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PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF PAKISTAN

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Introduction

Prof. Pervaiz Vandal

Introduction

After an intense political struggle, the Muslims of the Subcontinent achieved a separate homeland on August 14, 1947, wherein they could pursue their own destiny. The story of the country since then has not been uniform for all its inhabitants. The Narrative of the Elite cites the difficulties that the new country faced along with the unrelenting threat from the hostile neighbor. It ascribes the security driven paradigm of the present day to the basic struggle for survival, still continuing, that drove the rulers to seek foreign friends and military aid to counter the enemy across the border. The loans, always available at an increasing price, helped the country with industrialization, urban infrastructure, highways and motorways. Huge fortunes were made through manipulation of the foreign loans/aid towards private interests. Commissions, bribery and nepotism are not unheard of and have become the basic lubricants of the economic machine. The seventy years' experience of the ruling segments has been quite different from the great numbers of the ruled – the people.

On the other hand, the Peoples' History of Pakistan since the great upheaval that came with the partition of the Subcontinent has been a story of unrelieved struggle for survival. For those who came to the 'Promised Land' and those who received the endless stream of tired, hungry, heartbroken and sick humanity, it was a trauma that has taken decades to overcome, if at all. In the main, they settled in the larger towns and cities occupying the state lands in makeshift housing - the *jhuggi* (slum dwelling) and *Katchi Abadi* (squatter settlement) came into its own and grew. The elite, the *ashrafiya,* quickly got down to the sordid business of grabbing property left behind by the non-Muslims, while the unfortunate poor eked out a living in the refugee camps amid appalling sanitary conditions of filth and disease. The experience of the fortunate bureaucrats, who were the main instruments of evacuee property distribution against claims both legal and illegal, is thus world apart from those who sought jobs, any job, in their new country to feed themselves and their hapless families. The two histories are tales of contradictions.

The new State, with its new Keepers, teetered from one crisis to another; the communal hostility engendered during the struggle for independence morphed into a war between the two new countries; political inexperience led to a great reliance on the state functionaries, the administrative services, leading to a society without a political strategy. The civil and military bureaucracies trained during the Colonial Period for the objectives of control, suppression and extraction of wealth could not bring about a change in their culture of superiority, arrogance and a feeling of contempt for the ordinary citizen. The decision makers, even after 1947, looked up to guidance from the British and the West in general. With little understanding of the economic issues involved they gratefully accepted the Western loans and aid. The people had no say in the impoverishment of their land. The erstwhile granary of India, the Indus Valley, became increasingly deficient in the business of providing for the people. The huge flow of wealth from the West resulted in a few industries in private hands albeit underwritten and in the end financed by the public loan money the brunt of which was borne by the citizens. An aid dependent economy developed where the inequities in the social and economic classes grew into monstrous chasms. A state of war with India combined with a few active outbreaks of hostilities kept the masses engrossed with problems of external threat and security stoked and fed with appeals to patriotism and ideology. The people stoically gave all they could.

The ever-increasing population of the country, unable to find sustenance in their traditional habitat, moved towards the more glamorous magnets of urban conglomerations. Villages turned into towns and towns into cities. The major cities have become major metropolises housing millions. The mushrooming of the cities and the attention they commanded of the little resources left over after fulfilling the needs of security, led to the neglect of rural economy and agriclture. Lack of investment in the agricultural infrastructure of water, seeds and machinery led to its stagnation. The simultaneous development, however little, in the cities stimulated the ever-increasing impulse to urbanization.

The Political Economy of Urbanism rests on the basic inequity that blossomed through this neglect of the agricultural economy and the rural population. The differential in the value of the land under plough and that under an urban house is the inequity that is the source of wealth

for those who can manipulate. Buying of cheap land from the peasantry and selling at tremendous profits to the erstwhile house builders on the periphery of the cities is the mechanism that was developed by both the private entrepreneurs and semi-state Development and Housing Authorities. If the rural land were not so cheap the urban sprawl would not take place or if the land were not a medium of speculation it would not be so wastefully used. The end result of this nature of urban growth is that the inequity increases to unacceptable levels, generating numbing poverty. It has given rise to a food-importing and cement-exporting economy. This uneven development is alienating people with the resultant social problems. The worst possible equities have come about in the cities and other urban centers. The infrastructure reflects the dominance of the automobile while pedestrians and those using less glamorous modes of transport are put to great difficulty in negotiating the maze of over and under passes. As the towns and cities expand, agricultural land and villages are gobbled up taking away the livelihood of the tillers and their support craftsmen who are thus reduced to the level of unskilled labor working in construction industry. Land-grab movement and the concomitant land mafia make for an insecure crime laden society.

The general state of the debt laden economy surviving amid internal terror and external threat does not make for a happy and stable existence. People's history of Pakistan is a story of frustrated expectations, misplaced hopes and betrayal by those who could have given them a better quality of life.

Address

Rt. Rev. Dr. Alexander John Malik, Bishop Emeritus of Lahore

"Prof Sajida Vandal, CEO of THAAP; honorable Dr. Ahmad Mukhtar, Chairman HEC, the Chief Guest of the conference; worthy participants, ladies and gentlemen, I count it my rare privilege and honor to have been invited to the inaugural session of the conference. I am delighted to be part of this highly esteemed and honorable group of social scientists, scholars, historians, artists and intellectuals. Today, their presence itself stands as evidence to the objectives of THAAP, inspiring to celebrate diversity, pluralism and inclusiveness.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate Prof. Sajida and Prof. Pervaiz Vandal for establishing THAAP, a rare and innovative forum for multidisciplinary discourses on history, culture and tradition. Both Sajida and Pervaiz Vandal deserve a big thank you for that.

Secondly, it is a special joy for Kinnaird College to cooperate and collaborate with THAAP's 6th annual conference. The driving force behind THAAP is none other than Prof. Sajida Vandal who is an alumna of Kinnaird College. Just to show off my humility, I am happy to say that after all, all good things come from Kinnaird College. Both Prof. Sajida and Prof. Pervaiz, through the THAAP forum, are trying to liberate history and especially Pakistani history from the stereotype and one-dimensional narrative. Normally, history has been written from the perspective of the powerful; the weak, the minorities whether religious or ethnic and the marginalized are left out as if they do not exist or play no part in history. For the past six or seven decades, Pakistani history has been written from a particular point of view, defeating all norms of historiography. This is especially evident in our school textbooks. A number of scholars and historians have pointed out this trend. For example, Prof. Syed Vali Reza Nasr (1994) says that Indophobia and anti-Hinduism were the driving factors behind the rewriting of school textbooks in Pakistan to promote a biased and revisionist historiography of the sub-continent. Dr. Rubina Saigol (1994), in her book *Locating the Self*, demonstrated how textbooks in Pakistan incite hatred, bigotry and alienation. In her two works (1995, 2002), she argued that the State ideologies of hate and a violent, negative nationalism are getting out there where *madrassas* cannot hope to reach. She further explained that almost all the

official cites of the production of knowledge were put to task of re-imagining an Islamic nation in an exclusionary exercise, which involved the diminution of the citizenship of non-Muslim and female citizens of Pakistan. Prof. Aziz in his book, *Murder of History*, says that the textbooks in Pakistan promote hatred for religious minorities, glorified wars and have distorted the pre-1947 history of Pakistan. All these historians have been quoted to give you a little demonstration as to how history has been written in Pakistan. We admire and appreciate the courage of Prof. Sajida and Prof. Pervaiz Vandal for initiating a new trend in the writing of history in Pakistan which takes into account the reality of the Pakistani nation as a multi-cultural, multi-lingual., multi-ethnic and multi-religious entity. The Pakistani nation is of diverse cultures and traditions. Diversity should not be taken as a weakness rather a mark of strength and be celebrated. We see diversity everywhere, especially in the big mosaic of God's creation.

The title for this year's conference is 'People's History of Pakistan'. This would bring together a historical narrative from the perspective of common people rather than political and other leaders.

This approach to history is in direct opposition to methods which tend to emphasize single great figures in history, referred to as the great man theory; it argues that the driving factor of history is the daily life of ordinary people, their social status and profession. These are the factors that 'push and pull' on opinions and allow for trends to develop, as opposed to great people introducing ideas or initiating events.

In our history books, we seldom get to read about the ordinary people's lives at home, work and leisure or their traditions. There is often no printed material, physical objects and photographs which celebrate the lives of ordinary people.

Pakistan has a rich history and like all recorded history is often from the perspective of great rulers who annexed or ruled this land. THAAP, thus, is a great forum for researchers, teachers and students to discover and talk about the stories and histories of the common man in order to uncover the pattern of life that underlies all history.

Last year, I believe, Dr. Tariq Rehman read a paper on 'Language on Wheels'. I have not read his paper but I know Dr. Rehman to be a scholar of great repute. We both jointly have given a number of lectures at the National Institute of Public Policy. The paper must be very interesting. We all enjoy the truck drivers' tea on the Grand Trunk Road but hardly peep through the lives of the truck

drivers transporting goods from Karachi to Khyber and beyond. These drivers are all the time exposed to dangers of the road and away from their family and friends. The truck drivers have a culture of their own and one should explore it.

Let me end with three stories from ordinary people and yet they were loaded with wisdom. These simple people were not university graduates but they had the knowledge and wisdom of life.

One when our first child was born, it was Nudrat, pet name Pinky, of course a girl. She was born on Christmas Eve. Next day was Christmas, Shamim, my wife was still in the hospital. The servants came to me and said that they wanted to garland me on the birth of our first child but apologized now that a girl has been born and they cannot do that. I said, "it does not matter you can still garland me". So a dialogue was initiated between the servants and me. Lo and behold, the gardener of ours - an illiterate person - said, "*Padri Sahib*, we are strange people when we enquire about the welfare of the family, we normally first ask about the daughter and then the son and moreover, we have not given any advance to God, whatever He gives is his *maharbani* (kindness, gift)". I thought it was superb. We have no claim on God. Whatever He gives is His *maharbani*, His gift.

Second, when Nudrat was of just a few months, I used to take her in my lap and play a lot with her. Again, our servants said, "you love Nudrat a lot", and I said, "Yes, as she is our first born. When we have more children I may not love her as I have to love others as well". The same illiterate gardener of ours said, "no, *Padri Sahib*, *muhabat batnei se kum nai huti*" (by loving, love is not going to be reduced, it multiplies).

Third, a servant of ours got a very nasty letter from one of his relatives. He was quite upset. He made me read that letter. It was abusive and full of allegations. So I asked him if I should respond to that letter on his behalf. He said, "*Padri Sahib*, no, not right now, let it cool off. *Garam khana khane say mu jal jata hai"* (eating hot food from the oven burns the mouth). The contents of the letter were not going to change by waiting to respond but the person may have a cool and composed mind to do the job.

And there are thousands of other stories of real life, full of practical wisdom from our culture and traditions."

Peoples' Stories during the Rule of the Last Wali of Swat, Mian Gul Jahanzeb (1949-1969)

Aftab Ahmed and Mujahid Torwali

Swat is a valley and an administrative district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. It was a Princely State until it was merged with Pakistan in 1969. In ancient history, it was called Udhyana and was the center of Darada, Gandhara and Hinduism.

Mian Gul Jahanzeb (1908-1987) was the last *Wali* (ruler) of Swat, who was popular for promoting education in the region. He served as the *Wali* of Swat between 1949 and 1969, taking over from his father, Mian Gul Abdul Wadud known as Baadshah Sahib (1917-1949).

The *Wali* headed each department of his administration. His role was that of king and religious leader, chief minister and commander-in-chief, chief exchequer and head *Qazi* (judge). He personally supervised every kind of construction work in the State. He ensured that his government provided good administration and productive revenue collection; a judicial system that provided quick and free justice to all. This was a unique system of administration. He also preserved the landmarks of previous cultures and protected the ancient ruins and other relics in the valley.

After its merger with Pakistan in 1969, Swat was mostly neglected by the government of Pakistan which resulted in the deterioration of its infrastructure and administration. Today, the people of Swat pine for the old, golden days; the period of the *Wali* of Swat. The recent Taliban insurgency is also described by many as a "nostalgic reaction" by many scholars. Though this is not true, many of the people of Swat remember the rule of Mian Gul Jahanzeb as the 'golden age'.

This paper contains some of the first hand stories told by elders regarding their memory of the 'golden age' - the rule of the last *Wali* of Swat, Mian Gul Jahanzeb (1949-1969). The paper is not a technical one. Rather, it is a casual collection of stories from the people of Swat about the *Wali* and State of Swat. Since most of the informants were illiterate, these stories are the dictations of the contributors.

During the time of my research from 2004 to 2015, I visited most of the areas of Swat and discovered that 90 percent of the hospitals and schools were constructed during the time of the *Wali* of Swat. During the *Wali*'s rule, Swat was a model state in South Asia, with a literacy rate of 20 percent. Tourists from all over the world visited Swat with their families as there were special hotels and clubs for international tourists. Many visitors came from England and Europe and found Swat to be as comfortable as their homeland. As a child, I remember when the English people came with our parents to our homes, feeling as though they were relatives because of their sincere nature. This was due to peace that existed in Swat. Respect was given even to the land during the *Wali*'s rule when no one was allowed to litter on the road sides. There was a special staff and department for the maintenance of Main Kalam Road as well as other tourism areas. The *Wali* of Swat was in great favor of environmentalism as well as tourism.

People's Stories

Education
Abdul Wahab
Age: 75 Years
Experience: 40 years as a primary teacher
Lives in Bahrain, Swat

"Before Jahanzeb's era, Swat did not have a modern education system. Bacha laid the foundations of the modern education system in Swat, which was rapidly developed by his son (*Wali* Swat), later on. The *Wali* founded a girls' high school in Saidu Sharif which is the first female educational institution of the tribal belt. Jahanzeb College for Men has the importance of Alligarh College in the entire Malakand division. He also established a missionary school at Sangota for girls.

For his unending love for knowledge he was given the title of *Sultanul Uloom* (Master of Knowledge) by the people of Swat and was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) by the University of Peshawar. The *Wali* was a talent hunter and had a knack for summoning intelligent people for services from all over Pakistan. The *Wali* would personally call those parents whose children would not go to school.

Wali Swat lived for 80 years in which he built a legacy of 800 years with

his deeds. He loved education and wished the same for his people as he did for himself. The *Wali* of Swat took interest in all parts of the State; he established schools in every village and town of Swat. One can see the buildings of those schools in most of the villages today, including Kalam and Ushu."

Between 1949 and 1969, the *Wali* ordered the construction of 3 colleges, 36 high schools, 30 middle schools and more than 270 primary and lower primary schools. Literacy rates were reportedly higher in schools for both girls and boys than other parts of the province. Abdul Wahab retold one of his stories when he was in school, stating, "Once, one of my teachers was absent for two days and when the news reached Hakim Sahib, he fined the teacher with 8 extra duty hours even after 2 pm" that is, the teacher had to teach for the whole day from 8 am to 5 pm for two days as punishment.

