'Flyover' is commonly used in the Commonwealth countries and the word 'Overpass' is used in the United States. This paper uses the term flyover because of the contextual recognition.

2   The disadvantaged population is referred to as marginal in this paper.

3   The flyover underneath space has been termed as Flyunder in this paper.

4   *Ludu* is a popular children's game in Bangladesh, known as snakes and ladders in other countries.

5   Folk Theatre: *Jatra* is the Bengali term for folk theatre. The idea of folk theatre here is different to the European folk theatre. This term indicates a musical theatre especially popular among the Bengali speaking community of South Asia.

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Ralli: A Legendary Craft Nurtured by the Marginalized

Asna Mubashra

Introduction

Asia has been known throughout history as a place that produced beautiful textiles. The rural areas have been the hub of various handicrafts, which not only helped to provide an identity to Pakistanis around the world but the innovative handmade creativeness also helped in sustaining many poor families.

Figure 1

Ralli quilts are a visual feast of color, pattern and energy. Source: Author

Ralli-making is one of such skills. *Rallis* are traditional quilts made by artisans in the southern provinces of Pakistan including Sindh, Baluchistan, the Cholistan desert as well as the southern border of the Punjab and adjoining states of Gujarat and Rajasthan in India. Quilt-making is an old tradition here, perhaps dating back to the 4th millennium BC as judged by similar patterns found on ancient pottery. Colorful *ralli* quilts with diverse patterns, themes and fabrics have been historically recognized as a cultural symbol. The intricate patterns not only show the creativity, the skill and dexterity of local artisans but also pave the way towards placing our region among the culturally rich lands of the world. The *ralli* forms emerge from purely handmade works of art embracing the tough grind of countless days. There are legends, folk songs and sayings about *rallis*. A normal *ralli* is a textile jewel finished with physical and spiritual labor, done with hand and mind, putting in almost 180 hours of work.

Thousands of women, regardless of religion, occupations, tribes and castes, living in towns, villages and nomadic settings, make *rallis*. All those actively involved in this textile craft belong to the marginalized, under privileged and poor segment of our society.

Origin of the word *Ralli*

The word *ralli* is mainly derived from the local word "Ralanna", which means mixing and connecting. The name also comes with various pronunciations around the country depending on the regions and languages. The symbols of flowers and animals used in the decoration and the colors are imaginative and exotic. Every *ralli* quilt tells a story. It tells of the natural creativity and love of color and design of the woman who creates it. Every *ralli* tells the story of the strength of tradition and motifs of *rallis* which have been passed from mother to daughter and woman-to-woman perhaps for thousands of years.

History of *Ralli* Patterns

Figure 2

Mixing and connecting. Source: Author

The motifs appear to have originated far back in the history of the Indus region. The carvings of the desert tombs of Sindh and Baluchistan (covering about 400 years, starting in the middle of the 15th century AD) have many similar motifs. The geometric designs in the blocks of carved stone are very similar to quilt blocks. Some of the lines in the stone seem like lines of stitching. However, going back farther than this are clear similarities between *ralli* designs and ancient painted pottery of the region (2000-800 BC). The majority of the patterns are based on a geometric grid but there are also patterns based on circles, stars or flowers. Some of the designs that are shared by *rallis* and pottery are simple, including checkerboards, lines and triangles, yet others are complicated patterns combining together many shapes and design elements.

One of the interesting aspects of ancient pottery is that archaeologists think that the pots may have been painted by women as there are some small fingerprints still visible in the paint. Scholars report that pottery with painted motifs seems to have been replaced in the first millennium BC by plain, undecorated pottery; yet the old designs continue in *ralli* and embroidery today. Even though ancient records are scarce, we know that quilting is an old tradition in the region (quilts are listed as an export item from western India to Europe on trade records from the early 1500s). Could the women have passed on the traditional cultural designs from mother to daughter for many thousands of years and at some point used them in quilts? There is a good example in the region where an ancient tradition

survives today. In the old graves from the time of painted pottery, women were buried wearing many white bangles. Women in the same rural areas today still wear multiple white bangles. Perhaps the ancient motifs have survived in their quilts as the tradition of bangle jewelry has survived on their arms. Mostly abstract patterns are made with pieces of cloth but one may also find flowers, ducks, leaves and other such motifs.

The Methodology of *Ralli*-Making

Rallis are made only with fabric, thread, needles and scissors. A typical *ralli* is about seven feet by four or five feet. The top of the quilt (the decorated portion) is usually the work of one woman. The women carefully form patterns and symbols from cloth, some simple and some complex. The women making the quilts rely on their own memories and the memories of their mothers and older women to teach them the patterns. They do not use paper or any tools to make their patterns. There may be a great variety of patterns and styles of *rallis* even in a small village or community. The women have a large mental portfolio of quilt patterns they have made, known or seen. They often describe them historically as "old patterns" or "new patterns". The woman will generally work on the blocks as she gets time between the chores of the day.

Scraps of cotton fabric dyed to the desired color and then cut into geometrical shaped pieces are joined together later to create long quilts. Much of the fabric comes from old and worn clothing and textile items of the family. Often, the quilt makers use fabric pieces that are no longer in use, for the top layer; they also use an old shawl, a worn tie and dye, *ajrak* or other, as a base for the fabric patches that are sewn on the top of it later. *Ralli* quilts also have a few layers of old fabric or cotton fibers between the top and bottom layers. All layers are held together by thick colored thread stitched in straight lines. The color combinations and unique patterns speak for the aesthetic sense of its creator. The traditional colors of *rallis* are called *satrangi* (white, black, red, yellow orange, dark green, blue and purple). Some communities prefer other colors such as pink and light green or brown and orange. The designs vary from floral motifs to waves and images of animals or trees. The number of patterns used on *ralli* quilts seems to be almost endless as there is much individual expression and spontaneity in color within the traditional patterns.

When the top portion is all pieced and sewn, the woman will start to sew it together. She calls on female family members and female friends to help

Figure 3

Scraps of cotton fabric for *ralli*-making. Source: Author

with stitching the quilt together when she is ready. This is a time for talking, news sharing and singing for the women. A reed mat is placed on the ground. The cloth that is to be the back or bottom of the quilt is placed on the mat. On top of that is placed small scraps of fabric (usually 3-5 layers) which will be the filling of the quilt. These are basted to the bottom with large stitches. The top fabric is then positioned and sewn. Often a group of women sit on opposite sides of a quilt and work on sewing it together. Depending on the thickness of the quilt and the skill of the quilters, the stitches may be as close as 1/8 inch apart. No quilting frame is used.

Styles/Types

Patchwork Patterns

Figure 4

Patchwork *ralli* pattern. Source: Indus Crafts

A patchwork pattern is made from pieces of cloth cut or torn into squares, triangles or other geometrical shapes and then stitched together. A patchwork quilt is most common and is found on most village beds. Many of the designs are very complex. The patterns are often bold with frequent use of triangles or squares to give movement to the design. Some patterns have practical uses such as a game board. One pattern is used for a chess type game (*tukri*) and another game uses the spaces in a cross pattern (*chopar*). Overall geometric patterns are called *farsh* or tile floor. Often the borders on patchwork quilts are fairly simple. In the Punjab, patchwork is often alternated with appliqué work.

Appliqué Patterns

Appliqué is made from intricate cut out patterns in a variety of shapes. Appliqué designs are also found throughout the *ralli* region. Small squares of fabric are cut out (similar to a paper snowflake); the edges are turned under and sewn onto the block fabric. Appliqué patterns come in a wide variety of abstract shapes.

Embroidery

Embroidered quilts have patterns formed with embroidery stitches on solid colored fabric. Embroidered quilts are the specialty of a few nomadic groups. These quilts generally use a large piece of whole or patched cloth and colored thread, with stitching in embroidery designs through all the layers of the cloth. A distinguishing feature of *ralli* patterning is the diagonal placement of similar blocks as well as a variety of embellishments including mirrors, sequins, beads, tassels, shells and embroidery stitches. The stitches include running stitch, chain stitch, double chain stitch, feather stitch, herringbone stitch, interlacing stitch and others.

Regional Variations

There are many regional variations in *ralli* designs. Sometimes it is possible to know where a *ralli* is made purely by its design.

Uses

Rallis are commonly used as a covering for wooden sleeping cots, as a floor covering, as a storage bag or padding for workers or animals. In villages, *ralli* quilts are an important part of a girl's dowry. Women start making *ralli* at an early age as part of their dowry. It is not usually bought or sold but made by women for use in their family. Occasionally, women will make *rallis* for sale. In other cases, the poor artisans offer these products as gifts to elite families on the occasion of marriages or births and in return get an animal such as a cow, buffalo or goat.

Research Work on *Ralli* Making/*Ralli* Quilts

In addition to creating beautiful designs with colors and shapes, the women have developed a textile craft with universal appeal touching the senses of those far beyond their community and culture.

Celia Eddy

Celia Eddy, an English author and teacher of quilting, has carried out detailed study of *ralli* quilts. She has written about *ralli* quilts in her book *Quilted Planet*. Of *ralli* quilts, she says that their patterns and colors "embody all the romance and exoticism of the East".

Dr. Patricia Stoddard

Dr. Patricia Ormsby Stoddard is an American quilt researcher, lecturer and museum curator. She and her husband lived in Pakistan for several years, where she came to collect and conduct primary research on *ralli* quilts. She wrote the book *Ralli Quilts: Traditional Textiles of Pakistan and India* in 2003.

Ironically, this cultural product, while gaining recognition abroad, failed to acquire its appropriate importance at home. As a result, many skilled artisans are leaving their profession due to lack of patronage. This work of art is exclusively handmade and cannot be duplicated. The skill travels from generation to generation but due to dearth of proper avenues for young artisans, the new generation has little interest in learning the trade of their ancestors. Their priorities too have changed.

Aik Hunar Aik Nagar (AHAN)

To solve the problems and to tackle on-ground issues, due credit goes to the Aik Hunar Aik Nagar (AHAN) project of the Ministry of Industries, Government of Pakistan, who with a three-pronged strategy initiated a pilot project for the craftswomen of Sukkur (Sindh).

During phase one of this pilot project, a large number of designs were reviewed by the designers. They observed that various geographic locations have *ralli* designs with their own history and tradition; hence various geographic clusters and craftswomen were identified by AHAN. They were then trained as master trainers. About five clusters of 12 master craftswomen were given one month on-job training at the designers' training centers in Karachi. The training course provided skills in product development with various themes and tones. The object of this pilot project was to train the master craftswomen so that they may train more women in their respective villages.

Renowned Pakistani designer, Deepak Perwani, provided his expertise in product development and training. He has now trained a group of female artisans at his factory in Karachi. The idea behind such training is to add value to this village craft by turning out various *ralli* products like fashion apparel, handbags, embellishments on shawls and bedroom accessories that include lamp shades, cushions and toys. The women participants were also trained to produce modern designs and guided towards a number of marketing channels. Their products were also displayed at a women's expo to get the market feedback.

Conclusion

An overview of the unique textile art and technique of *ralli* has brought into the limelight this silent yet striking legendary folk art which is conceptualized, nurtured and practised by the marginalized and the poor of our land. For a revival and preservation of the handicrafts, support is needed from the concerned quarters of society. New markets need to be explored within the country, as well as internationally, to utilize fully the potential of this legendary folk art.

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Dialogue – From Polarization to Participation

Christoph B. Spreng

Whoever is working in the fields of culture, art and architecture of the marginalized and the poor has probably realized that leadership and management skills are required to plan successful projects in the field. There is a need for an all-stakeholders approach when working to bring about tangible progress in the field. First of all to perceive, accept and then to manage a multi-stakeholder situation is worth some consideration.

This paper is about the author's experiences in Europe that, although from another context, may be helpful for creators, managers, patrons and leaders of culture, art and architecture of the marginalized and the poor. This experience comes from people who are volunteers at the Conference of International Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) of the Council of Europe and the product is called the International Non-governmental Organization (INGO) Dialogue Toolkit[1].

A fair amount of experience that lies behind this dialogue approach is inspired by the author's activity with his own local NGO called Caux-Initiatives of Change[2], an association that has been operational for over 60 years, helping to enable ethical leadership, trust building and sustainable living.

The author comes from Switzerland, which is not known to have large numbers of marginalized and poor these days; rather the current reputation reflects, although not accurately, banking, high-end manufacturing and tourism. However, over three generations ago Swiss life was marked by poverty

Figure 1

Courtyard in the village of Morcote, TI. Source: Author

and emigration due to its position on the periphery of Europe's main centres and without major natural resources. One can find the traces of this period in existing buildings. In the southern Canton of Ticino[3],

there was and still is plenty
of granite in various colors
but a relative scarcity
of construction timber.
Figure 1 shows a courtyard
floor made of natural
cobblestones from nearby
rivers. Figure 2 is from the
same area, where one had
to make do with the lengths
of available timber and
forego the proper carpentry
of a standard roof truss.

Creating then Realising Culture, Art and Architecture Projects

Whilst it is broadly accepted that an individual person does the initial
work of creativity, there are also some creations that are conceived
through teamwork. After the initial concept, the project usually goes
to an increased number of people with whom things need to happen.
With more people the number of views, perspectives and interests
might increase and with it the risk of polarisation, possibly threatening
the successful conclusion of projects. Besides the technical-material
aspects of project management, the human issue of polarisation seems
to be universal. At this point a brief explanation of context is required
before further developing the Dialogue theme.

The Council of Europe and Civil Society

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe[4] (CoE) is the oldest inter-
governmental organisation of that continent, currently with 47 member
states, which are 19 more than the European Union members. The CoE
has consultative chambers for Parliamentarians of Member States, for
their Local Authorities and for International NGOs. The author's own
international association delegates him to this latter CoE body called
the Conference of INGOs.

An accumulation of unresolved issues in matters of diversity and
migration was observed over the last several years, which has led to
a growing level of human rights infringements in European countries.
Pending issues, instead of being addressed, would be instrumentalized
for party political ends. To address this problem and mitigate its

negative consequences, the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe[5] decided to elaborate on a practical guide to conduct dialogues where they are most needed. The author was mandated to co-ordinate this pro bono activity. This began in 2011 with co-ordinating a five-member team of diverse professional, social and national backgrounds.
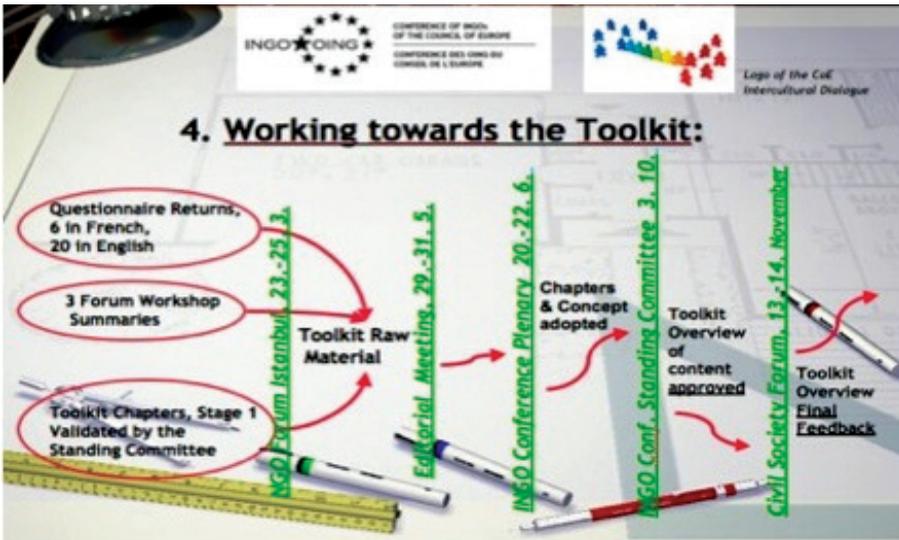
The Toolkit is the result of experiences, field observations and debate, a drawing together of lessons learned. Workshop reports and questionnaires were used along with some theoretical underpinning. The draft text underwent a peer review by a CoE expert as well as academicians[6] from Spain, UK and Ukraine. External funds were raised and more volunteers came on board to get to the launching stage of the Dialogue Toolkit. The 30 page text and its dedicated website were launched the following year.