Health
Faqeer Kalami
Age: 80 Years
From Kalam, Swat

I was traveling from Bahrain to Mingora (central city of Swat) when I met Faqeer Kalami, an elder from Kalam Valley. I inquired about his travels. He said that he was going to Mingora for a medical check-up. I questioned him whether there was a doctor in Kalam Hospital. He said, "There is a hospital but since 1980, the hospital has been run without a doctor and physicians of any kind". He added that in 1965, he had an operation on his kidney in Kalam Hospital but today there is no doctor there. He also added that during the *Wali*'s era, there were hospitals and dispensaries in every village, with full time doctors but after 1969, when Swat merged with Pakistan, all posts became vacant and the hospitals had remained ghost-like since then. The old man wished that there could be better hospitals and schools in Kalam area as these were remote areas and people cannot travel long distances in the winter because of snow and landslides.

Justice
Qazi Ghufranuddin, the last Chief Justice (*Qazi ul Qazza*)
Born in Nawakaley area of Mingora, Swat in 1924

I made a special visit to Mingora to meet Qazi Ghufranuddin, the last Chief Justice (*Qazi ul Qazza)* of the former Swat State, who firmly believes that a strong judicial system and speedy dispensation of justice to the people was the secret behind durable peace and prosperity in the Princely State.

Qazi Ghufranuddin, who served Swat State first as *Qazi* and then as *Qazi ul Qazza*, still recalls and discusses the golden era of *Wali* Swat Mian Gul Jahanzeb Abdul Haq, the last ruler of the State. Qazi Ghufranuddin received his primary education at Wadudia High School, the first educational institution in Swat State. He later went to Dehli, India in 1936 at the age of 12, when he was in the seventh grade, to receive religious education.

"I was more inclined towards religious education so I got admission in Darul Uloom Fatehpuri in Dehli. I learned a lot from Mufti Kifayatullah Dihalwi, a noted Indian Islamic scholar", *Qazi* recounted. Continuing, *Qazi ul Qazza* recalled the golden days of the former Princely State. Upon his homecoming, Qazi Ghufranuddin was appointed *Qazi* (judge) in the Swat State judicial system upon the recommendation of Mian Gul Abdul Wadud Badshah Sahib.

"At first, I was appointed a teacher in the newly established Government High School Banr in Mingora Swat for a monthly salary of Rs. 75. However, I didn't accept the job as I was interested in religious affairs, so *Wali Sahib* sent me to *Darul Qaza* (Justice Department) as *Qazi*", he said. Qazi Ghufranuddin was later promoted to the position of *Nazim-i-Ala* to monitor the judicial system across the State.

In the days ahead, he became *Qazi ul Qazza* of Swat State. "There were 24 *Qazza* departments in Swat State, while the one in Saidu Sharif was supreme *Darul Qazza*, having the central position, where cases would come if respondent(s) or defendant(s) objected to the verdict of the judicial department at *tehsil* level", said Qazi Ghufranuddin. Continuing, "If either party in a case had objection to the decision of *Darul Qazza* in Saidu Sharif, the case would be sent to *Darul Uloom* for review and a final

decision. The head of *Darul Uloom*, at that time, was Maulana Martoong, a renowned religious figure", he said. He mentioned that most cases were of civil nature during the times of the Princely State.

Describing the judicial system of Swat State, Qazi Ghufranuddin said, "During the rule of Badshah *Sahib*, verdicts of cases were given in line with the *riwaj* (customs) and *Sharia* (Islamic Law) but in the era of *Wali Sahib*, we would examine cases and announce verdicts on them purely in the light of Islamic Law and free from any influence". He added that a panel of *Qazis* would decide a case after thorough consultation and in the light of evidence. Even a murder case would never take more than a week for a decision.

However, he admitted that some cases of a political nature were decided directly by the *Wali* of Swat. Referring to an incident showing the strong writ of the government in the Princely State, Qazi Ghufranuddin remembered when he and *Wali Sahib* were once on a visit to upper Swat when they found a man, with his donkey, who appeared to be in trouble. "When asked, the man told *Wali Sahib* that he was carrying salt to Kalam on a donkey and after he had laid down to take some rest, awakening, found the salt was stolen. *Wali Sahib* immediately purchased salt for him from the State treasury and ordered the elders of the area to find and hand over the thief by 9 am the next morning. He warned them of strict action in case of failure. Early next morning, the thief appeared before *Wali Sahib* before 9 am", he recounted. Qazi Ghufranuddin stated that written records of all cases and their verdicts of the State era are still available.

Describing the status of peace during Swat State's times, Qazi Ghufranuddin said that the State era was truly peaceful, during which time only 24 murder incidents occurred and the majority of those had happened in mountainous areas. Quoting the *Wali* of Swat, he said, "The last ruler of the Princely State always expressed his dreams to bring Swat to the level of Switzerland in development. Apart from striving to make the educational, communication and the health departments as model institutions, the *Wali* of Swat would continually focus his attention on beautification, tidiness and cleanliness of cities and towns within the State".

Even after Swat State had merged with Pakistan in 1969, Qazi Ghufranuddin continued to hold his position, working in the office until 1993. Regarded as a moderate religious figure, Qazi Ghufranuddin strongly believes modern education to be indispensable for the development of a society. Likewise, he motivates people to administer anti-polio vaccinations to their children. Currently, he lives in Kokarai Valley with his children.

Qazi Ghufranuddin has written several books and translated some Arabic and Persian books into the Pashto language, including "*Diwan* of Hafiz Alpurai". His *Tafseer* (book of translation and explanation) of the Holy Quran, titled "*Tarjuman ul Quran*", is also ready for publishing, while his books on inheritance, as well as a translation of difficult words of the Holy Quran, will soon be published.

Peace and Security
Meraj Gul
Age: 80 years
Lives in Gurnai UC, Mankial, Swat

> "There was complete peace in Swat during the State", said Meraj Gul. "*Wali* was a man of keen observation and gave equal rights to all men of Swat. During the *Wali*'s era, there was a unique judiciary system with swift and egalitarian decisions. During the era of *Wali* of Swat, a murder case was solved only in one week, so, due to this fast justice, no one dared to commit murder or any kind of sin. Once, a man killed another in the town and when the *Wali* received the news, he sent his police and ordered the community to present the murderer by 2 pm of the next day otherwise he would call the entire village to Saidu Sharif and would enquire with punishment on the spot. So, the community searched for the killer and presented him before the *Wali* of Swat by the said date and time. From that day till the end of Swat State, there was not a single murder case in our village."

Security Check-up
Sherin Zada
A former policeman
Age: 53 Years

Sherin Zada said that at one time he was on duty as a security officer around the *Wali* of Swat's residence. Around midnight, he was trying to sleep on a bench. While in deep sleep someone poured drops of water on him. When he opened his eyes, "I found the *Wali* of Swat standing before me. Instead of punishing me, he sent me to get some sleep and ordered the other soldiers to cover for me, as he knew that I was sleepy and couldn't fulfill my duty."

Administration
Sultan e Rome
Age: 82 years
Professor at Jananzeb College, Swat

According to Sultan e Rome, Swat State was possibly "the only governmental machine in the world which ran without a superfluity of paper". During the early years, the *Wali* maintained a strong physical presence in the community and was easily reached by anyone who sought his attention. As the *Wali* of Swat became more powerful, particularly Jahanzeb, he relied on the use of Swat's extensive telephone lines to make calls while maintaining his position at the center of local life from his home office. The *Wali* relied on his chief secretary and private secretary in Peshawar to liaise with the colonial administration. In Swat, he was running the administration of the State with the support of Ministers and *Mushirs* (advisors). Below the ministers, *Hakims* (governors) and *Tehsildars* (revenue officer) ran the administration in towns and villages. When someone went to the *Wali* of Swat for his/her case, they were referred back to the *Hakim* and *Tehsildar*. During Swat State, there were telephone lines to each and every village far from the main city, Mingora, while today, there are no telephone lines beyond Bahrain.

Revenue Sources
Muhauddin
Age: 80 years
Aryanai UC, Balakot, Swat

When I met Muhauddin on my routine field visit, he was harvesting the crops. I asked him if they now give *Zakkat* (obligatory alms-giving) from the crops to which he replied, "Not anymore but during the *Wali* of Swat's era, we were giving *Zakkat* and *Ushar* (*zakat* on crops) to the State for its revenue. Once our father forgot to give *Ushar*; after two months a soldier came and asked my father to visit *Hakim Sahib*. When my father visited *Hakim Sahib*, he was asked why he hadn't given *Ushar* yet.". "This means that during the *Wali* of Swat, the system was transparent and operated regularly", said Muhauddin's uncle.

The main source of the State revenue was *Ushar* but in actual practice, the State received 13.33 percent gross produce of the land at the threshing ground in the nature of *Ushar*. In March 1969, the rate, however, was set at one tenth. In addition to *Ushar* on crops, taxes were taken upon the milk of cows and buffalos, herds of goats and sheep, orchards, beehives and vegetables.

All the above mentioned taxes were not collected by the State itself but were auctioned and granted to the highest bidders, known as *Ijaragar/ Ijaradar/Ushri,* for the particular crop of the season in case of *Ushar* and for the year in case of other taxes, of the particular area. The auctions were made by the *Wazir-e-Mal* through the *Tehsildars*. Only politically powerful persons made the bids. If they collected more, they retained the excess but if the collection was less, they would make up the difference. The *Ijaradar* was required to pay the amount of grain/*ghee*/honey, or the price thereof, just after the collection season was over. That is why it was made obligatory for the concerned authorities to give the auctions to the financially well off persons otherwise they themselves would have to pay the sum of the *Ijara*.

Conclusion

Upon concluding my research, I discovered that both Mian Gul Abdul Wadud and Mian Gul Jahanzeb were not the originators of the administrative system of Swat State. They, however, raised the super structures from the developed countries of the world, especially from England, as the *Wali* of Swat was frequently visited by the British during his Kingdom. They made developments and modifications therein and transformed the raw structure into a somewhat organized one.

In the administrative apparatus, all the appointments, promotions and dismissals rested with the rulers. There was complete autocracy and absolutism during Jahanzeb's entire reign. The *Wali* of Swat, however, energetic and hardworking, ruled firmly and benevolently. He personally supervised all the affairs of the State and administration keenly and minutely and held daily courts, except on holidays. The *Wali* of Swat kept himself informed of all the matters and cases, great or small. People, both influential and ordinary, had access to him in the office but in a visible, indiscriminative way.

The administrative hierarchy, from top to bottom, on the whole, worked quickly and effectively and so stands unique, at least among the Princely States. Direct appointments on the posts of *Tehsildars*, *Hakims*, *Mashirs*, *Wazirs* and similar other officials, had not been made during Jahanzeb's reign. On the whole, they were promoted from the clerks of the Ruler's secretariat stage wise, however, in some cases, the promotions had been given rapidly.

The technique adopted by the *Wali* of Swat to honor the local tribal traditions and aspirations, to a greater extent, in the formulation of rules, regulations and administrative machinery, worked well successfully. The contemporary British reports had endorsed the success and effectiveness of the rules and penal codes introduced and implemented in Swat State.

The collective local took responsibility of either surrendering the culprits or to pay the fine imposed in case, as the culprits and offenders were not known or not pointed out by the people of the concerned place. This was an effective measure and tool for tracing the culprits and offenders and also for minimizing the offenses, thefts and other unwanted acts of such natures. Even thieves were to be shot dead on the spot or where ever

they were to be found, before the *Wali* of Swat during Abdul Wadud's reign.

Like the civil administration, the military organization of the State exhibited its own features. The financial system too had its own unique features under the *Wali* of Swat. The Ruler was the State's exchequer. No officer, even the *Wazir-e-Mal or Mashir-e-Mal*, was entitled to draw a single rupee from the State treasury, except with the approval and signature of the Ruler. There was no limitation on the Ruler in disbursement from the State exchequer and there was no audit of him. In a sense, the State and private revenue and income of the Ruler, especially during Abdul Wadud's reign and afterwards, was considered one and the same and so had been used in the same manner. Taxation was heavy, which was no doubt based on taxing the fruits of the private activities.

The judicial system of Swat State was not Islamic in its essence as is commonly believed. It was a synthesis of the traditional codes, Islamic norms compatible with the traditional codes and the commands, orders and words of the Ruler. The Ruler had the final authority and supremacy and the traditional codes held secondary status. Islamic law was subservient. The Ruler was neither bound to the codes of conduct nor *Sharia.* The system, however, was an effective one. The trials were quick and cheap and the judgement properly implemented. The cases were usually decided on first hearing, or, at the latest, on the second.

Hence, the people of Swat were exceedingly happy with the overall administration and justice of the *Wali* of Swat. This is why they still appreciate the days of Swat State, especially when it comes to education, justice and peace as the people of Swat repeat, again and again, the stories of the *Wali* of Swat.

People's History of Pakistan: Project Coke Studio

Aishani Gupta

> ''History does dominate the public mind: its hold over the social imagination is total. History is a 'mass activity' that 'has possibly never had more followers than it does today, when the spectacle of the past excites the kind of attention earlier epochs attached to the new.'' (Davies 1)

'People's History of Pakistan' certainly highlights this central idea of History as a 'mass activity'; its emphasis on History for the people, of the people and by the people points towards the collectivistic nature of the process that challenges the hegemony of the State-sponsored, and therefore, usually uni-dimensional narrative. The dissemination of History by the public and for the public is in itself an evolution in the historical process; it signifies the dissolution of canonical (and therefore exclusive) agendas into a more inclusive commentary of the people and not the State. Ironically however, it is this narration at the public level which contributes to a collective picture of their unique location in the crossroads of time – in other words, it contributes to the story of the society, the urban and the rural vistas and in turn the State or the Nation itself.

The nation, then, is the summation of conflicting narratives – those of the powerful populace as well as those of the minorities; the demands of the more privileged, as opposed to the views of the less privileged.[1] As a result, the nation is always in a flux and it is precisely because of its dependency on multifarious narratives that the nation has remained, and will forever remain, highly volatile. Timothy Brennan in his essay "The Nation Longing to Form", explicates this issue by declaring that the nation's existence is contingent to the thriving of a vast "apparatus of cultural fictions" and it is in this regard that Coke Studio Pakistan's unique positionality becomes clear (Bhabha 49). Coke Studio is a music television series which features live studio-recorded music performances by various artists. Music and the discourse surrounding music offer an alternative idea of the Pakistani nationhood, one that

confirms and contradicts the foundations of the country at the same time.

Pakistan's emergence in the political-scape of South Asia has been logical but has also been fraught with complications. The demand of the All India Muslim League for a separate state gave rise to immense challenges because a new nation had to be formed via a truncation of thousands of years of shared history. Religious divisionism seemed to be a plausible pawn in the compilation of the story of this new nation. Yet, it was hardly the solution as Professor Ayesha Jalal potently remarks, Muslim social identities in the late 19th century remained fractured by class, region and the rural-urban divide (Bose and Jalal 137). Therefore, the idea that the nation would be first and foremost contingent to the commonality of religious experience has remained a problem point at the socio-cultural scene of Pakistan. Secondly, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah had never envisaged a nation that would be founded on Islamic exclusivity, as is evident from his address to the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 11th of August, 1947:

> "We are starting in the days where there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we all are citizens and equal citizens of one State. … you will find that in the course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State".[2]

Yet, this call for an absolution of religious identities in favour of a singular national personality is something that has not successfully adorned Pakistan's political image. The popular sentiments of the All India Muslim League failed to highlight the spirit of Pakistan and several subsequent political coups and aberrations have further diluted the cause of Pakistan. The constant attempt on part of the state has been to enforce homogenization, standardization and stability but as history has proved repeatedly, these attempts "rather than providing a panacea for unity in a plural society, have opened a Pandora's Box of conflicting identities." (Talbot 1)

If the Pakistani nation was already facing several adversities in the path to form and define itself, the beginning of 21st century brought a fresh set of challenges. The September 11, 2001 attacks in USA forced the people of Pakistan to take up the challenge of nation-building, as it were, and project their humane standpoint as a nation; therein lays the importance of Popular Culture. It is a fact that the nation does not exist in isolation from the times; in a period of globalization and intensely porous intercourse among the different politico-cultural regions of the world, it is of immense significance as to how the nation projects itself. Perhaps the Pakistanis have realized this quite acutely and Popular Culture strives to highlight the aspirations and realities behind the world of chaotic political dealings, often also underscoring the inconsistencies in the socio-cultural and politico-religious claims.

This projection of the nation is often subsumed by a friction between the nation as "imagined" and the nation as "lived"; however, there remains a form of continuity from state-contrived ideology into popular culture. Both feed each other and are mutually inclusive. This is what nourishes the complex Pakistani character:

> "The popular culture of Pakistan has developed a split personality … this … duality has evolved into divergent tracks of popular culture, namely ideologically approved and manifest versus latent and unrecognized but pervasive. Both coexist in Pakistani personality and culture" (Qadeer 245).

What Mohammad A. Qadeer talks about is essentially the principal feature of "People's History of Pakistan". This 'History' is both a bid to overstep the religio-political impositions, as well as to modify it, debate on it and fuse it into the culture-scape of the nation. A prime example is Pakistani music, which has been steadily climbing the ladder of global popularity since the 2000s. The chief feature of prevailing Pakistani music is that it borrows heavily from Western genres, especially Rock, Pop, Blues and Funk, at the same time, keeping its roots firmly fixed on the aesthetics of Islam in the subcontinent. Sufi musical traditions, *Qawwalis* and folk music have been put on the international map via a draping of conventional methodologies and old compositions into a garb of non-indigenous musicality.[3] The aim of Pakistani music, therefore, is clearly a desire to put Pakistan as a point of cultural

confluence on the map of the globe but the aim is also to define the uniqueness of Pakistani identity. In this perhaps, it echoes the original ideology of Pakistani nationhood – to form a new state which has its foundation in traditional Islamic principles. Music can thus be thought to be the true torchbearer of the initial Pakistani ethos.

However, this argument is problematic. Qadeer categorically points out that by becoming the Pakistani version of the global youth culture, Pop music sharpened the generation gap and bridged class and cultural divides. Most importantly, it originated in defiance of the official and religious establishment, which means that it did not intend to evolve in synchronization with state-sponsored dogma (Qadeer 247). So, can it then be said that popular music in Pakistan becomes a reaction against the inceptive idea of Pakistan and it also strives to envisage a noveau-Pakistani identity? Is it then, a bid to break free from the political statehood which has often entangled itself in hostilities and create an internationally-acclaimed cultural identity?

Coke Studio Pakistan seems to provide some sort of an answer. Having started in 2008 and entertaining audiences worldwide with eight seasons, it has revolutionized the cultural image of Pakistan on the virtual platform. The format of the show is itself a celebration of diversity that contests the State-projected homogeneity and therefore, questions the idea of uniformity in nationhood. A series of live studio-recording sessions form each Season of the show, with vocal artists ranging from Sufi maestros such as Abida Parveen and Sanam Marvi, Classical singers such as Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Pop and Rock sensations such as Ali Zafar, Quratulain Balouch; *Qawwali* experts Fareed Ayaz and Abu Mohammad and Folk exponents such as Arif Lohar and Akhtar Chanal Zahri, who bring their own unique music to create an eclectic lyrical combination. However this diversity is not merely a fusion, as Rohail Hyatt (producer of the first six seasons of Coke Studio Pakistan) emphasizes, it is "a merger of both".[4] The idea is not to present a mere synthesis of the old and the modern; the idea is to create a new realm of musicality, where the past and the present would co-exist and be granted equality in articulation. The result is therefore, weaving of a 21st century narration of the people's history via a musical journey.

Coke Studio Pakistan develops this notion of a unique musical order through a variety of permutations and combinations, the genre of Sufi Rock, being the most effective one. In the fourth episode of Season 4, a rendition of an Amir Khusrau composition brings the point home. Khusrau, a 14th century Sufi poet and historian, is deeply respected across the subcontinent; he was the first to bring about a synthesis of the Indian *raagas* and the *pardahs* of Persian music (Ikram and Spear 46). Turkish by birth and a scholar of Persian, an exponent of Urdu and adept at Braj Bhasha, Khusrau's career epitomizes the synthesis of variant linguistic cultures and oral traditions in the subcontinent.[5] The selection of a Sufi verse, originally composed by Khusrau, is therefore a celebration of the heterogeneity that is an essential part of life in the subcontinent; and it is also a claim to the shared history of the region, which has been overshadowed by political strife post-Partition. Also, Sufism is characterized by a desire to dissolve all petty mortal differences, and unite human beings under the shade of faith and humanity.

The composition titled *Rang Laaga* features two vocalists – Sufi sensation Sanam Marvi and Pop singer Sajjad Ali. Their voices transport the listener to an era bygone, bringing back what Rohail Hyatt calls the "traditional" as a "capsule palatable by the younger people".[6] The lyrics are important; therein lays the significance of the Sufi *kalam*. *Mo re Saeen ki oonchi nyaari/ Mo se utro charho nah jaae/ Koi kahde more Saaeen ke/ Mo ri bayyaan pakar le jaae* (My master is near to God and has a lofty station/ Given all my flaws, I cannot manage the climb/ Please someone tell my dear Master/ To grip my arm and take me along) – such beautiful phrasing of an ardent spiritual plea time-travels from the 14th century to the 21st century, with artists rejecting the divorce from the past, insisting on looking back, to move ahead.[7] In this scenario, Davies' argument that the 'spectacle of the past' becomes a focal point for the fabrication of a new History, gains ground. The constant vacillations between the past and the present ensure that the historical narrative remains multi-dimensional.

Another key element is the music deployed to arrest the pulse of the nation. The lyrics of *Rang Laaga* for instance, are beautifully offset with the usage of Classical Rock music. Rock music has had an interesting history in Pakistan. It gained popularity during the regime of President

Zia-ul-Haq, when Islamization was being forcefully imposed all across the country. As an expression of rebellion, the youth secretly promoted Rock music in underground concerts, all through the 1980s and soon it became a national sensation.[8] On the one hand, it is ironic that the iconoclasm of Rock is being coupled with a deeply traditional form of devotional composition; however, on a deeper analysis one finds that both Rock and Sufi ideologies are reactions against conventions. While Rock, with its distortions within a single musical piece, clearly presents a counter to set harmonic progressions, Sufi verses (although founded on the Islamic concept of *tawhid* or Unity of God) protest against the ritualistic practice of religion, focusing instead on the ecstatic fervour of pure love and devotion. The unending possibilities of Rock music are therefore perfectly compatible with the infinite adoration of the Sufis towards God.

Such experimentation is not restricted to the customization of *ghazals* and *nazms* or Sufi verse; Hyatt's attempts feature classical and semi-classical music as well. In an interview, he points out, "Adaptation is critical. Who has time to leave the world and listen to an hour and a half *raag*? It's beautiful if you have time but who has the time?"[9] The viable alternative is proposed through fusions of classical and semi-classical vocals with Rock, Pop or even Funk music. This is what makes the end product extremely popular and appetizing. Rahat Fateh Ali Khan and Ali Azmat collaborate on a semi-classical performance of "*Garaj baras saawan ghir aayo*" -- (The clouds thunder and the rain encloses us), with Rock music forming the perfect complement to Rahat Fateh Ali Khan's powerful vocals.[10] As the inaugural song of Coke Studio Pakistan, it certainly sets precedence for the new alloyed genre that Hyatt has henceforth been championing. However, a more pioneering achievement in this field has been Ayesha Omer's rendition of "*Laage re Nain*" – (My eyes met yours) in Season 6. This musical piece is a pure classical *bandish* (structure/pattern) of *Raaga Bhupali*, which is sustained by diverse musical instruments such as the *sarangi*, the flute, the *kora* and the electric piano.[11] *Bhupali* is a calm *raaga*, and the Funk-inspired music ingeniously bolsters the effect of this *raaga*. However, what is more significant than the fusion in this case, is the clearly detectable globalization that Hyatt adopts. The music is provided by a Serbian band, while the *sarangi* is played by a famous Nepalese musician, Anil Gandharba and the *kora* is played by the Senegalese musician

Kaw Dialy Madi Sissoko.[12]   The music of Coke Studio becomes a collaborative effort - journeying from being exclusively Pakistani to embracing a global music culture at the tangible level. Innovation or re-traditionalization is no longer the sole aim. The dissemination of the "re-discovery" that Hyatt talks about is equally essential. The call for an associative development of indigenous music culture is what takes the defining of the nation (via music) to another level. The narration of the nation is not only to be determined by what it endemically produces but also what it imbibes from other parts of the world – chiefly on the socio-cultural platform.

This imbibing of extra-territorial practices and customs has a dual function. Not only does it enrich the culture-scape of the nation but also projects the popular legacy of the other socio-political regions. A third function would be a suggestive explication of the relationship and interactions between the receiver-nation and the donors. In this context, "*Amay Bhashaili Rey*" -- (You have set me adrift) of Season 6 provides a curious case study.[13] The composition is a fusion of a *Bhatiyali* song (folk music popularized by boatmen in erstwhile East Pakistan, or what is now Bangladesh), vocalized by Alamgir Haq, with a semi-classical rendition by Fariha Pervez. The choice of this admixture is interesting. Alamgir is originally from Bangladesh, or as it was known earlier, East Pakistan, who shifted to Karachi in 1970, in order to pursue higher education. His father was a member of the All India Muslim League and therefore his ties to Pakistan transcend his immediate ethnic identity. In an interview, Alamgir says that he feels blessed to have received so much love and appreciation in Pakistan and he is proud to have contributed to the origins of Urdu Pop Music.[14] However the musical piece he presents in Coke Studio is a veritable looking-back to his place of birth. It is interesting that he suggested the particular folk song to the makers of Coke Studio himself. Alamgir's sentiments are reminiscent of the subconscious mourning for the lost homeland, which diasporic individuals are often prone to. His decision to present a Bangla folk song in the churning of the nation-identity of Pakistan is a bold step for an artist who has earned his reputation as an exponent of music in a language that is not his own by virtue of kinship.

Hyatt's decision to rope in Alamgir and fuse his vocals with Fariha Pervez's semi-classical presentation is a clear stance on his vision of Pakistani nation-building. Alamgir is referred to by him and his band as a foremost champion of Pop music in Pakistan at a time when Pop only meant Western music but at the same time, Alamgir's expertise in Bangla folk is accepted both by Hyatt and Pervez as a "gift" to Pakistan.[15] This directly contradicts the racial oppression and exploitation perpetrated by the erstwhile political and bureaucratic apparatus of West Pakistan on the Bengalis of East Pakistan, and perhaps seeks to reverse the impact of State-coerced Urdu-ization in the Bengali-speaking section of the country via popular support.[16] The culture that had once been dismissed and consequently excluded from the identity of West Pakistanis is now being musically anchored to the noveau-Pakistani persona. In a way then, homogenization is being questioned via a reconnection of divergent traditional strands.

Via Coke Studio Pakistan, Hyatt attempts to reach out to a larger pan-Islamic culture. This reminds us of one of Kamila Shamsie's influential remarks that there is no possibility at all, of a united *ummah*, or a monolithic Islamic identity (Shamsie 15). However, Coke Studio Pakistan has clearly proved that a cultural communion can be established. The cultures in question cannot be divorced from Islam; therefore, the formation is that of a religio-ethnical interconnection. This is also a step towards re-traditionalization at a global level. By incorporating diverse regional cultures from Islamic nations, Coke Studio Pakistan spearheads a revision of the Islamic civilizational visage; thereby extricating the exclusivity of Pakistani identity from the immediate South Asian polity and placing it in relation to the international crosscurrents from the beginning of civilization. However, music, despite being the key player in the process, is not the only one. A primary reason for the popularity of Coke Studio Pakistan is its availability at the intercontinental level, via YouTube – a video hosting website. Video culture has been touted by many as the next big thing after the invention of television, simply because of its almost viral availability across all socio-political barriers.[17] A video is infinitely more accessible; it can be downloaded, shared, watched and re-watched at whim. Unlike Cable television, where programmes are broadcasted at a stipulated time, on channels which are not always available everywhere, videos can be watched at one's leisure. Also, platforms like YouTube boast of a seemingly infinite

resource of entertainment and knowledge, all of which can be accessed as long as one has an internet connection. Coke Studio viably uses this podium to reach out to millions of international viewers with a new vision of Pakistan. Not only does it allow dissemination of the noveau-Pakistani identity but it also provides a fertile ground for exchange of ideas and criticism in the form of Comments – a public feedback section on YouTube. These comments bring the viewers closer to each other at a virtual level, who, often forgetting their political allegiances, participate (albeit subconsciously) in the bolstering of Coke Studio's mission to secure a new public identity of Pakistan. An interesting case in point would be the comments in Alamgir's rendition of "Amay Bhashaili Rey". Remarks such as "Superb!!! East and West Pakistan longing for each other!!! Love to Bangladesh from Pakistan!" or even naïve opinions like "Oh How much I love Bengali People. Please come back we can't be complete without you" create what many would almost label as an "alternative reality", where politics hardly seems to play a role.[18] However, there are also direct (sometimes uncomfortable) statements made by the viewers, such as:

> "As a Bangladeshi after listening to this song I have one question for my Pakistani brothers, Why did you break our heart in 1971? I feel sorry for you that you as a nation are still following the same way, still your leaders are lying and still you teach your children the same lie. The day you as a nation will know the truth and feel what we feel will be the day you understand how wrong still you are doing with others. I hope that day will come. Pakistan as a nation will apologize for what they did in 1971 and become our brother".[19]

These observations question the foundation of political identities but at the same time, open up a stage for non-bureaucratic interactions on the virtual platform. Ideologies are questioned, negated, affirmed, reaffirmed and dismissed via the comments. There are unapologetic admirations from people worldwide, critiques from lovers of more traditional forms of music, considerable mud-slinging as to "my country is better than yours"; however, in spite of all these, the fact that Coke Studio offers an arena for such debates which help mould the idea of the nation and its onward progress amidst all odds, is itself

an indication of the continuity in the formation of nationhood. It could also be said that platforms such as YouTube nourish the architecture of the nation at the virtual level and perhaps then, nation-formation is becoming increasingly virtual than real or palpable. Popular culture on the virtual realm is probably not an accurate representation of a nation but what it exhibits becomes what the nation aspires to be and therefore, the history that people are desirous of forging.