Content Overview of the INGO Dialogue Toolkit

The aim was to supply a hands-on, concise and user-friendly Dialogue Toolkit. It was decided that the approach would not be on the level of "high end culture" but would be aimed at impacting those situations where people wanted to build social cohesion and the human rights based approach to diversity issues. Therefore, the term "culture" will refer to the mood of a geographic area or of a group of people that might be formed around any kind of thing they have in common. For example, the term "corporate culture" is known to describe the mood or working climate in a company.

Each operative element of the Dialogue Toolkit text ends with a set of action points to be used in the situation when and where dialogues are being initiated. It is also equipped with a variety of references and links to provide readers with more literature.

Action Points

Based on the findings of Action Points 2 and 3, assemble a list of potential Dialogue participants.

4a) Review the list: Are all stakeholders present/ represented? Try to reflect different ages, gender, professions, backgrounds, and social strata. Proceed to adjust the list accordingly;

4b) Determine how the potential Dialogue participants are organised; who are their key figures/leaders/opinion leaders; what are their expectations; Give particular thought to the role of the media and consider the timing factor: When the Dialogue needs the "Safe Space" and when it needs to "go public"?

4c) Try to assess which functions can be implemented by each of the stakeholders in your particular case; based on which human and material resources;

4d) Gather data on positions/attitudes/steps taken/achievements of the potential stakeholders in the scope of intercultural dialogue;

4e) Think about/Reconsider the contribution you expect from each participant;

4f) Consider the nature of a body/platform which should be established to give the participants an opportunity to express their interests openly, coordinate their efforts, and draw up a program of activities;

4g) Based on the above, develop an inclusive strategy of a Dialogue built on the common interests of the stakeholders.

The Toolkit helps in the designing of a dialogue on a given situation. It further provides some guidance in dialogue facilitation and evaluation. The INGO Conference proposes that co-operating partnerships be drawn up with relevant stakeholders to implement these dialogues and it has trained facilitators for this role.

Conceived as an implementation facility, the users of the Dialogue Toolkit are all those who are concerned with social cohesion, human rights or governance and diversity issues and willing to pass from policy recommendations to elaborate upon and implement policies based on the multi-stakeholder approach. Before going into an overview of the Toolkit text, it should be remembered that it was compiled and primarily written for the European context. During elaboration, however, remarks were offered from further afield stating that the main substance of the INGO Dialogue approach is of wider relevance. Therefore, some geographic contextual observations should not be taken too much into account.

Aims of a Dialogue

The first ten elements of the Toolkit explain the proposed dialogue approach. It gives the background to the Toolkit definitions and concepts such as "dialogue", "culture", and "honest conversation". The elements describe the background to the document and notes that the Toolkit was conceived as a practical follow-on to the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*[7] (May 2008) and to the Report by the Group of Eminent Persons on *Living Together in 21st Century Europe*[8] (May 2011).

Mapping of a Situation

Element 2 invites us to take a good look at the main challenges that societies are facing. The issue of diversity today is a lot more complex than simply relations between majorities and minorities. There is a "fractured mainstream society" meaning that there are now more sub-cultures and differences present in the so-called majority than ever before.

Rising unemployment and uncertainty fuelled by the financial crisis have given rise to populist trends as people feel threatened and insecure in their own societies. Populist "solutions" and xenophobic ideas that claim to address the problems rock the boat, sending some societies down a wrong and dangerous path. Various socio-economic

circumstances and levels of education provide people living in separate communities, even where they belong to the so-called majority, with no natural space for interaction. This only reinforces mutual false interpretations and perceptions. Parallel societies within nation states have become a reality.

The role of "identity" needs to be taken into account as one of the core issues when considering the challenges of a dialogue and the fact that identity questions can be instrumentalized and politicized. The main difficulties of intercultural dialogue, as is confirmed by the responses to the questionnaire and other discussions, lie in the areas of immigrants and asylum seekers, ethnicity, religion and the Roma population. The gender dimension was mentioned as well as other elements such as different perceptions of what freedom means, historical barriers, intergenerational barriers and lack of or misleading information.

Causes of Conflict

Element 3 identifies the factors contributing to conflict in modern multicultural societies in order to develop or adjust strategies to respond to them. These factors have been assembled in 12 domains. There is a range of responses concerning individual identity and group identities. An honest conversation with oneself often provides the key to a new way of looking at the other. Ignoring existing and/or potential intercultural issues facing particular communities, towns and/or cities along with pent up dissatisfaction, disillusionment and anger form the next set of components giving rise to conflicts. Change itself can often be perceived as a source of conflict. It requires particular care to minimize the initial negative impact of changes and derive maximum benefit for all. Global challenges, such as a clash of civilizations, cultures and ideologies, the growing economic and social disparities between the rich and vulnerable populations in Europe, the migration patterns and their driving causes, all require careful interpretation/reinterpretation in order to reach appropriate solutions that are implementable. Racism in its various forms is a reality in today's societies. There is rising xenophobia, Islamophobia and recurring anti-Semitism. The media sometimes aggravates conflicts, spreading prejudices and promoting stereotypes of certain ethnic and religious groups, migrants and asylum seekers. At the same time, taking the intercultural approach as a basis, rejecting sensationalism and myths, and striving towards more effective, sensitive and informed reporting,

the media contributes to conflict resolution and maintaining social cohesion. Element 3 provides a good example of a local newspaper in the city of Leicester, UK, the *Leicester Mercury*.

Who Needs To Be At The Table?

Element 4 shows that an intercultural dialogue is a multivectoral and a multidirectional continuous process that affects to some degree each and every one either as individuals or as members of social groups, be it in their daily life or while performing public functions. This element attempts to systematize the basic composition of participants in an intercultural dialogue, taking into account the factors mentioned above. Starting with the fact that an Individual remains a key link in any dialogue, the authors analyze the role of educational institutions, be they formal or informal entities and look at the role of a family. Speaking of social groups, the authors mention the importance of young people as agents of change and the role of the older generation who carry on the traditions ensuring continuity of social and cultural values as well as lessons learnt from the past.

The role of politics and politicians as well as public administration has to be considered since societal trends largely depend on political influencing factors. The role of civil society as a multifunctional, complex stakeholder is viewed through the prism of the key objectives and activities of NGOs as vital participants in dialogue. It is noted that locally, implementation of intercultural dialogue often depends on the mood and active involvement of social groups and communities, be they institutionally organized associations or informal groups. The activities of religious communities and their leaders bring into focus the religious dimension of dialogue. Then the authors look at the role of sports organizations and cultural associations and their spokespersons, as well as the part placed by intellectuals, academics and researchers in the preparation of a dialogue and in sustaining it.

In today's mediatized society, a great deal depends on the quality and the quantity of information and it is evident that the role of the media is crucial. This is also dealt with in this element.

Conditions and Context at the Macro and Micro Level

Element 5 shows that dialogue is possible and effective in the presence

of a whole number of tightly interrelated and interdependent issues. It formulates these conditions and defines the context that creates a fertile ground for dialogue. Beginning with the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, macro-conditions include the following values and principles: human rights, democracy and the rule of law; equal dignity and mutual respect; gender equality and dismantling the barriers that prevent dialogue. The task today is not just to recognize, respect and cherish this diversity but also to use it for the common good. Furthermore, it is a matter of shifting the mind-set of the public from polarization to solution-oriented dialogues. Hereby, the initial basic conditions at the micro-level include motivation/intention and readiness to join and to conduct dialogue and be open-minded. A willingness to engage in dialogue is influenced by conditions such as hospitality, affability and benevolence and also a specific expression of respect for the partner(s) in the dialogue with an attitude of welcoming the other to join in the dialogue.

Wherever possible it is ideal to start the dialogue in a situation where all are on an equal footing. This allows the participants to further develop such qualities as listening skills, self-awareness and self-reflectiveness which are closely connected to the ability to think critically, the awareness of and knowledge about "the other".

Facilitating a Dialogue

Element 6 looks at the role of facilitators in dialogue and compares it to other related roles and procedures, in particular to the role of the justice of peace and the process of arbitration and mediation. Finally, it mentions some of the skills required. The following definition forms the basis of the element:

> A facilitator of dialogue helps a diverse group of participants to accept and appreciate each other, to evaluate all factors involved in overcoming difficulties, to own their share of responsibility to make a difference, to identify the group's common objectives and to assist them in planning how to achieve these objectives. [9]

One of the key principles for facilitation of dialogue, and therefore for the task of facilitators, is maintaining the integrity of dialogue. During the process, the facilitator needs to have in mind these elements of the dialogue and he/she needs to ascertain the participants' consent.

Planning and organization of the dialogue, as well as maintaining it, requires a continued assessment of the process, including an understanding of the hidden obstacles to dialogue, of possible dilemmas in approaching the dialogue, of "hot-button" words and such.

Main Obstacles to a Genuine Dialogue

Element 7 notes that the obstacles to dialogue are on all levels: national, regional and local. They are caused by different factors, including the lack of political agenda for dialogue and the lack of public policies in combating discrimination. Specialized state institutions that focus only on the issue of discrimination seem to ignore the gaps in the corresponding legislation, for example, in the legislation on "racial" and ethnic discrimination and hate crimes. Other factors are false perceptions/ stereotypes/prejudice, especially if the media distributes them in direct and indirect ways. Some of the hidden obstacles to dialogue are also created because of no sense of belonging and the lack of human security for all, lack of support for NGOs involved in dialogue and no space available or offered for dialogues to happen. There are still a lot of inequalities regarding treatment and opportunities. Other factors that may block the dialogue, concern education and the lack of schooling of immigrant children and other socially disadvantaged groups.

Among the issues which spur the most discussions are the ones related to migration (legal/illegal), religion, ethnical, cultural and religious racism and xenophobia, employment, social integration of minority groups and vulnerable groups, gender differences, the rights of the immigrants, cultural heritage and such. It is not easy to address these problems. Some of the obstacles may be dissolved by openness, by recognizing the problems and showing a willingness to overcome them. It requires time, effort, a long-term commitment and courage to push the ''hot buttons'' in a sensitive manner.

Design of a Dialogue Process

Element 8: Despite the fact that in each case the dialogue will have to have its own specificities, there are some general guiding principles for any dialogue process. It is based on the values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law; it seeks to promote unity in diversity; it is committed to honest conversations, trust-building, adhering to the principle of "what is right", not "who is right" and to the prerequisite

of having "all at the table".

The element underlines essential elements of the dialogue process such as "learning from the past" - unpacking and tending to wounds of history, the collecting of good practices, the study and exchange of training experiences of facilitators. It includes the need for establishing a personal evaluation system for initiators of dialogues and for the participants, allowing people to reflect on the coherence and relevance of their involvement in the process as it relates to their life and work.

Context and Purpose

Element 9 elaborates on the purpose of the dialogue. In the Council of Europe context this means the democratic management of diversity and an approach of social cohesion based on human rights. Taking this road means developing a culture of participation. This element also lists some items regarding the planning of dialogues, if they have not been covered in the preceding elements.

It mentions again the need for evaluation of the dialogue process. This evaluation can be initiated before the end of the dialogue and it gains in quality if it is completed by a retrospective evaluation.

References and Resources

Element 10 offers a collection of literature for further reading as well as a number of Internet links with access to examples of best practice of intercultural dialogue. This content overview concluded, the next section provides reports on some field activities.

Getting to Work 'From Polarization to Participation'

After the publication of the Toolkit in 2012, a working group was trained and then formally appointed; it is called the INGO Dialogue Hub. Several requests were received to transpose the INGO Dialogue Toolkit content into higher educational circuits but for the time being the policy is to gain some visibility, to develop fieldwork and to provide feedback to the Council of Europe on the insights and lessons learned from the field.

Visibility

In 2013, the Dialogue Toolkit website has had 5,693 visitors from 113 countries, which makes an average of 16 per day. The top ten visitor countries were France, Switzerland, India, Canada, UK, USA, Germany, Italy, Russia and Australia.

A number of inquiries were received through the contact page of the website; worth noting is an NGO from Lebanon who, after correspondence, agreed in principle to partner for projects that may come up in the Middle East and the North African (MENA) region. Here follow notes from some situations where the INGO Dialogue Toolkit was used.

Life in the Paris Suburbs

The Initiative Dialogue (ID) team, a volunteer initiative in France, has been facilitating dialogues for a number of years to promote good neighborhoods in some of the restless suburbs of Paris. In March 2013, ID organized an advanced training[10] for volunteer facilitators and professionals. The INGO Dialogue Hub was asked to provide the content and the moderation. The two-day intensive workshop was appreciated and termed as being practical, efficient and based on the exchange of experiences. The training subject that was evaluated with top grades by the participants (23 points out of 24) was called "Failures, Obstacles and Risks". It points to the importance of on-going, candid feedback from implementation to the conception and planning stages of a project. One participant wrote afterwards, "The Dialogue Toolkit is a useful instrument for peace because it has methodological and practical keys to bring young and old, regardless of where in the world, to a fruitful dialogue."

A Month after the New Constitution: Citizens Dialogue in Tunisia

In February 2014, the author joined the Space for Citizen's Dialogue - *Carrefour du Dialogue Citoyen* (CDC)[11] in Tunisia, a three-month project aimed at empowering Civil Society, especially women and young people. The project was carried out by three NGOs, one of them was the ID team in France led by a Franco-Tunisian bi-national. The project contained three phases and had touched 320 people from 70 diverse associations in the north, the centre and the south of the country. The Dialogue Toolkit content largely contributed to phase 2 and the author was invited to facilitate the further training of 40 selected applicants from phase one. The Anna Lindh Foundation has funded 80 percent of the project.

In one of the workshop items, the participants were invited to identify a course of action and to map out some steps for preparing and running a dialogue. First they would choose their (polarized) situation and then tease out what had caused it, which is derived from Element 2 of the Dialogue Toolkit. The very brief compilation that follows is by no means a scholarly piece, partly because of technical limitations at the time of gathering the data but the 14 sheets that were left usable give a snapshot idea of what was/is on the minds of those leaders of associations.