Coke Studio Pakistan's aim is commendable; however, there are a few issues which arise. The first is that Hyatt's project is directed towards the youth; the youth of Pakistan and the youth at the global level. By focusing on a narrative for the youth, Coke Studio takes up a few cultural causes and ignores the rest. This dismissal of what could have potentially given a fuller figure to the Pakistani character is problematic. Secondly, Coke Studio's championing of a stylized, secular popular culture may not actually represent a unanimous concept of the Pakistani identity. In pioneering a certain aesthetic ethos, the project runs the risk of perpetrating what it was conceived against – homogenization. By providing an alternative to the international religio-political image of Pakistan, it dangerously balances itself on the border of noveau-cultural institutionalization. The other argument that many put forward is the corporate interference in the realm of music. Sponsored by Coca Cola, this project has often been shepherded at the whims of the company, who want their business venture to return maximum yield and at the same time, not get entangled in direct political statements. A Western multinational's participation in Pakistani nation-formation is deeply paradoxical; it perpetuates cultural imperialism in that, the management decides what musical tradition is to be archived and how it is to be presented. Furthermore, Coca Cola's marketing strategies, intended to create a stronger consumer connection with the youth of Pakistan, using the soft drink as a vehicle for branded entertainment is something that problematizes the narration of "People's History" (Dhanwani 12). There is an unmistakable seepage of brand politics and economic imperialism into indigenous experiences and identity formation, thus contaminating the cultural output. The noted cultural critic, Nadeem Farooq Paracha however, turns the table against this controversy: "The radicalization in our society has increased and nothing much is happening on the cultural front. It would be all right to criticize Coke Studio as a corporate brand game if we were an open

society. To criticize Coke Studio in the present situation would be nihilistic". It is clear therefore, that the route ahead for this particular musical odyssey is implicated with several challenges and complexities.

Representation of people's history has always been carried out by those with resources and history has often been shaped by their prerogatives. However, if one were to read into the character of a nation in the 21st century, popular culture would be a suitable point to embark on; because it houses the divergent strands (sometimes consciously, sometimes unwittingly) - it talks of homogenization, divisions under institutionalized ideology, contradicts itself and opens venues for acculturation; and Rohail Hyatt realizes the significance of such discourse. Coke Studio Pakistan is a laudable, non-myopic attempt at a comprehension of Pakistan by the agency of music because it takes into account the three temporalities of past, present and future. The political foundation of Pakistan is examined via a bid to establish cultural ties with the rest of the world. There is also an endeavour to re-traditionalize Islam and render it suitable for the changing tastes of the times. Thirdly, the makers of Coke Studio harness the platform of mass media and marketing strategies to encourage discourse on their project. The question that now arises is what precipitation it generates. The effect is mainly dualistic; perhaps unintentionally so. The objective is clearly to provide an alternative to stereotypes. However, in presenting a substitute, there is, as has been pointed out, a risk of standardization but there is also a contradictory effect of de-harmonizing the factions that had been hitherto been tied via a one-point agenda of the State. Coke Studio unearths differences in a continuous bid to align those differences and in that, effectively problematizes the idea of the nation. The most compelling idea it presents is the idea of potential; the suggestion of unlimited scope for remodelling, reshuffling and readjustment of deep-rooted notions – formulating a non-institutionalized idea of Pakistan, which is bolstered by some of the original, Jinnah-preached beliefs in favour of the land. The "People's History" does not remain restricted to the political boundaries of Pakistan but instead becomes globally inclusive. Coke Studio embarks a mammoth challenge of dialogue; among the Pakistanis themselves, among residents of the subcontinent and with those living far away from the immediate socio-political impact of policies in the subcontinent. This dialogue, which has hitherto not been made possible by the political and diplomatic limitations

across territorial borders, is conceived as plausible via popular culture. That it gives hope, highlights the inconsistencies, challenges the norms and encourages a sojourn back to the roots – is in itself a prototype of nation-formation. The history that Coke Studio strives to weave is a popular history of the nation; a people's vision of their realm.

Endnotes

1 Homi K. Bhabha, in his "Introduction" to *Nation and Narration* writes that the 'minority' is in no way a space of the "celebratory or utopian self-mar ginalization" but is instead an intruder or challenger to the 'modern' idea of progress, homogeneity and cultural organicism in the nation. The nation, therefore, becomes an amalgam of both normative and non-normative dis courses.

2 Jinnah was elected the first President of the Constituent Assembly of Paki stan after Partition in 1947. His address emphasized on the need to overhaul the entire socio-econo-political system of the newly created state of Pakistan. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0UQ6VoceXY>

3 Amir Khusrau is popularly acknowledged as the creator of Qawwalis. It is an energetic performance of Sufi lyrics, often inciting the listeners to ecstatic fervour of pure devotion. See < http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/ topic/485661/qawwali>

4 Sabeeh, Maheen and Sartaj K, Saba. "Of musical masterminds and mam moth undertakings." Instep. 8 June 2008. Web. 10 April 2015.

5 Braj Bhasha is a dialect of Hindi spoken in the regions in and around Mathura, Agra, Etah and Aligarh in India. Devotional songs to Krishna were mostly composed in this dialect. See <http://www.britannica.com/EB checked/topic/77431/Braj-Bhasha-language>

6 Sabeeh, Maheen and Sartaj K, Saba. "Of musical masterminds and mam moth undertakings." *Instep*. 8 June 2008. Web. 10 April 2015.

7 Hyatt, Rohail. "Rang Laaga HD, Sajjad Ali and Sanam Marvi, Coke Studio Pakistan, Season 4". *YouTube*. YouTube. 1 July.2011. Web. 20 March 2015.

8 *Pakistani Rock*. Wikipedia. 3 February 2015. Web. 17 March 2015.

9 See The Jang News <http://jang.com.pk/thenews/jun2008-weekly/nos-08-06-2008/instep/mainissue.htm>

10 Hyatt, Rohail. "Garaj Baras, Rahat Fateh Ali Khan & Ali Azmat". *YouTube*. Y ouTube. 7 December 2010. Web. 20 March 2015.

11 Hyatt, Rohail. "Laage Re Nain. Ayesha Omer". *YouTube*. YouTube. 23 No vember 2013. Web. 20 March 2015.

12   "Laage Re Nain – Ayesha Omar, Coke Studio Season 6 Episode 2." Online posting. *KOM*. 21 November 2013. Web. 22 March 2015.

13   Hyatt, Rohail. "Amay Bhashaili Rey. Alamgir, Fariha Pervez." *YouTube*. You Tube. 21 December 2013. Web. 20 March 2015.

14   Hyatt, Rohail. "Amay Bhashaili Rey - BTS." *YouTube*. YouTube. 01 December 2013. Web. 23 March 2015.

15   Ibid.

16   "Independence War. A Long way to Freedom." *Bangla2000*. Web. March 2015.

17   "Are Youtubers Revolutionizing Entertainment?". *PBSVIDEO*. 6 June 2013. Web. 20 April 2015.

18   Hyatt, Rohail. "Amay Bhashaili Rey. Alamgir, Fariha Pervez." *YouTube*. You Tube. 21 December 2013. Web. 20 March 2015.

19   Ibid.

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Migration among the Hindus of Sindh in the Historical Context

Anwar Shaheen, PhD and Sajjad Zaheer

Human history is largely a history of human migration. If 'sons of the soil' have to, or decide to migrate, the process invites investigation as to its reasons. The region Pakistan lies in has a long history of in- and out-migration, caused by industrial, technical, geographical and climatic conditions. In a particular country a particular ethnic/religious group migrates due to its own particular conditions. This paper is focused on the migration of the Hindu community now living in the Sindh province of Pakistan. It is based on primary data collected through a brief survey and interviews, alongside secondary data from books and digital sources.

Figure 1

Map of Sindh
Province
Source:Authors

Theoretical Perspective

In Pakistan, the Hindus have migrated as well as are displaced. Migration and displacement are two concepts connoting two different meanings. Migration is defined as: 'the permanent change of residence by an individual or group; it excludes such movements as nomadism, migrant labor, commuting and tourism, all of which are transitory

in nature'[1]. Migration is mostly a planned and contemplated move; displacement is forced by natural disasters, development projects, conflict/war or climatic changes. Migration is identified in five types: primitive, forced, chain, mass and free. Migration in pre-historic times has been due to physical factors but later, physical and social factors of control together have been causing migration. The modern day migration is mainly to seek economic settlement or temporary work in other lands. Now, government policies control migration and the freedom of migration enjoyed in the 19th century has been curtailed. [2]

Migration has two major drivers: push and pull factors. The former refer to conditions at the point of origin that force people to leave the place and the latter refer to attractions at the point of destination for the migrants. Migration has relations with the geography of poverty, low density of population, incompetence of administrators posted in poverty-ridden districts and natural disasters coupled with poor preparations for disasters. In the case of minority groups, the factors causing migration may be of two types: economic - high wage, employment opportunities; and non-economic - ethnic, religious, security, urban attractions and personal. The processes of urbanization, industrialization and mechanization of agriculture are prominent causes of migration to small or medium distances.

Historical Background

Hindus are indigenous people of the Sindh province of Pakistan. The land was ruled by Hindu kings till the Muslim conqueror Muhammad Bin Qasim annexed it to the Islamic Khilafat of Damascus in 711 AD. The process of conversion to Islam was accelerated especially when rulers accepted the new faith. The traditions of worshipping the idols and the practice of dancing and singing to the statues of the gods for pleasing them were common. People used to donate their property to these statues to ensure deliverance in the afterlife. Such traditional rituals continue as a part of the Hindu religion till today.[3]

Under the Arabs, religious sentiments of the local people were respected. Religious freedom was granted to worship or build monasteries. Since the time of Mohammad bin Qasim, there has been a class of Hindu 'Amils', the local rulers, who obeyed the supreme ruler of Sindh. At one stage, the slaughter of cows was prohibited and this act was also

approbated by the Hindu people.[4] Some Hindu *Amils* chose to stay in Sindh, enjoying their traditional wealth and social position.

When the Arabs attacked Sindh, the land was a stronghold of Hindus but many Rajputs fled to Jaisalmir and adjoining areas to escape from the new rulers' persecution. The Hindu population of Sindh in the 18th century was ten times greater than that of Muslims. The Hindus living in Sindh were in fact those coming from Punjab, Kutch and Kathiawar, a fact testified by 'their languages, dress, manners and appearance'.[5] Burton holds that the stories and sayings about hatred, atrocities, forced conversion or terrifying Hindus were exaggerated by the Hindus and denied by the Muslims, so the truth lied somewhere in between.[6] Though Hindu-Muslim differences have remained in the history of the Indian sub-continent, they very rarely turned into active hostility, thus the observation by Burton seems closely reflecting the actuality.

Yasmin Khan explains that the interests and issues related to the minorities were not given due consideration in the Partition Plan (of 1947). Demarcation of boundaries was announced three days after independence, so people did not know about their future as a majority or a minority; if their home fell on the 'wrong' side of the boundary they were to face oppression, exploitation, secularism, conversion or even death instead.[7] Moreover, for the people and the army, the religion of one's birth was inevitably taken for their new national identity. Hence all the non-Muslims were assumed to be loyal to Hindustan.[8] The untouchables' leaders tried to bargain, in the hope of justice, as their leader in Punjab expressed that their community wanted to live in Pakistan rather than as *achhoot* in India.[9] During the Partition, the minorities faced a high degree of insecurity about their physical well-being and civic rights. Such fears had forced people to leave their homes and be part of the greatest migration of history.[10]

Zamindar (2008) has explained how Hindus and Sikhs were forced to leave the city of Karachi, soon after Partition. In the decade of 1941-1951, almost the entire community of Hindus left the city, despite an environment of communal harmony. This exodus was not natural, nor incidental but 'rather central to understanding the very tensions of Partition's ambiguous new nations'.[11] Sindh was the province where the local economy was completely disrupted and the conflict between indigenous Sindhis and patriot refugees began from the very first

day after Partition.[12] Ahsan[13] asserts that in the history of the freedom movement, differences between Muslims and Hindus are highlighted too much and commonalities are obliterated too much. During the colonial times, the emerging bourgeois system was eagerly welcomed by the Hindus and the hesitant Muslim landlords kept to the crumbling feudal system. The commonalities between the two communities were so strong that they lived together for centuries peacefully but it was only after the advent of British in the sub-continent that highlighted the differences to the point of Partition. The story of two nations' antagonism was rooted in the past collaboration of the two communities; its zenith was the rebellion of 1857. The Hindus always remained in majority and Muslims were concentrated only in those areas as majority which made Pakistan in 1947. The consciousness of separateness, according to Ahsan, started growing after the Battle of Plassy (1757), when religious differences, class conflict, professional antagonism, means of livelihood, social status and perception of differences on both sides interacted to widen the gulf. Muslims were either rulers or artisans [or agriculturalists] but Hindus had always preferred the role of traders and bankers. Naturally, they found an ally in the British who came to India as traders. When at the onset of the 20th century, an active, frugal and strong Hindu bourgeoisie was engaged in establishing industries and struggling to get free of the colonial yoke, the Muslims were prodigal, relying on estates' income and feeling secure due to their loyal employees for exacting revenues from the farmers. This was the high time when differences between the two communities were identified on the basis of their economic, cultural and attitudinal differences. Rather the two communities were living in two different time zones. Ahsan holds that the agricultural feudal community of the Indus basin was afraid of domination of a bourgeois community of Hindus. It happened only after the creation of Pakistan that the principles of merit and fair-play could not succeed. Opportunities were grabbed by a few, rightfully or wrongly, thus the whole of society has turned into a mess of looters, corrupt and opportunistic people.[14] These and similar other writings explain the process of differentiation and social distance between the Muslim and non-Muslim citizens, as well as the intra-class divisions and conflict.

Social Stratification among Hindus

The hallmark of the Hindu social system is caste. 'Caste has been the Alpha and Omega of Hindu life, the greatest sin being to "lose caste".'[15] The customs subscribing a caste also indicate its prestige, rank and social distance from the upper-most caste. The process of caste is largely determined by the religious order. Ziauddin Ahmed (1989) has explained the evolution, significance, merits and demerits of the caste system in the Indian society, which have stayed through three thousand years. He observes that as per the hierarchy accorded to various occupations in British times, agriculture, trading and government were three occupations in descending order. Major drivers of change in the old caste system, pointed out by Ahmed include: Westernization through western/modern education and lifestyle; upward social mobility actualized by acquiring more wealth, public offices and political power; and spatial mobility to get rid of old inferior identity; integration within a caste group to struggle for a higher rank or to combat hegemony of upper castes, inter-caste marriages, a new complicated occupational structure and above all urbanization.[16] Moreover, democratic parliamentary system, quota allocation or positive discrimination for lower castes, party politics, secularism, Sanskritization and economic compulsions have been breaking the caste system and a hope for a class system replacing the caste system has been established.[17] However, only the caste Hindus can move across the ladder but schedule castes (untouchables, known as *dalits*) cannot, because, though religious in character, the caste system is basically exploitative in nature.