Figure 6

Relationship between situations chosen and their causes of polarization. Source: Author
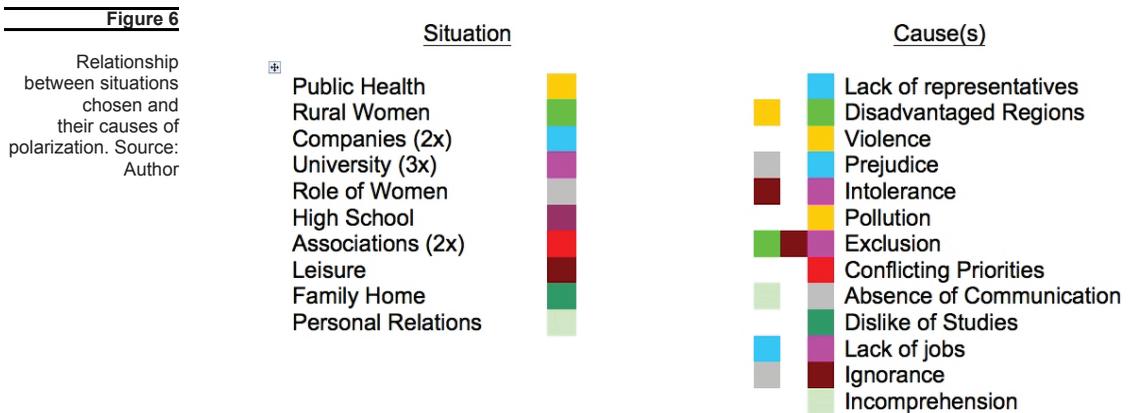
The Figure 6 paraphrased treatment illustrates the relationship between the various chosen situations and their causes of polarization. By using the colored squares, one can see the degree of correlation between them. While some of the identified situations point to immediate challenges, there is also mention of the bigger social issues. Also, whilst participants in the CDC project were mostly young people and women, we see a broad range of identified situations. The entry point of participants was not theoretical but in all cases stemming from their experience and sharing, as it seemed, the aspiration to move together towards the longed for participative model of society. The CDC organizers have recently reiterated their wish for a continued cooperation with the INGO Dialogue Hub.

Conclusion

> Looking to revitalize our arts and culture it is necessary to broaden the mainstream, enrich it and facilitate it to develop a direction and a meaning, which can be truly rooted in our traditions and our people. Culture, art and architecture thrive in an ambience reflecting all the people.[12]

This paper attempts to show that a dialogue from polarization to participation may possibly help to facilitate and develop that meaning referred to in the quote.

Endnotes

1   Website: The INGO Dialogue Toolkit

http://www.dialoguetoolkit.net/the-toolkit/

2   Website: Caux - Initiatives of Change

http://www.caux.ch/

3   Website: The Canton (State of) Ticino, Switzerland

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ticino

4   Website: The Council of Europe

http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal

5   Website: The INGO Conference of the Council of Europe

http://www.coe.int/T/NGO/default_en.asp

6   Website: Participants of the Peer Review

http://www.dialoguetoolkit.net/partners/peer-review-partners/

7   Website: White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/publication_whitepaper_id_en.asp

8   Website: Group of Eminent Persons Report

https://book.coe.int/usd/en/european-debates/4676-living-together-combining-diversity-and-freedom-in-21st-century-europe-report-of-the-group-of-eminent-persons-of-the-council-of-europe.html

9   Website: Definition paraphrased from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facilitator

10   Website: Facilitators Advanced Training (only in French)

http://fr.iofc.org/atelier-sur-loutil-de-dialogue-oing-issy?bc=node/72295

11   Website: Space for Citizen's Dialogue Project in Tunisia (only Arabic and French)

https://www.facebook.com/Carrefour.Dialogue.Citoyen/
posts/1423998921179947

12   Thaap Conference – 2014

Vandal, Pervaiz (2013) Explanation of the Theme, Paragraph 4

The Ignored Dardic Culture of Swat

Zubair Torwali

Introduction

The term 'Dardic' was first used by Dr. Gottlieb Welhem Lietner in his book *Dardistan* published in 1866, 1886 and 1893 (*Dardistan*: Lietner, G. W.). Lietner writes, "Herodotus (III. 102-105) is the first author who refers to the country of the Dards, placing it on the frontier of Kashmir and in the vicinity of Afghanistan" (*Dardistan*, 1893: 1-4).[1] Lietner named the land from Kashmir to Afghanistan, including northern Pakistan, Dardistan while the people were reffered to as Dards — a persianized word meaning 'pain' for what is termed as Dadikai by Herodotus in the 5th century BC. 'Darada of Painni' has been translated as 'People of the cliffs'[2] as almost all the Dardic people were, and are, confined to mountainous valleys (*Journal of Asian Civilization*, Vol. 34, No.1 p. 130).

"In Tibetan sources the Darada are known as Darta"[3] (UNESCO, Vol. III, p. 385), whereas "in their descriptions of India, the Puranas speak of the Darada as the inhabitants of Kashmir and Gandhara.
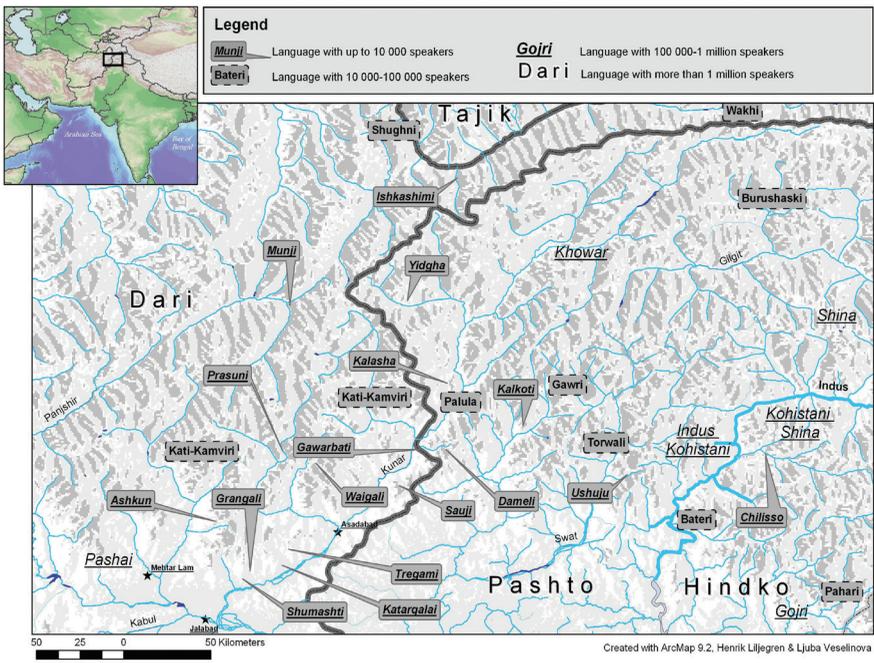
They are repeatedly mentioned in the Ramayana together with the Odra (the Uddiyana)" (Inam-ur-Rahim and Alain Viaro, II p. 59).[4]

Dardic Languages

The Dardic languages are not well studied and have no remarkable written traditions except the Shina and Kashmiri languages. The latter is even recognized as a state language by the Government of India, while the former is well known to many American and European linguists and scholars. The Dardic languages are usually divided into six groups as done by John Moch in his essay *Dards, Dardistan, and Dardic: An Ethnographic, Geographic and Linguistic Conundrum.* [5]

Figure 2

Dardic Languages. Source: *Dards, Dardistan, And Dardic: An Ethnographic and Linguistic Conundrum* by John Moch Ph.D and Kimberley O'Neil
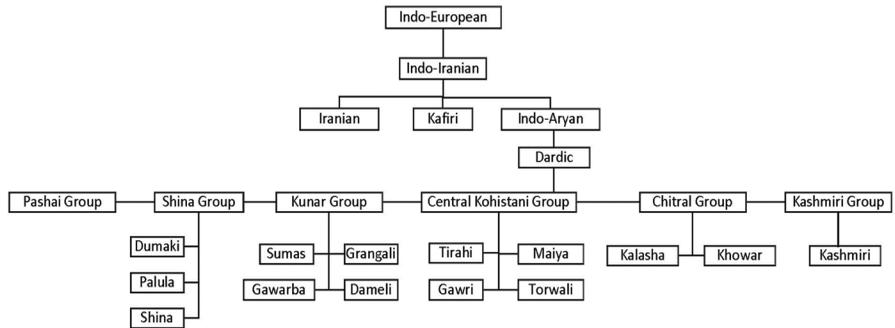
1. Chitral Group
   i.   Khowar
   ii. Kalasha

2. Kunar Group
   i.   Dameli
   ii. Gawar-Bati
   iii. Nangalami-Grangali
   iv. Sumashti

3. Pashai Group
   i.   Northeastern Group
   ii. Southeastern Group
   iii. Southwestern Group
   iv. Northwestern Group

4. Central (Kohistani) Group
    i.   Gawri
    ii.   Torwali
    iii. Maiya (Indus Kohistani)
    iv.   Wotapuri-Katarqalai
    v.   Tirahi

5. Shina Group
    i.   Shina proper
    ii.   Phalura or Palula
    iii. Dumaki

6. Kashmiri Group
    i.   Kashmiri proper

Dardic Occupation of Swat

Today, the Darada communities are predominantly Muslim except the famous Kalasha who live in the valleys of Brir, Bomborate and Rumbur in Chitral. They are hardly 4,000 in number and are socially under pressure to shift to the dominant culture and faith. However, they still adhere to their own mythology, rituals, shamans and festivals and believe in their mythological pantheon.

The Kalasha and a few other Dardic communities, such as the Shina, are well known to scholars due to their being geographically isolated from other dominant communities of the Gandhara area; however, the ones living in the Swat Valley are often ignored due to the overwhelming majority of Pushtuns in the valley. These are the Torwali and Gawri (Kalami) communities of the Central Kohistani Group of the Dardic communities. Today they inhabit the idyllic part of the Swat Valley known as Swat-Kohistan. In the early eleventh century, when Mehmud of Ghazna defeated Raja Gira, the last Hindu king of Swat, many of the indigenous inhabitants were either killed or driven away. "The Hindu and Buddhist local population had no choice but to convert to Islam or to be killed. The part of the population, which did not convert to Islam, was driven into the mountains north of Madyan" (Inam-ur-Rahim and Alain Viaro II. p. 61).[6] This area is called Swat-Kohistan and the people are generally called Kohistanis by the Pushtuns of Swat. Swat-Kohistan remained "Yaghistan" (lawless) till the rule of Mian Gul Abdul Wadud, generally known as Badsha Sahib, the first ruler of Swat during the state era 1917-1969, who captured the area in 1923 (*Story of Swat* 1962: p. 78).[7]

The Torwali and Gawri tribes are said to be ancient inhabitants of Swat. "In Butkara, near the present Mingora, under the strata of the Buddhist period, Italian archaeologists found tombs showing a long occupation of the site. Thus, the scientific analysis of a skull, probably of one of the most ancient inhabitants of valley, indicates a Torwali human type similar to the present inhabitants of the Swat-Kohistan. From the findings, archaeologists conclude that in the second millenary, or even earlier, groups of invaders entered the valley bringing with them Indo-Aryan and Dard languages" (Inam-ur-Rahim and Alain Viaro II. p. 34).[8]

Vestiges of Dardic Culture in Swat

Torwali is one of the Dardic languages spoken in north Pakistan. It is one of a number of languages generally grouped together as Kohistani. According to George A. Grierson, Torwali is a true Dardic language (*Torwali: An Account of a Dardic Language of Swat-Kohistan*, p. 3).[9]

Presently, the Torwali tribe of Dardic origin is estimated at about 110,000, living in the area beyond the town of Madyan towards Kalam. A considerable number (about 30%) of Torwalis have immigrated to the cities of Karachi, Quetta, Hyderabad, Peshawar and Rawalpindi permanently.

The Torwali and Gawri communities have many things in common with a slight difference in the way each of these communities name their tangible and intangible culture. The lifestyle and culture of both the communities are fast shifting along with their endangered languages. Rapid changes are underway in their way of life because of a number of factors described later in the paper.

Home Life

The extended family members lived in a single room, which was large and divided into various portions according to the structure of the ceiling. This room was simultaneously used as a kitchen, bedroom and dining room and had a single bathroom without a latrine. The back of the room was also used as a stable and a storehouse.

The houses were made of mud, stone and wood. Only the well-to-do families could engrave their front doors and pillars.

Food Habits

The food contained a simple dish mostly *saag,* spinach and corncakes. Wheat bread was not common as this crop was not known. In its place barley bread called *rhod* was used. Milk products such as curd, butter and cheese were used commonly. Butter was made by stirring the curd in a pitcher made of mud with the help of a wooden tool called a *mehdaen* or cream separator. The food contained no spices. Stone salt was melted by rubbing it in the *saag* dish. Wheat bread and meat was served only during festivities such as marriages and *bilaeth*. *Bilaeth* is a term used for large meal gatherings during certain rituals such as praying for God's grace in the afterlife. In *bilaeth,* pure *ghee* with honey was also served as a meat alternative. The food was served in vessels made of either wood or mud. Utensils made of copper and other metals were very rare. Pots made of mud were used for cooking, storing water and other liquids. Tea was not common in the past. Often melted and clarified butter, *ghee,* was poured into the dish with the help of pans. A special pot, *dhoan,* was also used for carrying water or *ghee*. The food was put into one of the large pots and people ate from it in groups. The corncakes were soaked in sauce with some *ghee* sprinkled over them. Mostly there were woolen mats to sit upon while eating, however, wooden seats were also used.

Furniture

In the past, furniture was made simply. Beds were made of wood stalks and ropes. These ropes, made from animal hides, were braided together to make the beds tight. Chairs were not common and were used mostly by wealthy families. There were two types of chairs, both called *shaen*. The seats were low, about six inches from the ground and were made of rope. One type included a straight back, made from engraved wooden planks. A simpler version had no back. *Shaens* large enough for two people were also made.

Maize grains were stocked in a large wooden box called an *ashaan*. The flour was stocked in a smaller wooden box. These smaller boxes called *taen* were often engraved with beautiful symmetrical figures. *Taens* were also used for keeping clothes and money. There were no carpets; woven woollen rugs called *poray* were used instead. Later came a more refined woven woollen mat called a *lamsay*. Rugs made of grass were also common in the past.

Shaen are still in use but *ashaan* are only used in more isolated villages situated far away from main roads. Mostly they have been replaced by aluminum trunks. The *taen* are no more in use. Rich luxury furniture such as sofa sets and dining sets have become common now.

Clothing

Men owned a few clothes only. One set was new and was kept for special events while the other was for daily use. Hard oval leather caps wrapped with long strips of cloth were worn by men. The common people could not wear such caps. *Pokhols*, woollen caps folded many times up to the blade and *Kurakuli*, hard conical caps made of animal hides came later. In winter, a woollen and hand-woven coat called a *goan* was worn by men. For sleeping, a mat called a *pelaes* made of goat's wool was used.