Meyer (1955), confirming the economic exploitation of many depressed, "unclean" and "untouchables" castes, in abject poverty, holds that the British rule, modern education and good income occupations allowed mobility for the lower castes but that was resisted by the upper castes. The British had a stake in the internal strife in the Hindu community; however paradoxically, their humanitarian values, nationalism, individualism and rationalism promoted the notions of human equality, hence the lower castes' progress.[18] He finds the caste system as ill-adapted to changing modern urban-industrial life.[19] Now, that the residents of the remote desert of Tharparkar have been interacting with the modernizing world conditions around them so the physical, social

and mental distance is being reduced; even then, 'it is premature to expect the total disappearance of the caste system in the near future'.[20] This assertion by Meyer holds true in Pakistan.[21]

The Lower Caste or Scheduled Caste Hindus

Bhil, Dadawar, Gond and Antal were declared 'Shudra' (untouchables) after the arrival of the Aryans. Bhil were the savage people who were pushed to Rajputana from Punjab and Sindh but they kept fighting with the Rajputana people. Still most of them live in miserable conditions in Sindh.

A significant number of low-caste Hindus in Pakistan are 'travelers across time and space', who live in three settings: the primitive society, agrarian society and industrial civilization. They move, settle, wrap up and then move, depending upon variation in the social environment, seasons, climate, political control, means of livelihood, security and contract labor in farms, factories or construction sites. Their largest concentration in Pakistan and Sindh is found in the districts of Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar and Mirpur Khas. They are the most suffering people in the country on many counts: belonging to minority religious group and to the least respected castes, poverty, social exclusion, denial of many of the basic needs, disempowerment due to assetless-ness, lack of education and skills, hatred by even the higher ranks of their own religion, physical and spatial marginalization and having no courage or awareness of demanding their equal rights as citizens of the state, thus corresponding to Lenin's image of a poor, that is, landless, assetless, shamefully exploited, living on the verge of life and death and incapable of deciding their matters independently. Their mobility is restricted; they cannot even see the doctor, are not getting sufficient sustenance despite their day-long toiling in harsh conditions. They are literally 'agricultural slaves', who could not marry without landowners' permission, are bound to work on the schedule and payment terms fixed by landowner's manager and cannot leave the village or purchase property without landowners' permission.[22] Almost same conditions apply on the Hindu agricultural laborers in Sindh, who are virtually slaves, sometimes kept in private jails of the landlord to stop them from fleeing.[23] Their powerlessness is indicated by the fact that: 'We purchased ration (food and grocery) three days ago and are not in a position to bring it to our huts due to non-

availability of transport and no permission by the manager.'[24] Among the scheduled caste Hindus, the industrial labor which moves to city factories are better-off due to mobility, choice and better awareness. Incidentally, these are found as belonging to better-off castes among the scheduled castes such as Meghwars, who come to Karachi and Hyderabad, work in factory shifts, live in crowded houses and visit their families on weekly or fortnightly basis. These Meghwars have also entered in large number in educational institutions, owing to the efforts of a few educated and enlightened members of the community, who support it by arranging admission, residence and basic needs of the students.[25] The migration facilitated so by educated youth is a sign of hope for progress.

Demographic Changes

Religious Composition: In 1881, the time of first census of Sindh (excluding Bombay), the total population was 2,542,976 comprising 1,887,204 Muslims, 126,976 Hindus, 86,040 Sikhs, 6,082 non-Hindus, 1,191 Christians, 1191 Jain, 1063 Parsis, 153 Jews, 26 Brahmo and 9 Buddhists. In 1931, Muslims were about three-quarters and rest were non-Muslims.[26] In 1947, there were 533,770 Harijans in Pakistan, composing 2 percent of the total population of that day

District	Population
Tharparkar	501,500
Hyderabad	473,000
Umerkot	427,500
Mirpurkhas	402,000
Sanghar	396,500
Badin	307,000
Karachi	114,500
Ghotki	88,000
Jacobabad	68,500
Khairpur	61,500

Table 1

Major Districts of Sindh with Hindu Population. Source: 1998 Census Report, Province of Sindh.

(West) Pakistan, whereas their ratio in Sindh was 4.2 percent.[27] In 2011, out of every 1000 non-Muslim Pakistanis, there were 425 Christians, 429 Jati Hindus and 68 scheduled caste Hindus. Out of every 1000 Hindus, 993 lived in Sindh and in the southern districts of Umarkot, Tharparkar and Mirpur Khas, whereas in Hyderabad, Sanghar and Badin districts, their ratio was about 40 percent. In upper Sindh, the largest concentration of Hindus was in Ghotki.[28] Their district-wise distribution is given in Table 1.

Both Jati and schedule caste Hindus make up significant populations in terms of political participation in the democratic set-up. There are 143 (50%) constituencies of the National Assembly where non-Muslim voters count above 5,000, which makes them a significant number. In Sindh, this population is largely Hindu, at least in the districts

mentioned earlier. This indicates that if the political parties and leaders are democratic and committed to democratic norms of equity, justice and participation, they would give due importance to this population and take care of its concerns as well. Then they will be more satisfied and less willing to migrate out of push factors.

The Migration Process

Whether living at the margin or the central areas of Sindh, the Hindu community in pre- and post-Partition times, embedded in the mainstream social and political processes, has been notably affected by factors highlighted below:

a. **Political Resettlements**: The Partition of India in 1947 was the greatest game changer for the Hindu population of the sub-continent. From Karachi alone 0.2 million Hindus migrated to India[29] and 0.9 million migrants entered the city, hence the Hindus who once were a strong community controlling a major part of business, industry, banking and agriculture, were reduced to a minority group, numerically dwarf, economically weak, and culturally insignificant. This was a mass migration as well as forced migration due to bloodshed and threats during the time of Partition. The migration to Sindh and Karachi brought in the Partition migrants, late-joiners after Partition, migrants from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and neighboring countries as well as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of various man-made and natural disasters in the country or province. All these have been adding to the population of Sindh urban centers and particularly Karachi which has now become the fifth mega city of the world. It has been attracting people from all parts of Pakistan and the South Asian region. With the multitude of ethnicities around an indigenous ethno-religious group, the present number of Hindus living in urban centers shows they have been committed to their indigenous homeland.

b. **Environmental Changes**: The climate of Sindh province has been changing and resources of livelihood, cultivation, livestock and fishing have been dwindling to bring serious consequences at times. For instance, the desert of the southern region of Sindh, known as Thar, has seen long spells of droughts and lately some heavy rains too, which shows that the human-ecosystem relationship is shifting.

The historic floods of 2010 and 2011 displaced a huge population from affected areas. Many of these uprooted people could not go back because of being assetless and they were willing to avail some chance of income in cities. This displacement has affected a large number of Hindus as well due to their high concentration in the affected districts. The recent spell of drought and high number of deaths in women and children of Thar continued to date also indicate that the local people would think of better places to go for survival. This was thus a primitive type of migration, caused by insurmountable natural forces. In fact, the people of Thar are used to this primitive pattern of migration.

c.   **Development Projects**: The government has the right to acquire any land for public projects provided due compensation is paid to the landowners but the process of rehabilitation has not been clarified. It has happened in many cases that the affected population of recent small, medium and mega projects remained in many social, economic and psychological problems when the authorities did not consider the human aspect of development-related displacement important. Women, children, artisans, landless peasants and fishermen are the communities who have been suffering. Even when they tried to protest, they were treated harshly. In violation of the UN conventions and international laws about displacement, a large number of people have suffered in Pakistan due to development projects. The Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), however, have been protesting, advocating and lobbying for the rights of the affected persons and also trying to rehabilitate them, yet the large scale damages could not be undone.[30]

d.   **Conflicts**: Pakistan has been going through multiplex conflicts within and out of its borders which have been forcing large scale displacement. Important issues related to the present study are related to the borders with India as Hindus are assumed to have a religious link or loyalty to the land where their religion is followed by a majority of the population. It happened in Pakistan's wars with India (1948, 1965, 1971) that the Hindu population was treated as suspects and spies for India, hence was harassed to the extent that many families migrated to India for a peaceful future. The attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001 prompted India to get

its forces along the Pakistani borders. Such large scale military deployment and the tension in Pakistan-India relations had sent alarming waves among the residents of bordering areas, who had to lose their crops, face explosive mines and work for the military as unpaid labor. The areas of Umerkot, Diplo, Chhachhro and Nagarparkar in lower Sindh were under the threat of destruction in early 2002, when Indian forces had lined up near the Rajasthan border, so residents started migrating to safer places, apparently voluntarily, but this was also a forced migration. Such reports came in the media; the civil society raised some voice for the affected people but the government had little resources and no effective policy and program to help them.[31]

e. **Terrorism and Faith-based Violence**: The urban areas of Sindh have been under a deadly wave of terrorist attacks as a fall-out of Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan and consequent massive Talibanization. A high tide of religious extremism and militancy also accompanied the secular forces that had joined hands with the terrorists of many sorts. These have been the militant wings of political and religious parties/organizations who took to destruction to end the writ of the state. Though the seeds have been sown a long time back in the 1970s, yet the full-blown exhibits of terrorism came to the fore after the 1990s. Since then, it has been all the Muslims and non-Muslims and all the sects of the major religion Islam which have been targeted ruthlessly. Faith-based violence against the Shias, Sunnis, Ismailis, Hazaras and Bohris as well as Christians, Hindus, Qadiyanis and Zikris has been happening unchecked till the state decided to come back and an all-round operation was started to curb the multi-headed monster of terrorism. Unfortunately, the most peaceful religious/sectarian minorities (Hazaras, Ismailis, Christians and Hindus) have been targeted systematically and both the upper and scheduled caste Hindus in urban areas in particular have been suffering. Their migration out of Pakistan especially to India has been triggered due to their feelings of extreme insecurity of life, property, business, livelihood, honor and places of worship[32] and the uncertainty of future. They have been trying every possible means to secure their future but still face an uncertain future.[33]

f.   **Globalization of Economic Opportunities**: This has been attracting workers in a large number to the opportunities created within and outside the country for jobs. Problems at home do push out workers but the attractions at the destinations are no less significant. In this process the patterns, of both free and chain migration are observable.

g.   **Urbanization**: The way cities have been expanding under the pressure of the population migrating from rural areas and small towns to cities in Sindh, indicates that the process is on incessantly and un-thwarted. The growth of officially planned and unplanned housing schemes, illegally occupied low-income settlements (locally called *katchi abadis*) and recent mega-projects of Bahria Town, DHA, Fazaiya Housing and many like these, have been depriving the rural population in Sindh of its land ownership and livelihood, apart from causing great damage to the environmental resources and archaeological and cultural heritage.[34] The rural population includes Hindus as well and in the wake of changing land use the population has been moving to other places for sustenance or they have been demanding due compensation and promised rehabilitation from the authorities. The same authorities have been busy planning various schemes including Pakistan Steel Mill, Port Qasim, Malir Development Authority, Lyari Development Authority, and Lyari Express Way. Despite the resistance by environmentalist and human rights organizations in the past, the schemes have not been changed or abolished. To grab more lands from rural population, a plan namely 'Vision 2020' was announced and later abolished but in fact it is still underway through a re-routing of mega housing projects, doing the gravest injustice to the indigenous people of the region.[35] These examples refer to development related migration, which is irreversible.

h.   **Natural Disasters**: Disasters have been frequently occurring in Sindh especially in the last decade but the level of response, preparedness and mitigation, as well as rehabilitation has been very weak and poor in the government machinery. Therefore, the people's sufferings have been multiplied. The most vulnerable have been the poorest residents, living in the marginalized areas or having lowest social capital; the religious and ethnic minorities have been largely in this group. The governmental, non-governmental and international aid

programs generally ignore the non-Muslims and the scheduled castes had to suffer the most because the aid distributors and the local people did not allow them equal access; women were no doubt even more deprived in emergencies. When such persons shifted to other places temporarily, after returning, their sufferings continued, as they were now more impoverished, more assetless and homeless. Floods, heavy rains, earthquakes, cyclones, and droughts have been continuously displacing people in Sindh. In 2001, 0.1 million people migrated along with their cattle from Tharparkar to barrage (cultivated) lands in upper Sindh because of the drought; of these 70 percent included the religious minorities. Even their losses could not be ascertained. An International Rescue Committee (IRC) estimate was of over 1500 or more deaths of humans. Thousands of nomads had to migrate while their cattle died. An official estimate reported that during the drought of 2000-2001, about 1.3 million people and 2664 villages were affected in Umerkot, Tharparkar and Dadu districts. Among the calamity hit villages, 5 million cattle also suffered.[36] Cyclones hit Sindh very often especially at the coastal districts of Thatta and Badin, where natural shield of Timr trees have been removed and Sindh delta has been inundated. The cyclone of 1999 killed about 1,000 people, destroyed 80,000 houses and displaced thousands of people; a small number of them were given relief by the district administration. With the earthquake of 2001 in Hyderabad, Badin and Tharparkar, over 1000 families were displaced and 500 villages were affected; 109,714 houses were damaged and 11,000 were completely destroyed. Relief activity proved extremely insufficient. Some more calamities have been hitting people due to the breaking of canal banks which are caused by negligence of the irrigation department or water theft activities of people from canals.[37] The UN regulations emphasize the governments to take special measures in case of protecting and rehabilitating the indigenous people and minorities while rehabilitating the internally displaced people.

Present Scenario of Sindh

Poverty Profile: The districts of Sindh where Hindus are found in the highest number are the ones having the severest poverty concentration. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)[38], the overall poverty ratio for Sindh is 44 percent, based on the analysis

of Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) 2008-09 data. Mirpurkhas and Tharparkar districts have 31 and 30 percent households with severe poverty, respectively. These together with their neighboring districts (Thatta, Jamshoro, Badin, Nawabshah, Tando Allahyar and Tando Musa Khan) form a geographical cluster with high ratios of poverty. The districts with fertile land and agricultural productivity, or with mega cities and industrial activity, have lower poverty. These districts are the pull centers for the population living in push-out districts. Another important finding and prediction of the study is that poverty is also clustered in certain ethnic or linguistic groups but in cases of extremely poor marginalized persons, it is next to impossible that they would engage in any action causing political instability.[39]

Bonded Labor: Globally, Pakistan ranks third in having bonded labor, now estimated around 2 million.[40] An International Labor Organization (ILO) study confirms that bonded labor exists in agriculture and its worst form is in the sharecroppers, among whom the worst is in lower Sindh and above all the 'very noticeable dimension in lower Sindh is the large numbers of non-Muslim *haris* (landless peasant farmers), mostly as Hindu migrants from the very arid areas of Tharparkar'.[41] The ratio of sharecroppers in landless tenants is very high in Pakistan (about 75%) and due to large family sizes,[42] they have more persons serving as bonded laborers, since it includes women, children and elderly as well. In Sindh, the estimated number of total tenant households in debt was 107,394, and sharecroppers in bondage were 80 percent of these. The number of sharecropper persons in bondage was estimated as of 2,508,726 and those in debt bondage were 746,721. The number of Hindu *haris* is mostly concentrated in the Hyderabad Division.[43] It was estimated as 1,357,557 in bondage and 519,810 in debt bondage in 2000.[44] Variation in sharecropping affects this ratio as well.[45] The number of debt bondage in Sindh among brick kilns is small due to a small number of kilns (about 200 in year 2000) which was decreasing as well. About half to two-third of the workers on kilns are non-Muslims.

Violence Against Women and Oppression: Conditions of oppression and excesses on bonded labor get worse if the landowners face pressures. The proof of this factor is cases reported by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. The bonded laborers are kept in

private jails because of their inability to pay debt along with fear of their running away. If they flee, the landowners try to get them back from the new owner, or demand money so the cycle continues even at new places. The owners and their managers are reported inflicting severe psychological, physical, even sexual abuse for insulting these bonded laborers. The women are more vulnerable to sexual assaults and rape. It is held that:

> "… sexual abuse is less a matter of lust than instilling terror and helplessness into their victims. Despite the extreme sensitivity of the issue, over 50 percent of *hari* households reported women being sexually abused …. Even if only half as many were raped only once, the incidence of such fierce oppression of poor women should be intolerable to society and to the State".[46]

Cultural acceptance of violence, class difference between *haris* and the landlord, the latter being linked with local bureaucracy and judiciary and multiple disempowerments caused by poverty, low caste and being non-Muslim, particularly Hindu and the lowest wages as *haris* are the perpetuating factors, whereas the government does not take it as a serious issue.[47] In 2014, 3,972 bonded laborers were released in Sindh from private jails of the landlords, including the highest numbers in Umerkot (1871), Mirpurkhas (786), Sanghar (494), Badin (445) and Tando Allahyar (212)[48].

Forced Conversion*: The local influential persons and clerics encourage the conversion process, for all non-Muslims but the girls are converted to marry Muslims boys. Such events have continued since long. According to All Pakistan Hindu Panchayat Secretary General, about 1000 girls are so converted and married but now the boys are also being converted.[49] The ratio of voluntary conversion is about one-fifth,[50] so the rest of the cases need a check. To that end, The Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights has proposed a legislation to end forced conversion by criminalizing it.[51] Strangely, only the girls are attracted towards Muslim men or they are forced but no case of Muslim girl running away with Hindu man is reported, which indicates that, either Hindu girls are under more oppression or the Muslim community forces them.[52] These questions need to be investigated, as the families are now hiding their girls more strictly and also they are trying to

escape to India or elsewhere for safety.[53] Recent enactment of the Hindu Marriage Law by the government has been an overdue act, now giving a sense of relief, as earlier there was no record and safety of marriage solemnized under Hindu customs.

Crimes Against Life, Property and Livelihood: The common crime against the rich Hindus is kidnapping for ransom and the state machinery does not respond properly. Their belongings, places of worship and statues are attacked, dishonored and set ablaze. Many such events have been reported in 2015 as well. Even the demolition of temples is also feared under the recent trend of occupying land in order to make mega housing projects a reality.[54]

All the above-mentioned factors cause the process of migration from one place to another and trigger out-migration for seeking peace.

Why Non-Muslims Suffer in Pakistan?

On the basis of literature surveyed, the following major factors may be identified:

a. *Weak democratic governance*: The quality of governance is weak despite the continuation of democratic dispensation since 1999, hence society cannot grow at a stable and smooth pace of development.

b. *Intolerance and lack of social harmony*: In a society which has diversity as its hallmark adding to its richness and vivacity, exploitation of the same by the divisive force means attacking the forms of diversity. Religious, sectarian, ethnic and class distinctions need to be accepted through a series of accommodative socialization.

c. *Radicalization*: With the rising wave of religious bigotry,[55] all minority religions have come to face threats in Pakistan, as in South Asia.

d. *Educational system and curricula:* The contents of the educational curriculum have been found promoting misconceptions about our history and hate material about the religious minorities, particularly the Hindus; a situation well-documented and projected[56] but still the curricula

are not purged of such material. The teachers need to be sensitized about equal citizenship and the human status of religious minorities, as teachers are most effective in communicating concepts and attitudes in the younger generations. Social discrimination and segregation is a perpetual problem for the young members of the Hindu community.

e. *Human rights education:* The students and society as a whole is deficient in a proper conception of human rights, hence they need to be educated about the human rights of all the marginalized groups and religious minorities. Equal human status of the scheduled caste people is a big challenge to the democratic and 'proudly Islamic' society of Pakistan. For every citizen, awareness about human rights must be ensured through education and the media.

f. *Class, ethnic and linguistic biases:* Formation of multiple layers of identities (class, race, ethnicity, caste, language, religion, sect and gender) needs to be understood and contextualized through research in social sciences. The better we know our societal functioning the greater will be our willingness to accommodate the natural features of this system. Pluralistic values must be promoted to avoid social conflicts.

g. *Need to promote a global perspective:* To get above the natural differences among humans, in a globalized world, we need to promote global perspectives by making people aware about how the *dalits* are suffering in other parts of the world and how minorities are treated with respect in multicultural and multi-religious societies, as well as what international commitments are made by the governments and how they can be made to fulfill them.

h. *Reciprocity of violence in India and Pakistan:* Both nations have been at loggerheads on Kashmir and regional/border disputes and their efforts to arrive at settlement have been thwarted many times. Every attack on Muslims in India is answered by the extremist elements in Pakistan by attacking the Hindus living here, which is a shameful approach, in need of condemnation and punitive action.

i. *No respect for cultural and religious heritage*: Destroying temples and religious relics of any minority community provides an impetus to the terrorist and extremist groups whereas they have been killing humans as well. Such challenges are a test of the government and society too.

j. *Poverty and agricultural backwardness*: The poor methods of agriculture requiring more labor input do offer some job to the poor *haris* but also allow their exploitation. A great deal of work is needed to get the schedule caste (*dalit*) Hindus convinced and motivated to get education and adopt modern modes of earning a livelihood. They will remain practically slaves unless they realize the reasons of this condition and adopt some ways out.

k. *Denial of merit*: Hindus are largely discouraged to enter jobs despite having good qualification, or they are given only lower grade jobs, in clear violation of the principle of equality given in the Constitution.

l. *Lawlessness*: Terrorism and crimes against people take special shape when minorities are in focus. The rich and upper class Hindus are usually abducted for ransom, whereas the lower class suffer due to discrimination and humiliation. Only strict enforcement of law can check all such trends.

m. *Media rating frenzy*: Media can improve or exaggerate the tendencies of radicalization in a society and unfortunately the rivalry and competition among the media houses have been supporting the extremist and terrorist forces. With proper implementation of media ethics and responsibility rules, such tendency can be checked, which again goes to the government to ensure.

n. *Civil society and human rights defenders' role:* So far a good deal of work has been done by the NGOs for enhancing development, social harmony, advocacy, awareness of rights and access to justice.[57] Yet there lies a great challenge ahead to promote respect for human rights, good governance, right interpretation of religion, social and economic justice,

democracy, pluralism, and art and literature.[58] The civil society has to expand its ambit and the state institutions have to acknowledge their potential and interventional role as legitimate.

Conclusion

The Hindu community of Sindh is largely at a standstill, if seen from the century and millennia perspective. They have been living in this region, now called Pakistan, since time immemorial. They are concentrated in Sindh, a concentration which is embedded in history. Despite the fact that the community is largely facing insecurity, attacks, kidnapping and desecration of their religious assets, their willingness to leave Pakistan is very low. Those who have migrated did so for economic betterment otherwise they want the political conditions to be improved through good governance, economic justice and rule of law. They have very proudly declared themselves as 'sons of the soil'; heirs to the five thousand old Indus valley civilization. They generally dislike the idea of abandoning their motherland despite the high level of dissatisfaction with their present circumstances.

Endnotes

1   *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Micropedia, Vol. 6, 15th edn. 1973, p. 136.

2   *Seligman's Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2006), Vol. X, Part II, pp. 420-40

3   To mention these rituals here is meant to indicate that these practices are common among the worshippers of all castes till today. For details see, Abu Zafar Nadvi, *Tarikh-e-Sindh* (Lahore: Takhleeqat, 1997, 1st edn. 1947), pp. 170-2.

4   Ibid., pp. 318-9.

5   Richard F. Burton, *Sindh Revisited*, Vol. I & II (Karachi: Department of Culture and Tourism, 1993, 1st edn. London: Richard Bentley and Sons, 1877), p. 270.

6   Ibid., p. 272.

7   Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition*, transl. Mahmood Alam Siddiqui, *Azeem Batwara* (Karachi: Paramount, 2009), p. 157.

8   Ibid., p. 161.

9   Ibid., p. 156.

10   Ibid., p. 221.

11   Vazira Fazila-Yaqoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Mod ern South Asia Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 49. Specially see Chapter II for Hindu exodus from Karachi.

12   Ibid., p. 241.

13   Aitezaz Ahsan, *Sindh Saga*, transl. Mustansir Jawed, *Sindh Sagar aur Qiyam-e Pakistan* (Islamabad: Dost Publications, 2013).

14   Ibid., pp. 432-40.

15   Kurt B. Meyer, *Class and Society* (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 15.

16   Meyer also confirms that the crumbling of the caste system has been occur ring under the impact of industrialization, urbanization and Westernization. Op. cit., p. 15.

17   Ziauddin Ahmed, *Hindustani Samaj – Sakht aur Tabdeeli* (New Delhi: Tar raqqi-e Urdu Bureau, 1989), pp. 141-69.

18   Meyer, op. cit., pp.180-9.

19   Ibid., pp. 15-16.

20   Ibid., p. 16.

21   For an interesting debate on conversion and continuity of caste, see Pad manabh Samarendra, 'Religion, Caste and Conversion', Economic and Politi cal Weekly, 23 January 2016, pp. 38-48.

22   V.A. Lenin, *To the Rural Poor*, transl. Abdullah Jamaldini, *Dehat kay Ghareeb* (Quetta: Kalat Publishers, 2003), p. 11.

23   For instance, see *Jehd-e Haq*, February 2015, p. 52, reporting court issuing or ders to free 115 *haris*, mostly Kohlis, during one month of December 2014.

24   Interview with a Bhil laborer in the periphery of Karachi division.

25   For example, hostel facilities are provided by an NGO, headed by a univ ersity research officer, who is a source of inspiration, protection and guid ance for those leaving their parents in distant resource-poor villages. Even if such arrangements are largely operated for own caste members only, yet they uplift their own people at least. Education is definitely going to en hance the social, spatial, political, economic and gender-related mobility among these marginalized castes.

26   CF, *Sindh ka Geographia* (Urdu), in Abu Zafar Nadvi, op. cit., p. 10.

27   Umar Saleem, *Muqadama Taqseem-e Hind, Aik Tarikh – Aik Tajzia* (Lahore: Maktaba Aaliya, 1988), p. 298.

28   *Zila Jamshoro aur Dadu Taraqqi aur Siyasat* (Lahore: Punjab Lok Sujag [2012]), p. 8.

29   Vazira-Fazila Yaqoobali-Zamindar, op. cit., ch. II.

30   For instance, see reports of Pakistan Institute of Labor Education and Re search (PILER), Baanhn Beli, Thardeep, Customs Health Care Society and es

pecially a detailed report in a book by Dr Asif Mahmood Jah, *Thar, Piyas aur Paani* (Lahore: Ilm-o Irfan Publishers, 2014), among others.

31   Ataur-Rehman Shaikh, '*Tameer ya Takhreeb*', in Amir Riaz and Ataur-Rehman Shaikh (eds.), *Janoobi Asia mein Androoni Mohajarat* (Lahore: Newline, 2007), pp. 31-33.

32   In May 2015, death threats to leaders and visitors to a temple in Mehrabpur motivated them to migrate for safety. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court had ordered to rebuild a destroyed temple in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2015), *State of Human Rights in Pakistan 2015* (Lahore: Human Rights Commission of Paki stan, 2016), pp. 99-100. *Holi* was celebrated officially in Sindh province in 2016.

33   Ibid., pp. 96-97.

34   Gul Hasan Kalmati, *Karachi ki Housing Schemain aur Sawaliya Nishan Banay huay Dharti kay Waris* (Karachi: Indigenous Rights Alliance, 2015), provides details of the process of expansion, illegality involved in grabbing and allot ment of land and the imminent damages.

35   See, Ibid., pp. 42-45 for Vision 2020.

36   Attaur Rehman, op. cit., pp. 37-40.

37   Ibid., pp. 41-2.

38   Arif Naveed and Nazim Ali, *Clustered Deprivation: District Profile of Poverty in Pakistan* (Islamabad: Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 2012), p.49. The study has used five measures of poverty: headcount ratio, intensity of poverty, multidimensional poverty index, severe poverty and vulnerability.

39   Ibid., p. 76. The lack of asset-ownership and non-enrolment of children in schools are two highest indicators adding to the poverty index.

40   United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2014, available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>, ac cessed 11 October 2016.

41   Aly Ercelawn and Muhammad Nauman, *Bonded Labor in Pakistan: An Over view* (Karachi: PILER, 2001), p. 4.

42   The latest family size is estimated at 6.5 but it was 7.5 around 2000. The situ ation of small family norms adoption in this community is dismal hence no betterment can be expected in short term.

43   Then it comprised districts of Hyderabad, Badin, Thatta, Dadu, Tharparkar and Sanghar, that is, whole south-eastern part of Sindh.

44   Ercelawn and Nauman, op. cit., p. 5.

45   Ibid.

46   Ibid., pp. 8-9.

47   Ibid., pp. 9-10.

48   Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Human Rights in 2014* (La hore: HRCP, 2015), p. 254.

49   HRCP Report 2014, op. cit., p. 156.

50   HRCP Report 2015, op. cit., p. 98.

51   Ibid., p. 96.

52   According to an experienced NGO functionary, local people in the areas un der influence of *piri-muridi* (spiritual master and his disciple) try to launch such missionary actions in the hope of reward from God in the hereafter. In the lower Sindh areas, poverty and deprivation on women's part and lust or infatuation on the men's part seem dominant reasons. There the local Mus lim cleric is not that influential.

53   Maham Javaid, Forced Conversions Torment Pakistan's Hindus, availableat: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/forced-conversions-torment-pakistan-hindus-201481795524630505.html>, retrieved 27 August 2015.

54   HRCP Report 2014, op. cit., p. 158.

55   It is a better replacement for the word 'fundamentalism'.

56   See A.H. Nayyar and Ahmed Salim, *The Subtle Subversion: The State of Text books in Pakistan Urdu, English, Social Studies and Civics* (Islamabad: Sustain able Development Policy Institute [2005]). Also see, 'Nisabi Kutb main Mazhab aur Aqeeday ki Buniyad par Imtiaz', *Jehd-e Haq*, June 2015, pp. 21-24, and report on pp. 29-35.

57   For instance, see a study by Zeenat Hisam and Yasmin Qureshi, *Religious Minorities in Pakistan Constitutional Rights and Access to Judicial System: A Study of Socio-Legal Constraints* (Karachi: PILER, 2013), *Stories of Empower ment: Case Studies of Empowerment of Rural Workers* (Karachi: PILER, 2015) and Jennifer Jag Jivan and Peter Jacob, *Life on the Margins A Study on the Minority Women in Pakistan* (Lahore: National Commission for Justice and Peace, 2012).

58   Such are the points emphasized in most of the meetings conducted by Hu man Rights Commission of Pakistan, held nationwide to sensitize and in volve people for uprooting radicalization. See *Jehd-e Haq*, October 2015, op. cit., pp. 10-24.