Women used to wear *shalwar kameez*. The shirt was embroidered with colored thread and small pieces of silver. These shirts had large wide sleeves and an embroidered collar. The women's trousers were folded many times like the Balouch traditional men's trousers. On the head, the women wore a black blanket called a *taa*. This was both for decency, *purdah* and protection in the cold climate. The older women wrapped their heads with small scarves of black cloth called *shaeghaen*. Open hair was not considered graceful, so the women tied their hair into braids. On special occasions, women also wore colorful shawls as this old Torwali couplet informs us:

> *Huramza mozi ye daryiab si lal thua. Dhuth lhaghur asheem o sha zed zarin shawl thua.*

> To the rival, Huramza is like a pearl from the sea. She has red soft lips and wears a crimson shawl on her head.

Footwear

There were no boots except the barge-like shoes called *khożore* decorated with silk thread. The rich men and women both wore them. A type of wooden shoe called *kharpa* was also used and was an alternative to slippers.

Men also wore *thawat* in winter. The *thawats* were not shoes but animal hides which men wrapped around their feet upto the knees. These were especially used when there was snow. A kind of special shoe made of

braided hay (rice crop hay) was also in use. These were also made for a bride. The number of braids could exceed seven.

Goan, *khażore*, *kharpa* and *thawat* are no longer in use. The embroidered shirts are also not in use. The use of the *pokhol* is not common any longer and is being gradually replaced by white caps mostly made in Dir. The *Karakuli* is in use by a few notables only. However, it is still regarded as a sign of grace.

Rituals

Marriage

Girls and boys used to be married at the young age of thirteen years. While the girls were not allowed to choose their mate, a boy could easily send his family to the girl's house for the marriage proposal. After agreeing to the proposal, the couple was betrothed through the *nikah* (marriage bond) ceremony. The marriage ceremony used to be conducted at a later time. There were no *dolies* (a wedding palanquin for the bride) at first; these were introduced to the culture later. The bride used to be led to the bridegroom's house by a close relative. This ritual was carried out late evening or early morning. The dowry contained a wooden chest in which the bride's clothes were carried to her husband's house. The dowry included cattle, a goat, a cow or a bull. As there was no separate room for the newly married couple, the bride was seated on a mat stretched in a corner of the multi-purpose room. The bride was also accompanied by a *saet* (close female relative) such as her mother's sister or her brother's wife but rarely by her father's sister. This ritual is still in practice. The property right of the bride upon the bridegroom, called *mehr* (dower) was common but not practised. The wife usually conceded the property of *mehr* to her husband. Its amount was also small. The *mehr* in the form of jewelry was not much. The ornaments used then were of low quality silver. Gold was not common. There were no written agreements regarding the *mehr* and *nikah*.

Now the dowry is very large. It includes furniture and daily-use items. Gold jewelry is common and its quantity is determined during the engagement negotiations. People now tend to write agreements regarding the *mehr* which includes a house, land and jewelry. In both the bride and bridegroom's houses, a communal meal was and still is

served to close relatives and friends in the village. The meal consists of a single dish and rarely included wheat bread.

People were invited to marriage ceremonies by special envoys called *kotwaal*. Their job was not only to invite people at the time of marriages but also to inform people of someone's death, large meals and *ashar* (a local festival). These envoys, along with blacksmiths, drummers, pipers, barbers and circumcision surgeons were considered low caste, even though they played an important role in the community. They are called *Qasab Go*, which literally means artisans. A formal procession, called *jaen*, was usually organized by a close relative or friend of the bridegroom to his house soon after the marriage. It included scores of people waving large, colorful folded flags called *tugh*. It was a way to honor the bridegroom. The more *tughs* visible in the procession, the more the social prestige of the family of the bridegroom or the bride was as this Torwali *Żo* indicates.

> *Kamal Tugh-a si bor sawad Anath si bawa*
> *Mhi ghinu si samaam shid nu thu Aphara*

> Kedam (a village name) was made a bouquet of *Tughs* (flags) by Anath's father.
> It is the arrangement to marry me and my detested friend is not informed

Local musicians accompanied this procession. The piper played his *surni* (pipe) while the drummer played his *dhumaam* (drum). All these instruments were locally made. This procession also had cattle as a gift for the groom. No such procession exists now. In villages, where there is the wedding cradle there exists the procession. The *tughs* are no more. After a few days, seven, the bride's companion was/is led back to her house with many gifts including raw and cooked food. This ritual is called *satama.* The bride is then sent back to her husband's house by her parents in a ritual called *rukhsati* (seeing off) after her coming home on *satama*. There was a consistent custom of sending gifts, usually food items, to the married woman by her parents on special occasions like *Eid.* This custom is still in practice. The gifts sent with the bride or her companion when the latter was 'seen off' by the groom's house, were and still are distributed among the neighbors as n*aman. Naman* usually

consists of wheat bread fried in ghee, mixed with *gur* (raw sugar), fruits, chickens and other food items. Now the rich people make some jewelry for the *saet* as well.

Greetings

Barbarye was a common word of greeting. *Kherset aap* was/is another word for greeting. The usual Pakistani peace greeting, *salam*, has by now replaced *barbarye*. The younger women used to bow when greeting the old ladies. They even touched their feet. The old lady in turn kissed the younger one on the forehead. This practice is rarely observed now.

Social Gatherings

People used to gather at a common house usually owned by the chief of the village. This was normally called a *bhetak* or a *hujra*. People also used to sit around the fire pit in mosques in winter. In the mosques, the elderly used to tell folk stories, share their experiences and discuss local politics.

In the *bhetak* people entertained themselves with music. The instruments used were the *sitar* or *rabaab* and a mud pitcher with a neck. The open end of the pitcher was tightly covered with either hide or other flexible material. The Torwali *Zo* was the only song sung in *hujras*. Besides music, jokes, anecdotes and riddles were also a means of entertainment in the *hujras*. The *hujra* and mosque fire-pit gatherings are not in existence now. Listening to and playing music has also decreased. The old Torwali *Zo* gradually vanished and has been replaced by a parody of famous Urdu and Pashto songs.

Festivals

There were no festivals except the two *Eid* celebrations of the Islamic calendar. New clothing and *Eid* greetings were common. No greeting cards were used. The village chiefs were visited and greeted on *Eid* days. This trend gradually lost its importance. A small number of people now exchange greeting cards.

A common festival known as *asher* was celebrated. It was celebrated at the time of reaping and sowing crops, cutting hay, threshing maize grains from the cobs and building a house. People gathered to work together. During this event, music was played by professionals. The

workers used to sing Torwali *Zo* while working. For *asher* of threshing maize grains, a special type of Torwali verse was made by poets. It was called *phal*. *Phal* was sung differently from *Zo*.

> *Yeyi sanam yeyi aaj me pande sanam yeyi-a*
> *He yae Badakhshan si gha peshpesh te qadam deyi-a*

> There comes, comes my beloved along the way today.
> She takes steps like the mare from Badakhshan.

> *Hi shala si ka na thu a thung de de kiy juda*
> *Isi misaal alimo si ga sanam zid palara*

> Heart is not like a piece of wood that I should chop with an axe.
> It's like a creeper/vine that is coiled around my beloved.

Ashar is not very common today.

Honor and Family Grace Rituals

Tribal fights and generation to generation enmities were common upon issues such as land, elopement and such others. As there were no courts, land related issues were settled by force. Before the government of *Waali* (before 1925), the local *Jirga* had the function of both police and court. After the *Waali*'s government, *hakims* (judges) settled disputes. In this government, the police was very powerful as everybody used to fear the *nowker* (policeman).

In case of a girl's elopement with a boy of her choice, the couple was sought and shot to death causing enmity between the two families for generations. Often people tried to mediate and reconcile the dispute. The procedure for the reconciliation was to punish the boy's family indirectly. As the girl's elopement of choice was considered a severe disgrace, her family was compensated by giving them some cash and a girl as well. This girl, in many cases, would not be of age at the time of reconciliation. Only after the settlement, the girl who had eloped, now married, was allowed by her father's family to enter their house. This was called *dar*. To have *dar* means to have reconciliation. If the mediation failed to settle the dispute, there would be prolonged enmity between the families till vengeance was sought.

Now, in elopements or court marriage cases, the reconciliation method is the same without prolonged enmity. Only a stand-off between the families exists for a long time. People go to the police in such cases. Honor killing has almost ended. The penalty for reconciliation is the same as it was before.

Rites of Passage

Birth
At the birth of a male child, a feast would be held in the house to celebrate the birth. Relatives and neighbors came to congratulate the new born baby boy with merry making, dancing, listening to music and having a meal together. They brought gifts containing food items as well.

The birth of a female child was mourned. The mother was despised by her relatives and was considered responsible for giving birth to a female child. Even the husband would not enter the house. The mother was not treated well during her recovery period.

This attitude has changed to an extent; however, the birth of a male child still takes superiority over that of a female. The mother of a female child is no longer cursed by relatives. Gifts are now common on such occasions.

Circumcision
The child was circumcised between the ages of two and five years. The professional drum player called *dom* performed the circumcision. The *sunnat* (circumcision ritual) was also celebrated by inviting the relatives and neighbors to a meal. Now children are usually circumcised at an early age by doctors instead of the *dom*.

Puberty
Here puberty means the age at which fasting and praying becomes obligatory on the child. Nothing has changed in this rite. However, in some families the fasting of a child, even if he/she is underage, is now celebrated.

Old Age

An old person was respected and was not supposed to do manual work. There is a myth regarding a custom which involved throwing old people from a rock called *maazlu/maaslu baat*. A large basket made of the stems of certain shrubs, containing round pieces of maize or barley bread was also thrown into the river along with the old person. There is no evidence of this custom; however, there are places — rocks and cliffs — in the Torwali speaking area, which have names like *maaslu/maazlu or maarthalu*. These words seem to be the derivatives of *Maash Thalu* (to throw a man). A place near Mingora, which is now a public park, is called *Fiza Gut* but in Pashto it is called *Qaza Gut*. *Qaza* means death and *Gut*, in Pashto, is stone or rock. Maybe the stone/rock has the same story as the *maaslu/maazlu baat*. If true, this is evidence of the claim that Swat actually belonged to the Torwali people.

Anniversaries

Birthdays were never celebrated; however, now a small number of people have started to celebrate them. Death anniversaries were commonly observed. A large meal was/is served on the death day by the relatives each year. This was/is called *tilaen*.

Death

When somebody died, a large number of people came to the dead person's house, the women for mourning and the men for burial. The women cried in musical accents. The Islamic rites of bath, coffin and prayers were fulfilled and the dead body was laid to rest. There was a large meal served while the dead body was still lying at home. After the burial, there were seven smaller meals by the relatives on successive evenings. These were called *niyashams*. There were considerably bigger meals on the evenings of each Thursday for seven successive weeks. These were called *shugaer,* (Fridays). It is perhaps due to the sacredness of Friday in the Islamic religion. Another reason may be that here people link the preceding night with the next day. On the last Friday, the *chehlum* (fortieth) meal called *dubeshum* was served. People would come to the house of the dead for three days and condole with the relatives. The people gathered at the funeral were also paid either in cash or in kind with *gur*, soap and such. This is called *iskhaat*.

Now, there is no mass meal at the time of burial. Some people still hold

the *niyashams* and *shugaer*. The *tilaen* is rarely practiced. The *iskhaat* is not common but a few rich families still practice it.

The dead person is buried in a rectangular wooden casket about 5 feet deep. The dead body is laid on the ground inside the casket and wooden planks are nailed on top of it. The tombs are sometimes surrounded with a wooden structure as well.

Conclusion

Swat used to attract high profile guests due to its beauty. Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip of England visited Swat in 1962. Similarly, in summer thousands of tourists used to pour into Swat in search of solace from the scorching heat. Every visitor and resident of Swat is well aware of its azure lakes, waterfalls, crystal clear streams, lush green pastures and fields, fruit-laden orchards and the cool breeze during the summer but what most of the residents and tourists ignore is Swat's rich cultural and ethnic diversity which adds to its natural beauty.

Besides the majority Pushtun community, Swat is home to the Dardic communities — Torwali and Gawri — that add to its history and cultural diversity. These Dardic communities are under threat of not only a language shift but also of a culture shift. Being ignored and marginalized, these communities, like many other sister communities, regard their culture and language as 'barriers' in the way to their development leading them to abandon their culture and language. This causes the death of not only their identity but also of an invaluable human heritage for which Swat is equally famous the world over.

Endnotes

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Artists and Artisans of Marginalized Status

Kanwal Khalid, PhD

Artists of the Soil

Many families in Lahore were active in various arts and crafts. Sons adopted the profession of their fathers and continued the *larhi* (chain). Famous Astrolabe makers of Lahore are a classic example in this regard.[1] Painting was no exception and a number of families were associated with this profession. However, many of these families do not have records of their forefathers and very few have any record of their paintings or sketches. In the present research, both information and artworks were discovered.

Interviews with artists of Lahore revealed that families related to the construction of buildings were also associated with the profession of painting. It was ideal for a nobleman to hire a group or a family of masons/craftsmen/artists who would not only construct the *Haveli* or palace but later decorate it. Having wall paintings in *havelis* was common and so many *Naqqash* (Illuminators) flourished in Lahore who were both painters and masons at the same time. Usually a family would divide their members to practice different professions. As a result, carpenters, masons, *naqqash*, painters and sculptors all existed in one house and family. Prominent among these families is the Chughtai family who had architects (Ahmad Bakhsh Lahori), illuminators (Miran Bakhsh) and painters (Abdul Rahman Chughtai).

Figure 1

Interviewing artists and their descendants inside Mochi Darwaaza, Lahore. Source: Author

Two more families were discovered in the city of Lahore who had artists/craftsmen of high merit. By lineage they are Mughals, descendants of the great rulers of India. Later, their forefathers were associated with the *Darbar* of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and almost every member was associated with some artistic skill. They are the Imam Din family and the Habibullah family. The Imam Din family were carpenters and the Habibullah family were painters and sculptors. Both families are inter-

related through marriages and most of them are cousins and uncles, working side by side on various projects.

Their ancestors enjoyed the patronage of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's period. They faced a decline under the British Raj but joined other related fields of arts like printing, photography and theatre for survival.

The Imam Din family tree:

- Mian Lakha
  - Main Saudagar
    - Muhammad abdullah
      - Ahmad Din
      - Muhammad Din
      - Fazal Din
      - Imam Din
        - Abdul Karim
        - Abdul Ghani
          - Muhammad Bashir
          - Nazir Ahmad
          - Munir Ahmad
          - Muhammad Ijaz
          - Muhammad Afzal
            - Dilshad Farooq
            - Shahid Parvez
            - Tariq Mahmood
            - Asif Mahmood
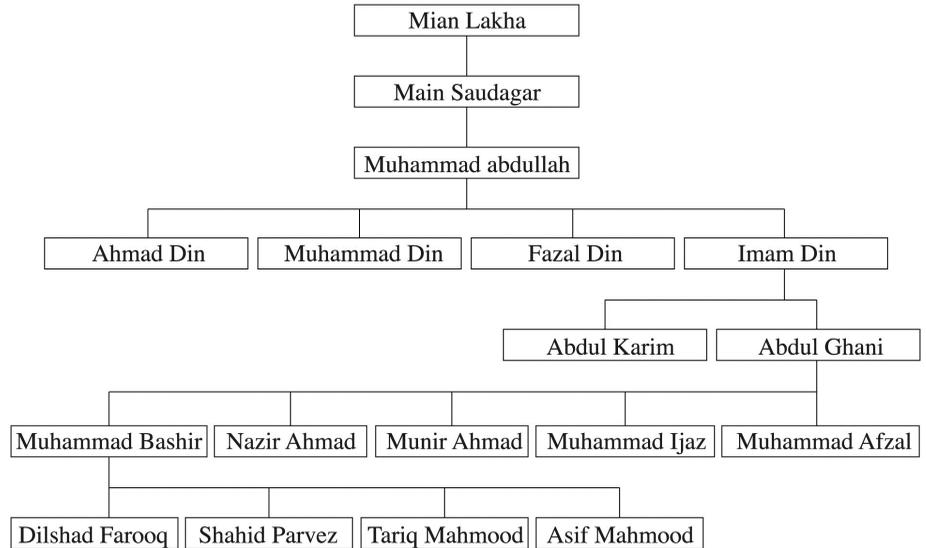
The Imam Din Family

The family is able to trace their ancestors to the 17th century when they owned some land in an area adjacent to Lahore called Khud Pur in Sharaqpur. The oldest name remembered is Mian Lakha, who apart from farming, also worked as a carpenter, joined by his son Mian Saudagar. They became such experts in their work that they shifted to Lahore and started living inside Shah Alami Darwaaza near Sunehri Masjid in Muhallah Sondhian. Here the sons and grandsons of Mian Lakha thrived because their *Tikai* work and carved floral patterns in Kashmiri style attracted customers from every walk of life. Their arrival in the city polished their technique and skill and they became one of the best woodcarving families of Lahore.

Haji Muhammad Bashir, a descendent of the family informed us in one of his detailed interviews, that his family members made many balconies and doors of the Walled City of Lahore. They specialized in

making wooden arches with the most delicate designs that have been the hallmark of Lahori woodwork since the Ghaznavide Period.[2]

All the sons of Mian Saudagar were either carpenters or *naqqash*. A few were *maimars* (masons/architects) including the elder son Fazal Din, a specialist in cut brickwork. However, the most brilliant of them was Imam Din. Born in 1846, he joined the profession at a very young age and was soon declared an expert in *Tikai* work. Furniture made by him was always in demand and if an ordinary bed was sold for one hundred rupees, a bed from Imam Din's workshop was sold for three hundred rupees because of its high standard of workmanship. He died in 1969 at the ripe age of one hundred and fifteen years.

Haji Bashir revealed another interesting fact, that Ghulam Muhammad, the brother of Imam Din's wife, was a good painter of Lahore. Ahmad Baksh Yakdil also mentioned a painter of Lahore by the name of Ghulam Muhammad who was active in 1847.[3] There is a strong possibility that the painter in question is Imam Din's brother-in-law as elder brothers were far older than their younger sisters due to multiple marriages of their fathers.

Imam Din, Haji Bashir's grandfather, told him many stories about their family and old Lahore. According to Imam Din, in the 19th century much of the Muslim population of the city were painters, *naqqash* or masons. Most of them were illiterate but brilliant in creative and manual work. It has been confirmed by other senior painters that Muslims were great artists but they were mostly uneducated and followed what their highly accomplished forefathers had been doing. The arrival of the British and the change of the official language from Persian to English discouraged the local Muslims to the extent that they preferred to train

their children in their family profession at home instead of sending them to British educational institutions.

Haji Bashir's family had very close ties with the late 19th century contractor Sultan Muhammad Thakedar.[4] Since Sultan Muhammad Thakedar had no child of his own, he adopted Haji Bashir's maternal grandfather (*Nana*) Mahmood Din who later on joined the Railway Department. Mahmood Din's father was also a painter but unfortunately no one knows his name.[5]

An attractive field for the children of old artists and craftsmen was photography and printing. Many youngsters were encouraged to join these professions because the traditional arts and crafts were losing their importance in the late 19th and early 20th century. Haji Bashir's younger brother Nazir Ahmad was one of them and he became a block maker and a cameraman in a printing press.

Nazir Ahmad did not attend an institution but learned from various *Ustads* of Lahore. He revealed that many *Ustads* treated their young apprentices as slaves, forcing them to do household chores. They were not taught properly as the *Ustad* did not want his student to become his rival. Most of the apprentices used to run away and those who were really keen to learn spent year after year filling the tobacco in their *Ustad's Huqqah Chilam* (smoking pipe). This was a routine practice. As a result, many art forms and techniques are lost to us because the *Ustads* took their knowledge to the grave.

Nazir Ahmad was very lucky in this regard because he learned from Mairaj Din who was Qamar Din's brother. Mairaj Din was a highly skilled block maker and taught his students all that he knew. Later Nazir Ahmad joined Packages, a prestigious printing company of Pakistan and spent his life working there till retirement.

Another fact revealed by Haji Nazir about his family was that they were sculptors also and their forefathers were famous for their sculptures in Lahore and its vicinity.

Haji Bashir's other brother Munir Ahmad completed his studies at the National College of Arts in early 1959 and spent his life pursuing the profession of his family.

Haji Bashir's eldest son Dilshad Farooq worked as a carpenter and his younger son Shahid Parvaiz has an office in Urdu Bazaar where he

works as a designer. Some other members are also involved in other artistic activities but their work lacks the mastery of their ancestors.

Tools, tracings of old designs that were copied by the later generations and some drawings of British style furniture that were made in the early 20th century are still with the family. The family also possesses a wooden carved piece and a *Payah* (support of a table or bed) that was made by Imam Din.

Figure 4

Documents at Haji Bashir's House. Source: Author

Figure 5

Specimen of an old wooden design used by the family. Source: Author

Haji Bashir passed away on 26th August 2007 before he could show the few surviving doors and windows that he knew were made by his forefathers in the Walled City. Now, nobody in the family knows the location of those balconies because they left their ancestral home in 1950, bought a nine room bungalow in Wasan Pura for PKR 6300,

which was previously owned by Khurshid Begum, a famous actress of Lahore.

The Habibullah Family

The other branch of the family is the Habibullah family. They are related to each other through inter-family marriages and most of the relationships are very complicated. The sister of Haji Bashir's mother was married into the Habibullah family. Haji Bashir's first cousin is an artist named Khalifa Qamar Din.

Plate B

Family tree of Habibullah. Source: Habibullah family
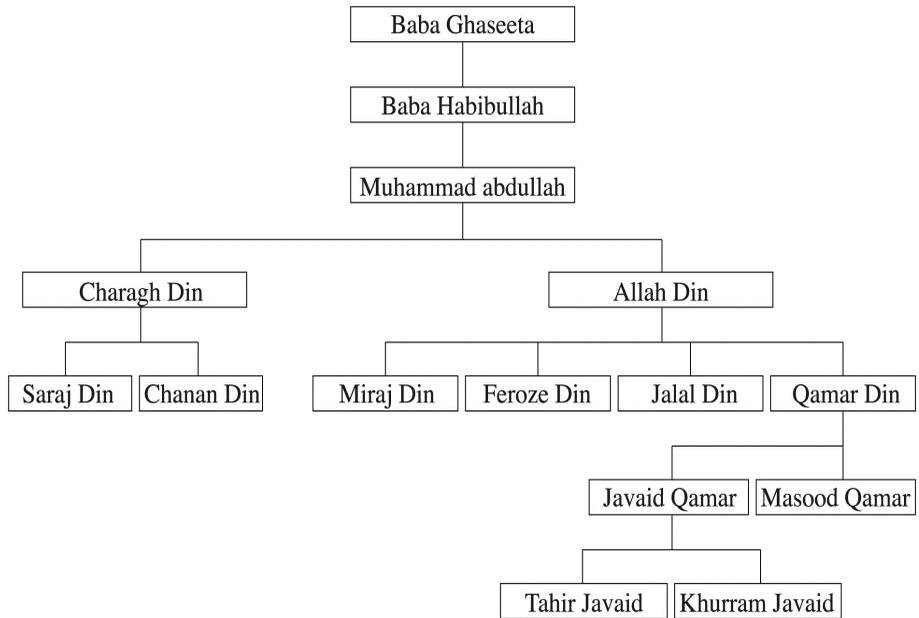
Figure 6

Late Khalifa Qamar Din

Khalifa Qamar Din was born in 1924 to a family that was highly respected in the art circles of Lahore. The story begins from his great grandfather, Baba Ghaseeta, who belonged to Lahore. In his house was born a man of great talent, Habibullah Qureshi, a famous *naqqash* of the 19th century. Abdul Rahman Chughtai also mentions his skill, "In the Kharadi Muhallah, Mian

Faiz Bakhsh, Farid Bakhsh and Habibullah were famous painters and *Naqqash*."[6] According to Musarrat Hasan, he was active in the mid-19th century.[7] The family also confirms that he was a *naqqash* of high merit and very well respected by his contemporaries.

Habibullah lived inside Mochi Darwaaza in a large house. Khalifa Qamar Din narrates that Habibullah's father-in-law was also a *naqqash* and engraver of high esteem. He used to design the shields and swords of the elite of Lahore. Once he was asked to engrave a sword for Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The sword that he presented was so beautiful that the Maharaja asked him to join his *Darbar*. The *Koftgar* (engraver) refused. The Maharaja offered the *Koftgar* whatever he desired. Habibullah's father-in-law needed a house desperately because he had to look after three widowed daughters, so he asked for a place to live. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very generous towards artists; he ordered his *Jamadar* (overseer) to take the engraver to Mochi Darwaaza, along with the keys of vacant houses as most of them were owned by the Maharaja. Whichever house the engraver selected, was to be given to him as a reward for his great craftsmanship. Thus, the Habibullah family came into possession of their family house in Mochi Darwaaza where they lived till the 1970s.

Every member of the family is familiar with this tale but nobody remembers the name of that *Koftgar*. Incidentally, R. P. Srivastava mentions an engraver who refused the Maharaja's employment, "Famous stylists were Mian Pir Bakhsh *Koftgar* whom the Maharaja himself wanted to employ in the royal service which he refused."[8]

Khalifa Qamar narrates that the engraver had three widowed daughters. One of them had no child, the other one had a daughter but the third one had a son who was named Muhammad Abdullah. This Abdullah later became another talented painter of his time. Even today his skill in figurative art is legendary in the family but none of his paintings have survived.

A convincing factor of Muhammad Abdullah, being a painter of high merit is that, he was the teacher of the famous artist, *Ustad* Allah Bakhsh. Although most people think that Allah Bakhsh was a self-taught painter, the fact is "he was apprenticed to Master Abdullah at the age of five."[9] Muhammad Abdullah trained Allah Bakhsh in his formative years and Allah Bakhsh never forgot the kindness of his *Ustad*.

Master Abdullah established an office by the name of "Abdullah & Sons" in Royal Park. This place was the centre of Bazaar style art because many theatre companies and other advertising offices were situated there. Even today many of the printing and processing houses of Lahore are located in that area. Master Abdullah had two sons Allah Din Qureshi and Charagh Din.

There is an intriguing family photograph that shows the fine technique of photography used in a very creative manner. These are the portraits of young and old members of the family represented in different

sizes according to their age and status, placed around the image of Muhammad Abdullah. Smaller portraits show the cousins and other youngsters who joined various fields of art when they grew up. Muhammad Abdullah's son Allah Din Qureshi was born in 1860. He was married to Qamar ul Nisa, a very gifted and hardworking woman who was the sister of Haji Bashir's mother.

The family tradition of art and craft was carried on by Haji Allah Din who had four talented sons, Miraj Din, Feroze Din, Jalal

Din and Qamar Din. The eldest three were experts in block making for printing and signboards for the roads. They also used to make enamelled name and number plates, first for the British and later for the Government of Pakistan, highly technical work, done successfully. Feroze Din completed his studies from the Mayo School of Arts in the 1920s but stayed in the family business. He was a mason, carpenter, designer and also knew calligraphy.

When Master Abdullah's son Allah Din died, his son Qamar Din was only six years old. He stayed with his family for the next two years and studied till class two when Ustad Allah Bakhsh insisted on supervising the grandson of his Ustad Abdullah. His house was in Prem Gali, Gowal Mandi and the building was called *Daroghawalian Di Gali* (the street of overseers).

Later, Allah Bakhsh shifted his studio from Gowal Mandi (an area near Mochi Darwaaza) to Muslim Town. "His studio, which he first established in Gowal Mandi and later in Muslim Town was a busy and active place where a number of people came to learn from the *Ustad*, who did not charge anything for teaching them".[10] But this place was far away from Qamar's house. At the insistence of Allah Bakhsh and for the better future of her son, the mother let him go and Qamar stayed at Allah Bakhsh's house for the next nine years, that is, from 1932 to 1941.[11]

It was a tradition of that time that the son of an *Ustad* was called *Khalifa* (successor). Since Muhammad Abdullah's son Allah Din was dead Qamar was given the title of *Khalifa*, as he was the grandson of Allah Bakhsh's teacher.

"Ustad Allah Bakhsh was a very versatile painter. It is said that he painted one hundred and fifty figures in a day and often sketched in the Hira Mandi (Red Light area of Lahore)".[12] His obsession with figurative drawing was transferred to his student and we see many sketches and paintings by Qamar also.

Figure 9

Man Holding a Tambourine by Qamar Din

Although Qamar Din's stay with Allah Buksh was very rewarding artistically at a personal level, he suffered a lot. He was involved in all the household chores. Out of many, one was to carry a heavy bag of wheat from Muslim Town to a flourmill in Icchra and return in the hottest of weather, always on foot. These are two localities in Lahore at a distance of three kilometres approximately.

When in 1936 Ustad Allah Bakhsh went to Patiala at the invitation of the Maharaja,[13] Khalifa Qamar accompanied his *Ustad* and worked there. Khalifa Qamar said that the Maharaja was very generous towards artists and loved to have men of merit around him. But Allah Bakhsh could not stay there for more than one year and came back in 1937[14] and so did his student.

Qamar Din was learning a lot from his teacher but his mother was missing him very much so she forced Allah Bakhsh to send Qamar home. The son came back but he was sent to learn lathe work. When the *Ustad* came to know about the fate of his pupil, he interfered and took Qamar to the Kapur Printing Press where Allah Bakhsh worked from 1938 to 1947.[15] Around 1942, Qamar joined the same press and worked there for the next 27 years.

After partition, Kapur Printing Press was renamed the Pakistan Printing Press, allotted to two partners Mian Shafih and Mian Mumtaz. The press is credited for drawing the first maps of Pakistan that were used in every department later on. It was highly detailed work and Ustad Khalifa Qamar Din was an expert at it. He was also a member of the team of those artists who prepared the first maps of divided India that were discussed in various meetings of the British government with leaders of the Congress and Muslim League. Khalifa Qamar informed us that those maps were changed at the last minute and the team of the same artists at Kapur Press re-drew the maps within three days. "I did not go home for two nights and three days, we worked on those maps all the time."