Annex

Survey Findings

The survey was intended to know about the family history of migration and the reasons behind it. The respondents (47 male and 8 females) were living in districts of Karachi 12, Tharparkar 11, Jamshoro 7, Umarkot 6, Jacobabad 5, Dadu 2, Sanghar 2, Mirpurkhas 2, Thatta 1, Benazirabad (old Nawabshah) 1, Hyderabad 1, Naushehroferoz 1, Khairpur 1, Sukkur 1, Ghotki 1 and Tando Allahyar 1. Their present residence was urban in 21 (38%), rural in 20 (36%) and semi-urban in 14 (26%) cases.

The ages of respondents varied, as being up to 30 years in for 20 (36%), from 31 to 50 in 26 (47%) and above 50 years in 9 (17%) cases. Their education was nil 6 (11%), primary 3 (6%), matric 9 (16%), intermediate 3 (6%), graduate 15 (27%), masters 12 (22%), MBBS 5 (9%), BE 1 (2%), and LLB in 1 (2%) cases. Educational level of the family members was maximum MA in 13 cases, graduate 3, intermediate 4, matric 5, primary 2 and nil in 3 cases. No response was 25 (45%). More respondents lived in joint families 36 (65%). Their family size was 3-4 in 1 (2%), 5-6 in 18 (33%), 7-8 in 13 (23%), 9-10 in 7 (13%), 11-12 in 6 (11%) and above 12 in 10 (18%) cases. Their residence was owned in 33 (60%), rented in 17 (31%), without rent in 3 (5%) cases, while 2 (4%) families were living in residence by the employing government institution. Occupations also varied such as: business 6, shopkeeper 2, self-employed 6, teacher 8, student 9, doctor 4, engineer 1, dispenser 1, electrician 1, farmer 2, laborer 2, government or private service 3, tailor 1, cobbler 1, domestic helper 1, retired from government service 2, working as sanitary worker 3 and seasonal agricultural laborer 2.

Women in the family were reported to work in farming 11, teaching 7, embroidery and stitching 4 each, sanitary worker in the government sector 2, job 1, domestic helper 1, handicrafts 4, doctor 4, NGO worker 2 each, labor 2, tailor 1 and housework in rest of the cases. At least 13 men reported that women in family 'do not work', indicating them being idle and no value put on their work. Women respondents on the contrary mentioned the hard labor and variety of work their family members were engaged in. Children and youth of the family were found busy in schooling (17 cases) or sharing the workload of parents in crafts/skill jobs 7, selling vegetables 1, shop-helper 2, selling items of daily use 2, farming 3, sanitary worker 1, boot polish 1, car wash 1, factory job 3, petty business 1, garage worker 1, sweeper 1, irregular work 1 and 18 cases of no response. Three responses indicated that children would adopt the occupation of tailor, labor, electrician, painter, and cobbler or carpenter in future, if necessary. There were very young children in one case and one response was that parents sought children's assistance occasionally.

The history of migration of the respondents revealed interesting facts. There was a strong assertion and pride in majority of the cases that their families have been living in the same place, city or province since centuries. The Hindus now living in Sindh province of Pakistan are mostly those who have been living here since long time spanning over centuries. All cases included in the sample confirmed no migration from anywhere, rather they had been moving within the province of Sindh. If they have migrated from areas other than those now in Pakistan, it was mostly before Partition and very few reported that they moved from one place to another, for which the most important and frequent reasons were economic. Other reasons were also alluded to but not explained due to fear of further problems in today's conditions. It is reported that at one particular locality when the lower class residents report their problems and complains to the outsiders — mostly from non-governmental organizations or media — and if they mention anything against the local leadership or influential persons, they are later harassed and threatened for revealing such facts. In this sense, the survey conducted for this study was also received with suspicion and precaution. The very topic of the survey was alarming, as to why someone is interested in our whereabouts and moving about here and there. Being a threatened minority perpetually under fear of some unscrupulous happening, many of the Hindus do not reveal much about themselves.

The respondent families, except 2 who migrated from India, had been living in every nook and corner of Sindh before Partition. The details revealed their staying in Karachi, Kotri, Dadu, Meher, Thana Bola Khan, Kandhkot, Jacobabad, Larkana, Ghotki, Rohri, Sukkur, Larkana, Qambar Ali Khan, Khokhrapar, Nawabshah, Bhit Shah, Khapro, Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Sakrand, Badin, Islamkot and Umerkot. The interesting comment came from 7 respondents declaring, 'We have been living here since 5,000 years when Mohenjodaro flourished here'. Before Partition, 7 families had migrated from areas now included in India — Gujarat, Kutch, Jaipur, Ahmadabad, all lying in the Indian region next to Sindh (Pakistan). Other 23 (42%) families reported moving within the areas now included in Sindh stating that: Larkana to Dehrki, Rohri to Ghotki and Sukkur, Tharparkar to Umerkot, Mithi to Nagarparkar, Sakrand to Nawabshah, Nawabshah to Kandhkot to Jacobabad, Sukkur to Jacobabad, Sanghar to Kotri to Hyderabad, Badin to Karachi, from Mehar to Karachi, Hyderabad and Mirpurkhas for education, from Thar to Jamshoro, Sukkur to Gambat, from Hyderabad to Tharprkar, Karachi to Thana Bola Khan as 'we were then turning into a minority', Nawabshah to Tharparkar, Hyderabad to Dadu, Ranipur to Mirpur Mathelo, Mirpur to Larkana, from one village to another village of Mirpurkhas 'due to poverty we could not stay in town, out of Pakistan due to lawlessness, within Umerkot district or Badin district'. A cobbler reported, 'we kept working as cobblers in various places within District Badin'. In 31 cases (56%) no migration was reported. Among those migrating within the province, mostly the next destination was within the same district or an adjacent district. One response clarified movement from the village to town within Sanghar district. Again the pride in being original *desvasi* (son of the soil) was expressed. The reasons reported behind migration were mostly economic (employment), better education, or to get to urban facilities, however, one response clearly stated, 'cruelty of *jagirdars* (landlords) and miserably small income'. A woman reported migrating for higher education.

Migration after Partition followed the same pattern, however, the reasons have shifted to longer distances from towns and cities and better education. Two cases of Tharparkar reported migrating to India because of the war in 1971 and then returning later. Poverty was also reported as bringing people from villages to cities. No migration was reported in 19 (34%) cases and, strangely enough, no one went out of the province. This indicates strong preference of the Hindu community to remain attached to the province, a fact which has reinforced the Sindhi Hindu identity.

Regarding the level of satisfaction with their present conditions, the majority was not satisfied. If one quarter (25%) were satisfied, another 60 percent were dissatisfied and 15 percent were somewhat satisfied. Those satisfied included teachers (5), students (4), businessmen (3) and, strangely enough, one housemaid. Those dissatisfied or somewhat satisfied included 9 respondents, who accepted the situation as it is, for they had no other option but to bear it. One comment was, 'we get just oxygen here'. Others stated: 'Thank heavens, we are faring okay'; 'All satisfaction is conditional with peace'; 'It has nothing to do with satisfaction because this is our motherland and whatever the conditions are, we'll stay happy'; and 'This is our motherland; we cannot leave the motherland in difficulty'. The reasons of dissatisfaction included: political and economic factors. Economic reasons were categorically stated as: economic hardships (9), unemployment or inadequate employment, capitalist and feudalistic system (7 each), inflation (6), inadequate environment for business (4), unsuitable work and unsuitable pay (3), problems with economy (4), poverty, injustice, no educational facilities in village (2 each), and load-shedding, external debt, extortion in business, Muslims' preference to do business with Muslims (1 each). Among the political reasons were: a sense/environment of insecurity (13), sons of soil but second order citizens (5), crisis of governance (3), extremism and religious fanaticism, overall deteriorating condition of lawlessness (3 each), forced conversion, corruption (2 each), and abduction, insecurity of places of worship, class system, minority status and not having own house (1 each). It may be concluded that the Hindu community has been facing the gravest threat in the form of physical and economic insecurity and domination of an oppressive economic structure. One statement suffices to explain: 'Every Sindhi Hindu wants freedom, not feudalism'. Moreover, they say 'we are laborers and cobblers and the system is feudal'. Though a general sense of insecurity prevails, it is more agonizing for the non-Muslims, as was clearly pronounced

by two respondents. Some more statements were: 'whatsoever; it is our land'. 'Good or bad, we'll stay'. This discussion may be finalized with the help of another response statement: 'Security and peace are the pre-conditions, economic betterment will follow automatically'.

As regards the greener pastures abroad, the respondents reported that they have relatives living in mostly India 31 (56%), Europe 12 (22%), USA 5 (9%), UAE 5 (9%) and Australia, China, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh (one each), apart from 4 responses indicating different countries and 21 responses (38%) having no relatives living abroad. These relatives mostly visit Pakistan but the respondent families usually do not visit them. Particularly for those in India, visa approval is a big hassle, therefore the interaction is less frequent or nil in many cases. Only 5 respondents with good income (businessmen or doctors) said that they visit relatives abroad because they can afford it. One family has reported sending all their children abroad for education and among these, a few got jobs abroad and settled there while others came back. The usual interaction times are festivals, marriage or death events in the family. These relatives are reported to be better-off due to living abroad, even those in India are better-off. This shows that out-migration must be an option and incentive for the sample families but many due to lack of resources or capabilities, do not move. However, one respondent family reported going to India after having enough of the insecure conditions in the country but since they could not succeed in getting permission to stay they returned. One domestic helper woman's response was: 'We are happy here and never think about leaving this place, as we have been living here for long; perhaps this is the right way. If we can manage we will build our own house, as so far I have married my one daughter and the second daughter is still to be married, so I could not build my house since 60 years but have been paying house rent.' Though she reported sending her son to Dubai recently, despite her belief that 'when people go out, nothing much is changed rather little changes occur in every aspect of life'. The reason is that if with little or no education people go out they cannot find any well-paid job hence the lack of incentive.

In response to the question about whether they would like to go to another city or country for improving their conditions, mixed responses were received. There were 3 cases showing 'no idea' and 'we are not that much suppressed yet'. Those who said, 'not at all' or 'we are happy or satisfied here' were 21 (38%). 'This land is my motherland, I can't think of abandoning it', was an emotional response from 2 persons. Similar responses came from at least 10 (20%) cases. Various response statements show the variety such as: 'Things can get better but we are not willing to leave this beloved land'; 'No, we shall improve our lot right here but not elsewhere'. A well-off person said: 'I have a successful business here, life is pretty happy'; 'We can go out as any other citizen can go; no problem in it'; 'I pray that conditions get better here'; 'We only want to see peace here'; 'We want to have a job in our own city first of all'; 'Our *dharti* (motherland) is our mother and it belongs to us' and 'Everyone has to do labor to drag the life on'. Apart from these respondents, those who have some inclination towards going out of country and improving their situations were 26 (47%). Their individual views were: 'Switzerland can be our land of hope as it is very rich and has peace'; 'It all depends upon money; if you have money, only then you can be sure about your plans'; 'I cannot say without planning and that is with money only' and 'In other countries conditions are favorable for business and here it all depends on Allah's will'. People of localities having poor infrastructure expressed willingness towards going to the cities, where there are facilities available. Among these, educational facilities are at the top of the list, as a respondent said: 'we can develop if we can enter a college or university'. A cobbler said: 'If we feel troubled at one place, we go to another locality; it is a tradition that a cobbler's son would also be a cobbler'. Migration abroad to get rid of the existing problems comes to a poor man's mind only if it is financed by some other means, for instance, the government. The notion is strengthened among people who say, 'our relatives who had gone to India are in better conditions. They feel that only their familiar occupation can be pursued even in a foreign country, as one response was: 'I can go where I can get some land for cultivation'. The underlying desire here is that of owning some land by a sharecropper and truly, this reflects the dreams of millions who have been working on others' lands since centuries.

Empathy and Risk: A Personal Response to Managed Engagement

Prof. David Cotterrell, PhD

Entering Pakistan

In 2015, before entering Pakistan (or any of the countries currently classified as 'high-risk') most UK academics were required by their university to comply with the travel insurance policies of the institution. It is interesting that Pakistan appears on a list which includes some of the world's most unstable countries but also countries which might not automatically be assumed to pose significant risk. At the time of writing these include Afghanistan, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Kenya, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mexico, Nigeria (Niger Delta), North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines (Mindanao), Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen.

Inclusion in the 'High Risk Travel' category has profound implications. The first is simply the official stamp of threat. While threats might legitimately be described, identified or anticipated in many inner-city areas of the United States or Europe, there is a difference when risk is no longer understood as personally mitigated through responsible responsive behavior but instead is something which must be fore-grounded in advance of permission being given to visit.

With the example of my own institution, the initial response was that it was impossible for an employee to be given permission to travel. This response was grounded in the fact that no representative from the University had visited Pakistan within the remembered experience of those administering the process. Despite recruiting students from the country and projecting the University's brand in international offices and literature within it, the categorization of the country within this list of dangerous places meant that institutional approval was impossible to attain.

The strange impasse of the situation of risk, once being institutionally determined, being no longer open to personal appraisal, affirmation or challenge, resonated with me.

Lengthy and patient explanations were offered in the form of 'duty of care', 'institutional responsibility', 'insurance restrictions' and 'corporate liability'. The advocates of the travel embargo spoke with authority and with a sense of personal confidence, which made me begin to question my own justification for the journey. The responsible approach to risk-management appeared to warrant profound disengagement – which reduced the possibility of review through any kind of subjective experience.

At this point, the natural course of events would have involved an acceptance of the lack of viability and a shift to desk-based research from the UK. However, I have had some prior experience with risk-management. Not as a researcher but as a subject of the restrictions and paternalism of protective systems. In two earlier visits to Afghanistan, first during 2007 attached to a field hospital regiment in Helmand Province and latterly with support of international medical charities and cultural organizations in the North, I had become aware of the widespread disparities between the nature of contact and the communication that could be engaged with by individuals working within the protocols of different organizations. I had met with the World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID) UK and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Embassy staff and with representatives of Emergency, Ibncina, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other medical charities and had been struck by the challenges presented to both the organizational understanding of locality and to local understanding of the organizations themselves.

I have increasingly felt through subsequent communication with members of various organizations - including the World Health Organization (WHO), European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC), Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) UK and ISAF Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC)/Transformation groups - that the relationship between responsible risk-mitigation, its impact on the communities that were being engaged with and the success of organizational objectives could be better understood.

This relationship between empathy and risk was the subject of this research-trip to Pakistan and that agenda appeared to mandate a critical engagement with risk, rather than a passive acceptance of categorisation.

On 4th February 2015, while waiting for the connecting flight from Doha to Islamabad, I heard that the University had exceptionally approved my visit. As I stepped onto the plane, I did so, surprised by the knowledge that I still had an academic post to which to return.

Risk Assessment

The assessment and management of threat is a rational and responsible approach to uncertainty. It allows for considered preparations, relevant training, and revision of strategy and mitigation of risk. Risk assessment has become a standard feature of corporate, institutional and state systems.[1] To a lesser degree, or perhaps simply in a less formal structure, it pervades and affects the decisions and experiences of individuals. Whether inherited from an individual's parent organization or self-defined, the improvised or established methodologies for engaging with uncertainty will have some bearing on the manner in which sensory and social engagement is experienced.