Khalifa Qamar also drew charts for the irrigation department that had nine squares in an inch. Such miniature work was a hallmark of the family because his grandfather Ustad Abdullah was also famous for detailed work. The family has no paintings by their talented ancestors but there is a reference to a very well painted portrait of Guru Nanak by Ustad Abdullah, though so far I have not been able to trace it. Khalifa Qamar had some paintings by his forefathers in his possession and he promised to show them but when he checked the attic after many years of neglect, he discovered that the documents and the paintings that were kept in an iron box were destroyed by termite. All that was left in the box was some powder of those papers and paintings.

Most of the paintings by Qamar Din are also either lost or destroyed but fortunately a few survived and they are in the possession of the artist who was kind enough to show them and share his views. Some of these paintings, discussed below, belong to the first half of the 20th century. They reflect the same influences that prevailed in the second half of the 19th century with modern traits associated with the next century. The reason for including this information is to stress the strong impact of the learning tradition that was carried on from father to son in a chain that lasted centuries.

Khalifa Qamar Din was commissioned to make film posters, along with a lot of copy work as part of his training. Some commercial drawings by Khalifa Qamar are still in good condition. One was done for a stationery shop, a simple drawing showing a girl sitting on an oversized book under a lamp. Her lovely face dominates the sketch. This is a typical example of the commercial art produced and published in the first half of the 20th century.

Somewhere in that entire commercial heap one can glimpse the genius of a true artist. His strokes are fresh and spontaneous. These are Khalifa Qamar's creations without restrictions of the client. Here, the artist has given free reign to his imagination.

Portrait of a Young Girl in Profile has been painted very simply. The technical skill of the artist is at its peak here. In just a few strokes of watercolor he has been able to achieve the maximum result. The innocence and charm of the face is alluring. Strokes of blue around her neck are amazing in their spontaneity.

A small sketch of an old man done in watercolors finished by pencil has been done brilliantly. The use of colors is minimum; pencil lines are added to enhance the effect. The artist has come a long way from traditional miniature painting. Although this work lacks the detail and finish of old times, it is expressionist and very modern in the approach.

Qamar din never painted in oils. Watercolor was his favourite medium. He felt very sad that he never learnt to make his own pigments and used readymade colors available in the market.

I spent almost two years interviewing Khalifa Qamar Din on various occasions. He shared his experiences and first-hand knowledge about the art scene of Lahore. Impressed by his good memory and wonderful sense of humour, I was still in the process of gathering information about 20th century Lahore when he died on 26th December 2008.

Many members of this family joined a number of printing presses, etching houses, drafting departments, map making and such. A few boys went to the Mayo School of Arts that was later named the National College of Arts. Others worked as designers, painters, illustrators and calligraphists in Urdu Bazaar, a famous market of Lahore that deals with designing, printing and publishing of books that are distributed all over Pakistan.

One of Khalifa Qamar's sons, Javaid Qamar became a photographer and joined Packages' press in 1968 but left in 1980, started his own processing house in Urdu Bazaar and today he is running RQ Printing Press successfully. Javaid's two sons, Muhammad Tahir Javaid and Muhammad Khurram Javaid have also joined their father. A tradition that started more than three hundred years ago is continuing with one *Larhi* following another.

Figure 14

Khalifa Qamar Din with his son Javaid Qamar

Endnotes

1   For details see Introduction Part III of thesis *Lahore School of Painting in the 19th Century*, (Punjab University 2011)

2   For details see "Wooden Doors of Lahore". Introduction Part II of thesis *Lahore School of Painting in the 19th Century*, (Punjab University 2011)

3   Abdul Rahman Chughtai, *Lahore Ka Dabistan i Musawwari* (Lahore: Chughtai Museum Trust 1979), 38.

4   A Kashmiri by origin, Sultan Muhammad Thakedar supplied bricks for a variety of buildings in the late 19th and early 20th century. The main source of supply was the old buildings of the city and he has been declared responsible for the destruction of innumerable ancient monuments of Lahore.

5   A very different aspect of the Saudagar family is that one of Imam Din's cousins was the father of Ghazi Ilam Din Shaheed, a famous martyr of Lahore. They all used to live in the

same neighbourhood, Muhallah Sondhian. Ghazi Ilam Din Shaheed and Abdul Ghani (Haji Bashir's father) were of the same age. Ilam Din used to work in a hardware shop in the famous bazaar of Anarkali owned by Mian Ramzan who later became Haji Bashir's father-in-law.

6   Abdul Rahman Chughtai, *Lahore Ka Dabistan i Musawwari*, 36.

7   Musarrat Hasan, *Painting in the Punjab Plains 1842-1945* (Lahore: Ferozsons Pvt. Limited 1998), 138.

8   R. P. Srivastava, *Punjab Painting* (New Delhi: Hans Raj Gupta and Sons 1983), 77.

9   Hasan, *Painting in the Punjab Plains 1842-1945*, 182.

10   Ibid, 183.

11   Allah Bakhsh's grandson, Abdul Khalique in one of his interviews testified to this fact.

12   Hasan, *Painting in the Punjab Plains 1842-1945*, 182.

13   Ibid.

14   Ibid.

15   Ibid.

Absent Presence: The Changing Reverberations, Evocations and Resonance of Art and Culture in the Otherwise Ignored Strata of Society

Maria Aslam-Hyder

It is interesting that one has to give specific thought to how the existence and survival of less privileged classes is possible. Pakistan today is increasingly burdened with many issues but more so by the population explosion, primarily with over 183 million (the world's sixth largest) of which more than 50 percent are living under the poverty line (Population Matters Report on Pakistan, www.populationmatters. org). More than half of Pakistan's urban population lives in eight cities and Karachi has the highest growth rate of five percent. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2010, the other urban centers have an average population growth rate of three percent. Every three years, a million people migrate from other cities and rural areas to Karachi. The speed of the urban population growth in Karachi is so exponential that from being 12th on the list of fast-growing cities (population-wise) in 2000, it is now in the 5th place according to the United Nations study of 2009.

Specific to Karachi, in a city of millions, life goes on with its harsh realities of inflation, no roof over one's head, power outages, water shortages, climate extremes, work insecurities and lawlessness -- basically a continuous struggle for survival. We will not encroach on the subject of what the government can/cannot do or question the welfare state preambles. What is worth mentioning is that every time the citizens of Karachi have resolved to work with the marginalized populace, it has resulted in an outstanding outpouring of works of art, literature and more.

The thoughts or parameters I had laid out for myself while initiating my writings eventually forced me to drop my inhibitions. My inhibition is my acquired education that has trained me to think and perceive elements in a certain way, has clouded my (everyone's) straightforward approach and vision into theorizing and intellectualizing thoughts. Thus, how can a realm like art be a simple task that the heart foresees and later the mind?

Today, we use the word 'marginalized' carelessly. The educated and the so-called varying strata of society are the cause of this 'marginalization'. To delve deep, I had to become one with them, think like them and live like them. My main diaspora were children, youth and females as they were more receptive and overtly excited over the subject and the ensuing dialogues. My most difficult task was and still is in clearing my mind of all the notions that I have had about art.

What Is Art?

As Edgar Degas said to his students and audience, "Art is not what you see but what you make others see". Art is a coined term produced by the educated, that is, by people like you and me. The expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power is the general definition of art that has prevailed since centuries.

In the current context of modern times, when the realization of modern art and design has catapulted manifold, we may also say that a visual object or an experience consciously created through an expression of skill or imagination is art. Today, the term encompasses diverse media such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, decorative arts, photography and installations; these various visual arts exist within a continuum that ranges from purely aesthetic purposes on one hand to purely utilitarian purposes on the other. This should by no means be taken as a rigid scheme, especially in cultures in which everyday objects are painstakingly constructed and imbued with meaning. Particularly in the 20th century, debates arose over the definition of art. Figures such as artist Marcel Duchamp implied that it is enough for an artist to deem something "art" and put it in a publicly accepted venue. Such intellectual experimentation continued throughout the 20th century in movements such as conceptual art and minimalism. By the turn of the 21st century, a variety of new media were formalized, for example, photography, video making, printmaking and many other fields that border on aesthetics and are collectively placed in the realm of art.

Hence, we may all define art through our own perspective and understanding and I am sure no rights or wrongs can be deduced and hence my suspicion is that no particular conclusion can be reached. However, what is quite clear is that art does play a great part in making

our lives infinitely rich. Imagine, just for a minute, a world without art! Since we are the privileged educated populace, this notion probably does not sit well with us. Art stimulates various parts of our brains to make us laugh or incite us to riot, with a whole gamut of emotions in between. Art gives us a way to be creative and express ourselves. You may say, art is something that makes human beings more thoughtful and well-rounded.

On the other hand, art is such an intrinsic part of our everyday lives that we may hardly notice it. Look at the chair on which you are sitting at this very minute; it has been designed; it is art. Hence today, all functional design, well done, is art.

At the same time, art is subjective and has different meanings for different individuals. This, too, is the truth but if one were to delve deep - millions of references would be required to quote the differences, so there is no point in traversing that path. Similarly, a fine line between art and craft is also ever present. Is craft the art that is not exhibited on expensive gallery walls? Another debate ensues.

Sadequain, in an interview, had said, "People ask why I don't paint flowers, butterflies and landscapes. I tell them that I seek the truth and I am after reality. I am not inspired by someone posing against a backdrop of roses in a vase or pink curtains. What inspires me is a person who has gone hungry for hours and is struggling for survival. The expression that lights up his face at the end of the day when he has finally found some scraps is what touches me. I am a painter of the expression of reality."

The preliminaries mentioned for the sake of understanding art have elements of truth varying on individual levels, so some cold, hard facts would be: the definition of art is controversial in contemporary philosophy. Whether art can be defined has also been a matter of controversy. The philosophical usefulness of a definition of art has also been debated and this paper is not a study on any of the above mentioned subjects.

Population Sector

Before delving into the creative psyche of the so-called marginalized and the poor, we have to understand the demographics of our society. Working out the true demographics of a country is as diverse as the media itself today with all kinds of numbers doing the rounds. The

following figures have been determined from international and government sites so that some semblance of order prevails though a proper census in this country has not taken place since 1998.

- Estimated Population of **Pakistan**: Approximately 185.1 million, 6th most populous country. Source: World Population Review
- Estimated Population of **Sindh:** 30,439,893 (30.44 million). Source: Government of Sindh Website, www.sindh.gov.pk
- Literacy rate of **Pakistan:** 69.7%. Source: The Express Tribune, www.tribune.com.pk
- Literacy rate of **Sindh:** 59%. Source: The Express Tribune, www. tribune.com.pk

From the source of Wikipedia:
- Population of Pakistan: 192,120,000 (2013)
- Pakistan Literacy: 60% (2013)
- Population of Sindh: 42,400,000 (42 million) (2012)
- Sindh Literacy Rate: 69% (2012.)

Certain visuals on the population sector posted by the Sindh Government on their website are self-explanatory. So who are the marginalized and where are their abodes?

Katchi abadis or squatter settlements on urban public land are in evidence and a result of the state's inability to provide land for housing the burgeoning population, especially those who, pushed by dire economic factors, join the waves of rural-to-urban migration every year. A whole informal system has grown over the years to occupy government land and provide it to those in need of housing in or around the cities. Though an agrarian country, agricultural land is subdivided and as a result *katchi abadis* in every city of Pakistan grow in population and new ones are being set up. The extent of this phenomenon can be judged by the fact that about half of Karachi's population lives in *katchi abadis*.

The Sindh Katchi Abadis Authority (SKAA), which was established in 1987 under an Act of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, is one of the outcomes of a realization on the part of the state that the magnitude of the phenomenon of *katchi abadis (*squatter settlements) is such that the traditional methods of removing the squatters has become a failure and the presence of squatter settlements is an acceptable fact as they feed on

the privileged neighborhoods in the form of household manual help, the labor class on construction sites, grocers, fruit sellers, *thelawalas* (pushcart owners) and beggars. All these persons are to be seen in abundance around you.

Study Ranges

The main focus of this study has been children of no specific age or gender. They are the ones who run to you when your car stops at a traffic light wanting to clean your wind shield, sell almost anything under the sun from newspapers, to flowers, combs, dusters and such; last but certainly not the least are the beggars. The following is a summary of dialogues with many such children and the study has been undertaken primarily in the urbanized sector. Some facts are derived from the studies of NGOs which are mentioned below. The secondary source is my discussion with artists, curators, critics, academicians and social activists who share insights into the realm of art in its various aspects in the city of Karachi.

- Charter for Compassion (Urban NGO)
- Central Prison Karachi
- Indus Earthworks in various villages of Sindh
- Heritage Foundation which works in the interior of Sindh

The interaction, especially with children wanting to clean the windshield of your car and help you with your grocery items at a Sunday Bazaar was a profound experience. Showing them magazines with artwork had a variety of responses.

- *Yeh rung acha lagta hai mujhe* - I like this color
- *Mujhe chidya pasand hai iss liye banati hoon* - I like birds hence I draw them
- *Mein udna chaitee hoon* - I want to fly
- *Meri maa* - My mother
- *Mujhe school jaana hai* - I want to go to school

They loved to play with pencils, especially the colored ones; some drawings resonated with cave drawings of primitive times. However, once it came to decorating their own abodes, the stenciled works became rampant and more colorful. Art is not a word that they relate to easily and in that case art for the sake of art is also not recognized. It is always in the context of "*mujhe kya acha lagta hai*" (what do I like?).

My maid's child was enthralled by an art book with outlines to color and had plenty of questions.

"You know I never quite know the difference between art and craft. In a way you could say drawing or painting is art but when it gets transformed into daily utilitarian objects and walls, does it translate itself into craft?", Shahid Khan of Indus Earth Trust muses. Art is not being taught in our schools, definitely not in the government schools. These children draw what they see around them, some talented ones copy what they like.

Sameera Raja of Canvas Gallery laments, "I have spoken to corporate sectors but their answer is: we will do education, we will do health but common people are dying on streets and you are talking to us about promoting art. That is the key we always skip so until we have the understanding and awareness that art is as important in education for the mental well-being of the people, civic society will not change, even the upwardly mobile have superfluous notions of art and do not consider it important, just as the curriculum is worked out in government schools. The public art forum is not in existence purely for the reason that we absolutely do not have public spaces and arenas. We are a captive society and until that realization dawns, change is not forth coming". Raja's life is dedicated to the propagation of art and she believes that our civic sense is precariously absent; if the cleanliness drive overcomes us, we will start beautifying our cities and art in its many facets will return to public arenas. It is definitely a necessity to have public art; the bureaucrats more so than the government need to understand how to emulate a creative, positive and vibrant society and the role that they can play in its promulgation.

A few years ago there used to be an engagement with arts in the private and corporate sectors under the patronage of Unilever, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the British Council but over the years

they have dwindled. According to Sameera Raja, "The Sindh festival though received by critics in a magnitude of ways I would only say that I have yet to come across the kind of out-pouring of the *awaam* that visited the Frere Hall and enjoyed the artwork, especially the installations, just because it was in a public space. That was its only parameter to success. It was a great context and a great equalizer for the varying sectors of society".

I am sure the therapeutic application of art has been recognized universally. The Manager of Compassionate Karachi, Zareen Qureshi, working with the Kharadar, Karachi children on streets and in schools, elaborates, "Keeping in mind that Karachi is a metropolitan city, it is very diverse. We feel that all the various cultures should integrate together in the city promoting tolerance. Art plays a key role in this, as it is a form of communication and expression. We feel that art can be used to reflect our vision of a Compassionate City, yet art is considered secondary though we feel it will automatically target with our movement".

Compassionate Karachi conducted an urban graffiti project in Lyari and Korangi; students of the targeted areas had never come across an activity where they would be allowed to paint. The painting included messages of empathy, mindfulness, compassion, humility, altruism, gratitude and integrity. Charter for Compassion (CfC) successfully engaged more than 10,000 students of differing ages in the urban graffiti activity, showcasing tolerance and unity among the youth of Korangi and Lyari and enabling them to show their artistic talent.

Figure 2

Urban graffiti project by Compassionate Karachi. Source: Author

The other area of study was Karachi Central Prison's annual art showcased by Alliance Francaise. This initiative that started a few years ago in which the very first was self-taught with no particular tools, made tremendous waves within the art circle and since then substantive classes are being given to the inmates and an annual exhibition showcases the work.

Nusrat Hussain Mangan (the IG Sindh who initiated the program) explains this phenomenon, "Human beings are born free and wish to live freely but when in captivity they need tools for ventilation and catharsis, so if not the body the soul reaches for the ultimate goal – freedom. Teaching art, especially fine arts to the inmates is one of the steps towards spiritual freedom of the captive souls."

In 2009, Nusrat Mangan organized the first exposition (in the history of Pakistan) of the work done by the prisoners of the jail. He clearly believes that colors can harness the untamed character of prisoners and hence commenced a Fine Arts Program in Central Prison, Karachi in 2007. Since its inception many known artists have visited the school to lecture and hundreds of prisoners attend these classes.

Activities related to art in the rural areas such as Sujawal, Tharparkar and other areas of interior Sindh were never looked upon as art by the inhabitants, observes Yasmin Lari. "It looks beautiful to me, I like to

Figure 3

Art in the rural areas.
Source: Author

combine colors and play with them, they take their path", is what an eleven year-old Mithi had to say about her work. She said she never thought while working on it, it just happened. Art is therapeutic, has no class syndrome, reacts and plays on an individual level but needs to be recognized, understood for its importance and emblematic effects. Our denial of arts in the cultural context has generated over the years an unforgiving, crime infested society. When art and culture mingle in harmony, it reflects on the inhabitants of a society.

Pakistan faces challenges associated with a burgeoning youth population, lack of education, fast paced urbanization, significant gender inequalities and a difficult devolution process. However, Pakistan as a country and the geographical space that it inhabits is rich in visual arts and crafts. Successive ancient settlements in the Indus Valley region have extended the craft vernacular of Pakistan, which has distinctive provincial and local traditions. Its artistic and artisan inheritance continues to develop and flourish in the contemporary world as indigenous, visual artistic traditions engage, for example, with traditions of western painting and globally available trends such as computer and digital art. Visual arts are especially covered by the mainstream press where new exhibitions are reviewed and generate comment. Sameera Raja of Canvas Gallery comments, "Artists come from all walks of life."

However, there is lack of representation of public art in major urban centers and there is no systematic approach to public art commissioning, an industry prolific, yet completely ignored by the creative sectors of society.

The inhabitants of Pakistan have a rich craft heritage from over 5000 years. History reflects the changing migration and settlements across the Indus Valley by the Persians, Greeks, Arabs and Muslims who have added their distinct cultures to Pakistan's craft heritage. Though the craft industry represents a significant source of employment and is, as per the British Council study, 15% of all national employment, it is important to highlight that most of the activity is still informal and undocumented and therefore the true size of the sector is unknown. Some crafts are a dying art as the legacy has travelled through generations and is now fading away due to lack of promulgation, especially the wood craft sector of the northern regions.

Craft practices are intimately connected to both place and home and

hence currently a large volume of crafts are produced for personal and family use, especially in the rural areas and the income from most crafts is estimated at less than the daily labor rate in the country.

According to the British Council survey and mentioned in the publication, British Council Research Analysis 2014, the "quality of product is a recognized issue, as is lack of copyright, although Pakistan is in the top 10 exporting countries for crafts it seems we are evaluating only the tip of the iceberg."

The conclusions are not restricted to the urban marginalized populace where there are government schools and some children when questioned do attend them on a very regular basis. Though the teaching of art is absent, the understanding of art and craft in the lower strata in its various nuances is present. The study was not restricted to the lower strata of society but went beyond my target audience. If I am to judge the capacity of intellect (uncorrupted) with education and the creativity that is self-taught with observation and is reticent with feelings how can we call it the art of the marginalized and the poor? If we are the educated breeds how can we marginalize on factors of the mind and heart based on monetary outcome?

As Picasso rightly elucidates, "The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls."

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The Traumatic Past

Abdullah Qureshi

> There is something very special in being able to sublimate your unconscious, and there is something very painful in the access to it. But there is no escape from it, and no escape from the access once it is given to you, once you are favored with it, whether you like it or not…
>
> Louise Bourgeois

Given my primary stance as a practitioner, I will be using this opportunity to elaborate and expand on the questions that are triggered as a result of my art. Within this paper, I will attempt to situate those concerns in a broader conversation, and discuss *Why I Never Became a Dancer* by Tracey Emin.

In terms of my own practice, I have always situated my painting in a post-abstract expressionist dialogue, where I have deliberately chosen to discuss my work in academic terms, addressing the relationship between the abstract and the representational or the expansion of the traditional disciplinary boundaries of painting into an interdisciplinary space. While the formal, I have been very successful in articulating; I feel in the case of the content, I have not been as forthright. The answers lie in the chair, which for me, as a symbol and motif, continues to resurface even in the abstract. The initial inspiration and later fascination came when I first came across a music video by Madonna, *Human Nature*, where she responds to criticism of her strong use of sexual expression in her work, questioning the perceived openness towards sex in the US where "express yourself, don't repress yourself" is the central lyric. As a young person, I

Figure 1

Untitled, 2007, Oil and Emulsion Paint on Canvas. Source: Author

found myself drawn to sex as well, however not the act so much as the idea of it; an idea that did not in fact originate in my adolescence but rather in my childhood.

I found myself, unconsciously and later subconsciously, accessing my past and re-presenting it in painting. None of this was ever explicit, however, I found myself engaging with practice in a therapeutic manner, where on reflection, it seems as if it was a case of the organ healing itself. I have debated about how to discuss this for quite some time, as I feared addressing the work in the context of a very specific biography would limit its reading to just that. These memories that I talk about are deep, dark and cold and the experience, often an overwhelmingly

psychological one. The question that arose was could any particular memory ever be recreated for the other? Would the audience really ever be able to experience it? Or was this a case of my seeking validation that all this that I was thinking was true -- that it happened and was not just my imagination. In addition to chairs, I found myself creating images of other interior objects as well. Drawers, beds and doors kept recurring.

When looking at contemporary art and the use of the personal, the prominent British artist, Tracey Emin, is an example of a practitioner who has extensively employed the emotional and traumatic moments of her life, translating them into a variety of forms, including monoprints, quilt-like wall hangings, neon texts as well as video. Through her work, Emin has addressed rape, her abortions as well as strong expressions of feelings such as love, hate, anger as well as desire. For instance, one of her iconic works, *Everyone I've Ever Slept With 1963-1995*, which was a tent appliqued with the 102 names of people she had slept with, not exclusively sexual partners but family members such as her grandmother as well, with whom she had shared a bed. It also included names of her aborted children.

This very direct and personal approach to art making, in the case of Emin aggressive as well, can be seen as cathartic, where the artist seems to be resolving and reconciling the traumatic past and dealing with its impact and residue in the present. Reflecting on the introductory quotation, Louise Bourgeois is another example of a practitioner who has engaged

with a painful autobiography. However, in contrast to Emin, it seems the process is much more psychoanalytic, where for instance, her sculptures have often taken the form of phallic objects or an entire series of works titled *Cells*. As a case in hand, we can look *at Destruction of the Father (1974)*, a biographical piece that explores the power dominance of the father and his offspring. Visually it re-creates a childhood fantasy that she and her siblings had of devouring their father on the dinner table as revenge for having a mistress.

In terms of reception, in an interview with Donald Kuspit, Bourgeois said, "I never – never! – get people to understand what I mean. I want them to understand tenacity as a virtue, as an end in itself. More than that, they

must understand that I had to equate sex and murder, sex and death. They could never understand the problem of this equation". Further highlighting the psychoanalytic purpose of making these works, the "access to the unconscious" comes across as addictive and an honor, as is evident in the statement, "Art is a privilege, a blessing, a relief". The making itself is a primary impulse, where the translation of content is occurring in symbolic ways. Emin's work, in contrast, can be seen as more directly viewer engaging, where the use of both text and speech is employed to express certain ideas and points of view. Aiming to get it literally across.

For instance, when we look at *Why I Never Became a Dancer*, from 1995, Emin begins with school, talking about how she never liked it, how she was always late and in fact hated it. Leaving it at thirteen, she instead spent time exploring her hometown, Margate at cafes, bars, the clock tower, the beach and sex. She says that it was something you could just do and it was free. She acknowledges the men being older than her; however it was something that did not matter to her at the time. Addressing how at times it gave a sense of power and at other times not. Sometimes she was just left there.

She acknowledges the abuse by saying, "the reasons why these men wanted to fuck me, a girl of 14, was because they weren't men. They were less. Less than human, they were pathetic. Sex, for me had been an adventure. A learning. I was the innocent. Some wild escape, from all the shit that surrounded me". After having experienced it all, she aspired to become a dancer, where she took part in a local dance competition, with the hope of winning and making her way out of the town that was now too small for her. However, this dream was cut short, when a gang of boys, most of whom she had slept with, started calling her names.

And as I started to dance

people started to clap

I was going to win

and then I was out of here

Nothing could stop me

And then they started

SLAG SLAG SLAG

(Words from the video narrated by the artist, quoted in Brown, p. 29)

At that point, humiliated by the boys, she could not hear the music any more, the clapping and chanting people faded and she ran off the dance floor, deciding it was time to leave. The video concludes with Emin dancing in a large empty room to, *You make me feel (Mighty real)* by Sylvester, with the voiceover, 'Shane, Eddy, Tony, Doug, Richard … this one's for you'. The joyful dancing, where Emin is twirling, can be seen as symbolic to her spinning out of their reach, where she confronts the abuse as well as the humiliation, turning it ultimately into a positive event, where the past seems to be just that -- the past.

Within my own work, the past has played a significant role as well, where I have used the medium as a vessel to articulate emotions that I wished to expel. While the way I read my own paintings, on a personal level, would be like Emin, I see it all. However, if one is to look at these more objectively, there is a psychoanalytic relationship that has been at play, similar to the philosophy of Bourgeois. As she once said, "Every day you have to abandon your past or accept it and then, if you cannot accept it, you become a sculptor". If it was acceptable, would not we be able to forget it? There seems the need to go over it, almost revisiting the memories to alter them, somehow making them palatable.

Art is not about art. Art is about life and that about sums it up.

Louise Bourgeois

Shaqq: An Archetypal House of Baltistan

Muhammad Taseer Hussain

Introduction

The Karakoram Mountains contain a most remarkable number and variety of historic buildings of monumental and domestic scale. Their survival up to the present shows how well they have served their inhabitants; it is proof of excellent material qualities, of superb construction detailing, of regular maintenance and of minimal external pressures for change. Since the opening of the region by the Karakoram Highway (KKH), this important architectural heritage has become readily accessible for tourists and for specialist research. Meanwhile, this very event and the ensuing recent development trends also constitute a considerable threat to the survival of the Northern Areas cultural heritage.

Baltistan at present has an area of 10,118 square miles consisting of five main valleys, that is, Skardu, Khaplu, Shigar, Kharmang and Rondu. It is located at the heart of the world's most towering mountain ranges, namely the Karakoram, Himalayas and Hindukush. It is home to many of the highest peaks in the world, such as K2 (Mount Godwin-Austen) which is 8,611 meters -- the 2nd highest mountain in the world, the Gasherbrums (7,932 - 8,080 meters, ranked 12-17 in the world) and Masherbrum (7,821 meters) -- 22nd highest in the world; all these lie in Skardu District. Altogether, Baltistan has more than 40 peaks over 20,000 feet high and is considered a mountaineers haven.

Earlier, it was known as Tibet and in the course of time, this name was extended to include the area of Ladakh as well. Later on, in order to differentiate it from Ladakh, Baltistan was called Little Tibet whereas Ladakh was known as Great Tibet. However, locally Ladakh and Baltistan were known as Maryul (Red Country) and Balti Yul (Balti Country), respectively.

Today, the people of Kharmang, Western Khaplu and Kargil resemble the Tibetan race in their physical features while the people of Skardu, Shigar and the eastern villages of Khaplu are Dard people. It is believed that the Balti people came under the sphere of influence from the kingdom of Zhang Zhung. Baltistan came under the control of the Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo, in the 7th century. Under Tibetan cultural influence, the Bon and Animist Baltis began to adopt Tibetan

Buddhism from Indian Buddhism. The most common indicator of the Tibetan influence of the past in Baltistan is the Balti language they left behind, classified under the Sino-Tibetan language family. Before the advent of Islam in Baltistan in the 14th century A.D, the Balti dialect was written in Tibetan script but was later abolished with the introduction of Persian (Farsi) script.

Figure 1

Map of Baltistan, Pakistan. Source: Wikipedia

Like the vast majority of the population in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, Baltistan comprises of farmers growing wheat, maize and barley in small fields and grazing their cattle in high mountain pastures every summer, farming and dairy products being their only source

Figure 2

Map of Hemasil, Baltistan, Pakistan. Source: Google Maps

of survival and income. In the far flung villages of Baltistan (Hemasil), to this date, the locals resort to farming techniques which have become obsolete since the introduction of machines.

The *Shaqq*

The *Shaqq* is one of the traditional houses of Baltistan which is usually built on two storeys of terraced slopes rising one above another; the roof of one house sometimes forms a verandah for the other. The first floor of the house is utilized during the summer time and the ground floor is used to cope with the severe winter season.

Construction of the *Shaqq* comprises walls made of twigs closely woven horizontally, supported by vertical, marginally thicker twigs placed at a distance of approximately 1 foot. One unit of the wall comprises two columns placed at a distance of 6 feet each, with the space in between comprising woven twigs, locally known as *Shaqq*. The walls are covered with mud mixed with hay to form a plaster. Columns made of the wood of the poplar tree support various poplar tree beams placed horizontally on top of them, covered with wooden rafters approximately 12 feet long, placed at a distance of roughly 2 feet each, filled with twigs and mud to form a flat roof.

SHAQQ 1

SHAQQ 2

WATER CHANNEL

RIVER
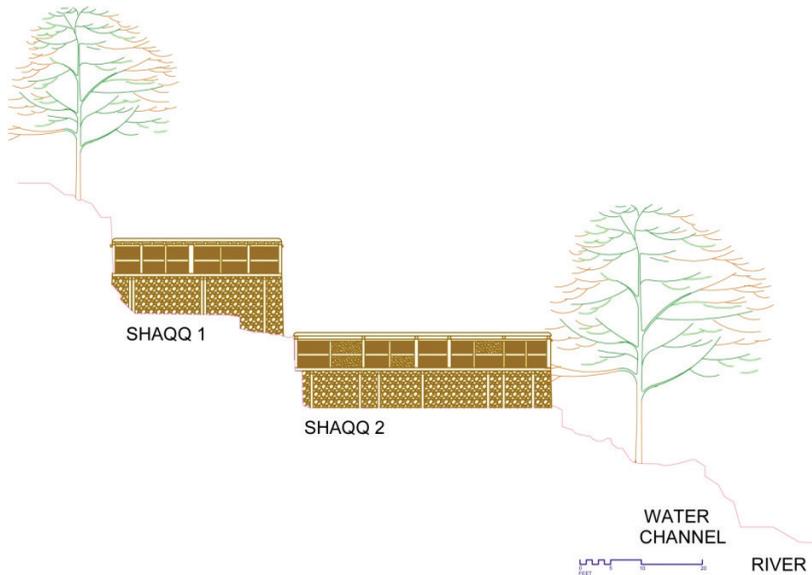
The ground floor of the *Shaqq* is used as a winter shelter. It is accessible from the first floor usually from two openings, one leading to the main winter shelter called *Oqkhang* and the other opening generally, leading to the lumber store. It comprises one large common room used as a kitchen and for sleeping, attached to a lumber store and animal shelters to keep warm during the winter. The walls at the ground floor are made of stone reinforced with jointed bonding timbers on the inner and outer faces of the wall, notched across each other at the corners, probably allowing the structure to flex and move making it earthquake proof.
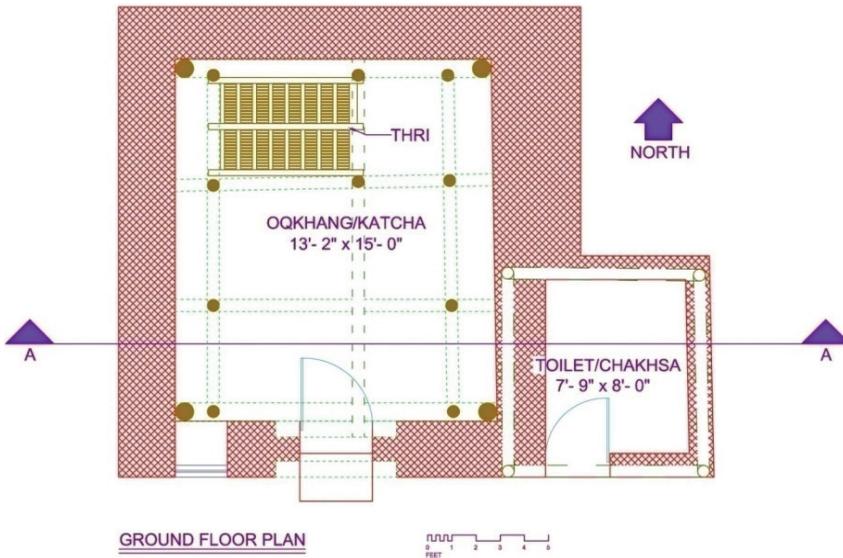
Figure 5

Ground Floor Plan (*Oqkhang*/Winter House) of *Shaqq* in Hemasil, Shigar, Baltistan. Source: Author
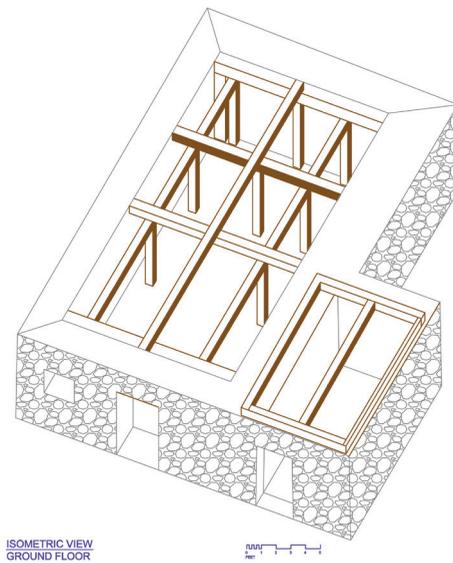
Figure 6

Isometric View of Ground Floor of *Shaqq* in Hemasil, Shigar,

The first floor of the *Shaqq*, locally known as the *Yarkhang*, generally comprises a common room, usually the kitchen for the family to reside and sleep in. The guest room is located at the entrance of a rich person's house in the village. A store room is usually located next door. The bathroom known as *Chakhsa* is located on the outskirts of the house. The *Chaksha* comprises two compartments, the top portion serves as the toilet and the lower compartment is used to accumulate the waste. The waste accumulated at the bottom of the common toilet is utilized as fertilizer in the fields. Bathing and washing utensils is an outdoor activity. The access of light and air is closed with the exception of the entrance to the house and a small hole in the roof to the let the smoke out. There is no arrangement for water drainage as very little water is used indoors.

Figure 7

First Floor Plan of *Shaqq* in Hemasil, Shigar, Baltistan. Source: Author
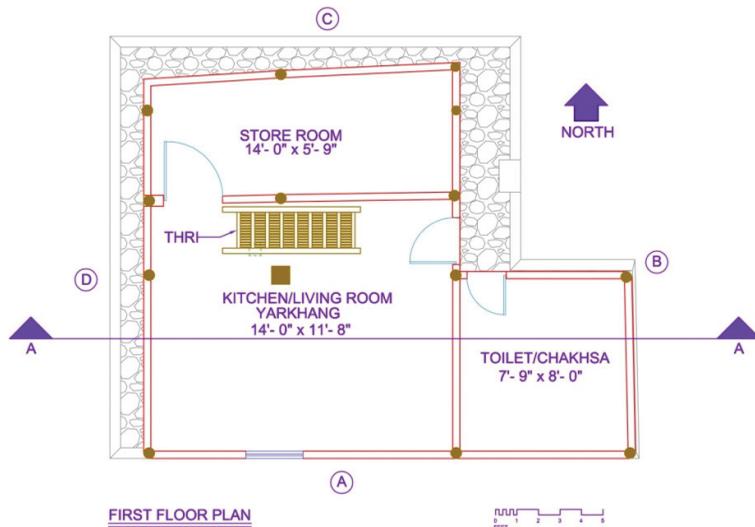
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Figure 8

Isometric View of First Floor of *Shaqq* in Hemasil, Shigar, Baltistan. Source: Author
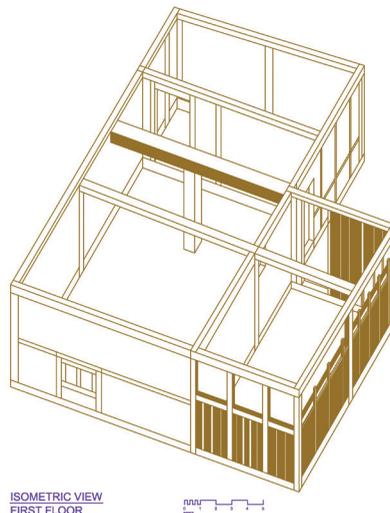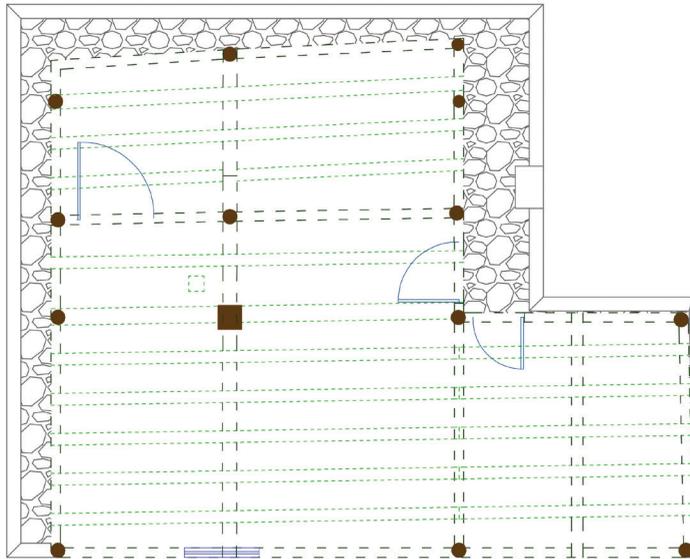
ISOMETRIC VIEW
FIRST FLOOR

CEILING PLAN

In the Balti society, wealth and power is not expressed by architectural display. The rich person's house may be a little larger than an average house with extra store rooms besides the living room but it still follows the same pattern and scale.

Construction Techniques and Materials

The key to the construction technology and choice of materials of the *Shaqq* are locally available raw materials that require minimal modifications. The structure is based on post and lintel system that forms a flexible internal timber frame, encapsulating the *Shaqq* woven walls in between, usually made of Salic Alba (Willow) on the first floor, locally known as *Yarkhang* (Summer House). These *Shaqq* woven walls are mud plastered on the outside and inside to create a finer finish. No nails are used and the beams are preferably kept short to cover only the distance between two posts so that the entire timber frame consists of standardized units. The most commonly used wood is the fast-growing poplar (Populus). The ground floor, locally known as *Oqkhang* (Winter House) is built on a stone plinth and is kept un-plastered. Apricot/ Mulberry twigs and dry leaves are laid out between the timber frames of the roof and are covered with mud to create a flat roof. Mud is the most common final layer for flooring and roofing, cutting down cost.

The primary heating system of a traditional Balti residence is the kitchen hearth or stove, fired with wood and dried animal dung on both the *Yarkhang* (summer house) and *Oqkhang* (winter houses) levels. Stone, being a poor insulator of heat, the heat is generated by firewood, body heat and animal heat, trapped inside to survive during harsh winter climates.

The introduction of new materials into the region has swayed the locals into using concrete for the construction of the *Yarkhang*. The *Oqkhang* continues to be constructed in its traditional form in most cases, with a few exceptions of entire houses being made of concrete but usually with far lesser practical implications. The concrete block surface exposed to water from rain and snow melt becomes a problem. Mortar must constantly be monitored and blocks must be sealed every so often to ensure that no leaks occur. The concrete blocks being porous and the mortar not being leak proof, eventually lead to water finding a way inside the finished surfaces and so ends up compromising any efforts made for maintaining the indoor heat during severe winters.

Figure 10

Elevations of *Shaqq* in Hemisel, Shigar, Baltistan. Source: Author

Materials Used

Stone (Walls)
Salic Alba – Willow (*Shaqq*)
Populus Nigra/Populus White (Kaa, Maghdoung, Ghdouma)
Mud Plaster -- Sweet Soil/Clay + Hay/Cow Dung + Water (Kalaq)
Apricot/Mulberry twigs and leaves (Roof/Floor)
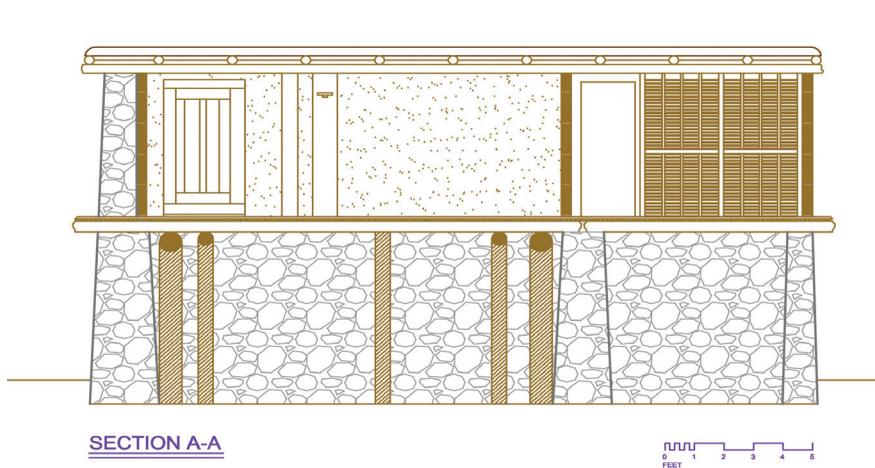
SECTION A-A

Conclusion

The oldest *Shaqq* houses are perhaps around 300-400 years old and most of them are being modified or renovated every one or two generations, so it is not possible to identify exactly the extent of architectural development that has taken place historically. Outside influence is visible in the region with the introduction of modern construction methods and development. The archetypal *Shaqq* of Baltistan are rapidly disappearing or may be found in different forms with larger houses having more private bedrooms (weakening the community spirit in the region), the open hearth being replaced by the later developed stoves called *Uchaq* and the use of glazed windows but fortunately, the essential architecture has managed to retain its traditional form.

The traditional character of the architecture of the *Shaqq*, unfortunately, has become extremely vulnerable to the growing impact of new materials and it will only take a few concrete roofs to destroy the homogeneity of the region. A statistical analysis in the future, for the numbers of traditional houses that have been replaced by houses using modern construction techniques in a given year and how many traditional houses have, if not actually replaced, been disfigured due to the process of modernization, would certainly help towards devising a more formidable strategy on preserving these traditional dwellings.

Acknowledgement

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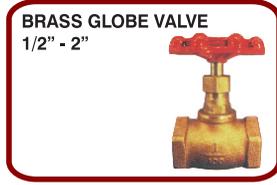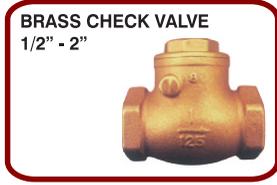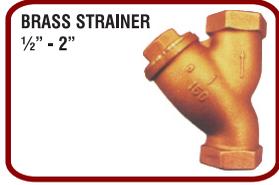
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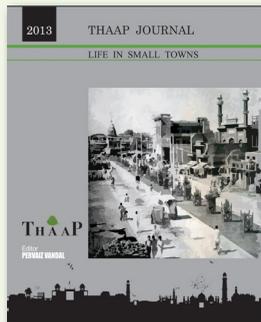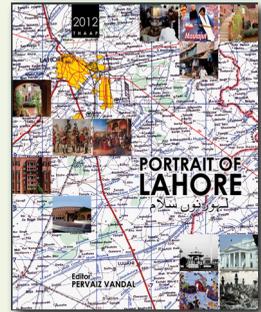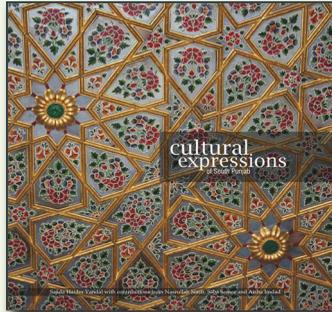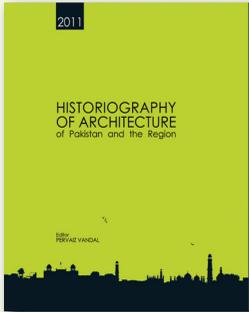
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