	Severity			
		Slight	Minor	Serious	Major
Most Unlikely		Low	Low	Low	Med
Unlikely		Low	Low	Med	High
Distinct Possibility		Low	Med	High	Extreme
More Likely Than Not		Med	High	Extreme	Extreme

Probability

Table 1

Personal/Institutional Risk Matrix (Severity and Probability).
Source: Author

The broad subject of risk management is beyond the scope of this paper, therefore I will be focusing on one aspect, within a specific category of context. This paper will anecdotally outline research questions which primarily consider the perspectives of an external observer, within the frame of 'risk' and 'empathy' in the wider background context of a visit to Pakistan.

Pakistan has historically featured heavily in the strategic political, economic and military agendas of many countries within and beyond the region. In recent years, this has become more visible. Most obviously the war on terror, the resurgence of the Taliban in 2006-7 and the acceleration of ISAF operations in Afghanistan, has had a profound effect on the western perceptions of, and engagement with, the Middle East[2] and wider region. Travel guidance, movement restrictions and risk management first curtails tourism and then begins to mandate an adjustment in the way in which professional visitors manage their interactions with the landscape and the communities inhabiting it.

The impact of this heightened paranoia is not limited to Pakistan; however, Pakistan is of particular interest because of its strategic significance within a series of concurrent local, regional and global struggles. At the nexus of economic maneuverings between China, Russia, India and the United States, Pakistan is rendered vital through its geo-location as both a trade route and as an economic ally (or potential ally) to multiple states. Its overt, covert and potential political influence within the region has led to it being identified as one of the world's 'pivotal states'[3] within the US and elsewhere. It's historically troubled relationships with Afghanistan and India, relating to the Durand line and Kashmir as well as suspicions of broader internal political rivalries, have meant that since its creation in 1947, it has featured heavily within discussions of ethnic supranational claims and sovereign challenges to its own and neighboring countries' borders.[4] It is seen as significant within the Saudi, Iranian and wider Sunni-Shia struggle for dominance[5] and since 1999, has been widely associated with the internal and foreign rise of the Taliban[6]. Whether viewed as a strategic ally or as a threat, whether perceived as the victim or the sponsor of terror, Pakistan has occupied an ambiguous and complex place within the politics of a global ideological struggle.[7]

What needs to be communicated is that what Pakistan represents, may vary dramatically depending on the point of perspective, the focus of enquiry and the self-interest of the observer. Pakistan is too valuable as an ally, a threat, a trade route or a trading partner to ignore and international organizations will not readily lose their agenda to observe or influence it. However, the manner in which organizations choose to monitor, communicate, collaborate or persuade may change radically

as the level of perceived threat is re-assessed. The question that is to be raised here, is then, what, if anything, is the cost of a corresponding shift of risk mitigation?

This paper will focus on the potential implication for history, policy and analysis in circumstances where the choice of vantage points become more limited and when barriers to communication have the potential to challenge empathetic engagement. Specifically, this paper seeks to consider the staged challenges to pluralism within contemporary histories that occur prior to the descent into the polarized engagement of military forces. Where risk has been identified and measures are variably employed as responsive protocols, a situation of distancing occurs – most obviously between the observer and the subject but also between the perceptions of different observers.

This paper will seek to explore the contradictory nature of mutually exclusive versions of truth, the way in which risk can be a catalyst to the creation of partial truths and the possibility of the loss of pluralist narratives as communities and individuals are denied access to each other's' vantage points.

The Legacy of Fear

On arriving in Islamabad, buoyed by the triumph of my bravado over bureaucracy, I realized that perhaps the preliminary experience had left a deeper mark on me than I had imagined. The 'High-Risk-Travel' form had not only necessitated convincing the insurance under-writers of my responsible approach to threats but also required a detailed itinerary. With help from the British Council, I reassured the University and their consultants of my responsible behavior, through the promise of an armored car collection from airports, accommodation within secure hotels and scheduled meetings only with known contacts.

While I thought I was articulating these precautions as a purely pragmatic response to an unfamiliar landscape, I realized, as I left the airport that I had also unwittingly engaged with the protocols on an emotional level. My plan was to telephone a nominated driver as I left security. He would then greet me with a pre-arranged signal and I would be ushered away in the safety of a government car. Unfortunately, as I reached for my phone, I realized that the battery was dead. Instead

of the efficient extraction that I had expected, I found myself facing a crowd of strangers with no means of communication.

As I dropped my camera bag to the floor and cabled up an emergency battery pack, I looked around. It would take about seven minutes for the phone to charge enough to make the call. I had seven minutes to assess what exactly was the danger that I was about to be ushered away from. I had been warned about kidnap and assassination. I had even paid extortionate premiums to insure myself against these risks.

The men standing in front of me were clothed in *Shalwar Kameez* and blankets protected them against the cool of the night air. I was wearing a fleece jacket and jeans. I felt incongruous, conspicuous and, to my shame, nervous. I could not help but wonder which of these strangers, all who looked tired but not aggressive, was a threat. I realized, I was seeing them as the other – as part of the landscape that the complex structures of risk mitigation was crafted to protect me from. In reality, my seven minutes were quite uneventful. The only challenge to my personal space was through constant offers of taxi-rides and kind questions about my wellbeing. As my phone finally crackled into life, I looked up the number of my contact, dialed and he immediately stepped from the darkness of the car-park to welcome me into the cocoon of the waiting armored vehicle.

I was driven through the empty streets of Islamabad. Signs proclaiming 'Kashmir Day' reminded me of the continuous cold-war with India. The driver patiently answered my jet-lagged questions and finally escorted me to the discreet guest house. He insisted he should step out to check first – I presume to check that all was safe, before allowing me to exit the vehicle. He then drove through the gates of the compound and only when they were secured behind me did he allow me to walk to the entrance. As he drove away and I sat in my room, marveling at the luggage that I had dragged from the UK, I realized that I was now profoundly disengaged from the landscape that I had entered.

It was defined, entirely through the risk assessment preamble that I had been so entangled in up to now. If I now continued to follow the itinerary that I had submitted, I might well never have to (or have the opportunity to) test the reality of the threat that I was avoiding. Potentially, I might return to the UK in the way that I arrived to

Pakistan, escorted, shielded, blinkered, protected and with nothing more insightful than a sanctioned and borrowed understanding of this country, its people and the risk it was guaranteed to pose.

I wrapped myself up in a blanket and went out for a walk in the night.

Risk Assessment and Reality

There is a fundamental problem with security protocols. The problem is that the risk assessment (assumed to be well-informed, accurate and prudent) not only describes possible threats but also eats into - shifts, defines and challenges perceptions I would make more naturally on my own.

In all unfamiliar environments we gradually refine our perception. The exotic becomes normalized. Barriers of culture become less pronounced and as words are identified within the melody of an unfamiliar language, so individuals are distinguished within the mass of a crowd. The stereotypes that we may create from a distance are overshadowed by the diversity of lived experience. Gradually, through proximity, empathy overtakes objectification. The experience of normal urban existence is inherently complex and negotiated. The experience of risk-averse urban existence is more simple and prescribed.

However, as an individual, I was constantly conscious of the general and authoritative statements that had so strongly framed my entrance into this world and which re-emerged again and again at constant intervals. I was here to observe and learn but I was concerned that potentially the frame by which I viewed the landscape would carry more meaning than the filtered content that I was able to witness through it. The nature of the frame appeared neither universal nor neutral.

In my brief journeys to Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, I witnessed a range of approaches defined by institutional or national allegiance. I saw that areas of the cities that the British were not advised to visit were widely used by other nationals. I realized that representatives from some countries appeared entirely absent from the landscape and came to understand that they were essentially confined to their embassies or the diplomatic enclaves. Others would walk freely around the markets, travel by private vehicle and have local friends.

Within the Islamabad Serena Hotel, a community existed that had transcended the external exposure to risk. The faded luxury of this well-defended palace offered a place to concentrate on work without the distraction of threats. Razor-wire, armed security guards, vehicular chicanes and pedestrian metal detectors, insured that the individuals entering the complex were screened from the unknown complexity of those beyond. The over-priced fruit-juices, souvenirs and postcards referenced Pakistan but did not entirely divert from the peripheral vision of the ever-vigilant, Kalashnikov carrying sentries.

In Karachi, the gardens around the Avari Towers hotel pool were populated by middle-aged men, struggling with the heat in striped short-sleeved shirts. The ten-foot wall ensured that their interaction with the landscape beyond was more through email than sensory experience.

The majority of these aid-workers, UN officials, government employees and others, would complement and contradict the insularity of their hotel-bound offices and accommodation with more diverse travel beyond the secure perimeter. The situation in Pakistan is fluid and diverse. It is not war, it is not simply polarized and it is not standardized. However, there were signs of withdrawal from normality and suggestions that risk-management was no longer a discreet background concern. The visibility of security ensured that the existence of threats could not be discounted. The separation from the landscape seemed to suggest that the nature of these threats could not be verified.

Distancing of the Gaze

Aversion to risk can offer a justification for distance. The likelihood of direct damage from a perceived threat is reduced when a physical barrier or space is maintained. The most obvious shift in behavior is withdrawal. Defensive positioning can begin in subtle ways but can also escalate to very profound levels of disengagement. In other words - what may begin with simple scheduling of travel can progress quite rapidly and quite naturally to travelling by car, travelling with escort, being accompanied by security, travelling in only an armored vehicle, restriction of movement, military escort, confinement to compound and culminate in the engagement only through intermediaries.[8]

Distance				
Personal/Institutional Risk		**Offshore Surveillance**	**Secure Compound**	**Security Escorted**	**Direct Contact**
	Low	Low	Low	Low	Med
	Guarded	Low	Low	Med	High
	Elevated	Low	Med	High	Extreme
	Severe	Med	High	Extreme	Extreme

Table 2

Personal/Institutional Risk Matrix (Threat and Distance). Source: Author

At each stage of retreat, dangers are acknowledged in order that dangers can be reduced. As threats and precautions feed each other and together grow to be more significant than it seems possible to either question, challenge or avoid, the sense, the intuition and the experience of the person at the center of all of this is greatly reduced.

Distance				
Personal/Institutional Risk		**Offshore Surveillance**	**Secure Compound**	**Security Escorted**	**Direct Contact**
	Low	Extreme	High	Med	Low
	Guarded	Extreme	High	Med	Low
	Elevated	Extreme	High	Med	Low
	Severe	Extreme	High	Med	Low

Table 3

Personal/Institutional Risk Matrix (Disengagement and Distance). Source: Author

As an outsider, there appeared to be two key factors influencing my perception of the country that I had come to visit. The first was the potential simplicity of the narrative that I was absorbing. My understanding was, at least partially, informed by the advice and

judgment of others – presumably others who had already visited the F-8 area of Islamabad, hailed Karachi taxis by night and walked the streets of Peshawar. Their experience, although unsettling, was clearly not fatal as the advice was passed on to ensure that I did not make the same mistake. The second was that the risk-management protocols appeared to also involve a high level of isolation – and interestingly, these protocols erected barriers of isolation not only between these organizations and the perceived outside risk but also between these organizations and indeed, within these very organizations themselves.

For obvious reasons, the restrictions and advice offered through organizations to their employees is not commonly published. Even access to employees' own risk management strategy cannot be accessed easily. Furthermore, access to the risk prevention protocols of other organizations are not readily offered.

Not knowing the level of others' access or disengagement, challenges the normal desire to compare knowledge. While pluralism of narratives was embedded within this expanded community of discreet perspectives, the mechanism for concatenation of these narratives into a broader holistic vision appeared less well-defined. The difficulty in challenging an institutional perspective, by adopting that of another, suggested that the weaknesses in institutional vantage points could potentially remain undiscovered, unchallenged or tolerated. The choice of which views are represented offers an implied value judgement, suggesting that those not represented are less important. Yet, if an attempt was made to document all possible perceptions, the archive would become near-infinite, impenetrable and, therefore, unusable.

Digestible summative narratives are helpful in sharing experiences, reporting back to political sponsors, rallying donor organizations and constructing public campaigns. However, they can only offer a partial version of truth and in conflicted landscapes, the requirement to represent complexity and diversity could be argued to be even more prescient than in stable situations.

The aspiration toward pluralism and contradictory histories leads to its own risks. Research can be open-ended. Conclusions may be hard to reach. Policy may not be confidently developed to respond to the needs and circumstances of all respondents. The choice of summative or

encyclopedic collation of narratives does not offer a simple satisfactory conclusion.

As I watched Non-Government Organization (NGO) workers accepting their varying corporate restrictions, I wondered if the claustrophobia and frustration of this security bubble could offer some solace through the limitation of their engagement with the vast and contradictory complexities of their wider backdrop. Perhaps the enforced reduction of pluralism, necessitated through distance, is one of the convenient (if undesirable) by-products of analysis in conflicted environments.

The Mandate for Retreat

The management of risk is not merely incentivized through compassion for the potential victim(s) of the threat. Risks are borne by individuals but then they also become reputational, institutional and national – and as they move into each of these arenas they grow in degree and also in rigidity – further away from the specific experience and into a more standardized response to circumstance.

In Afghanistan, while feeling particularly frustrated at being unable to leave a base within the South of the country, it was explained to me that there was a term, 'High Value'. We hear this when journalists and politicians adopt the military jargon of 'High Value Targets'. It is also relevant in terms of potential victims. It was explained to me that I could be considered high-value. This was clearly not in terms of my utility but it did reference the 'cost' should I be lost.

It was seen as unpalatable, but possible, to explain the loss of an individual that was identified as an infantry soldier. However, it would be nationally embarrassing to lose an affiliated politician, an observer or even an artist. While being imbued with value was touching, it was clear that the personal benefit to me was only part of the mandate for safety. The issue of maintenance of mission and aversion to corporate damage was potentially a more dominant issue.

It is interesting that seven years later, when reflecting on the paternalistic explanations given to me by my University travel advisers, that the terms referenced could be seen to be focusing on elements of institutional liability rather than personal survival.

Perhaps this was not surprising. Within contemporary western military and civilian policy, there are well-rehearsed arguments to be made for reduction in risk through increasingly remote interventions. The notion of 'consent' is frequently considered. The term 'consent' as used in this context, is the tolerance by the civilian population of the activities of the (military or civilian) external body.

In contemporary western campaigns, frequently a smaller force relies on the passive or active acceptance of a larger local community to enable it to function. This maintenance of consent may be achieved through a shared agenda, through attempts to avoid disruption, or through threat, incentive or mitigation. While attempts to foster local consent are actively pursued through civil-military coordination, aid and compensation, I came to understand that beyond the immediate mission concerns, the tacit consent of another, less discussed, population was potentially more influential in the maintenance of any mission.

The death or injury of infantry soldiers, government officials or aid workers, however much reduced through technological advancement, informed intelligence and local cooperation will inevitably be a risk for any foreign campaign.

The public view of domestic repatriation of bodies or the enhanced awareness of the long-term implications of battlefield injury have proved to be challenging for any government or organization seeking to engage in foreign landscapes, militarily or through humanitarian means. While other factors may dominate in some circumstances, the public consent for risk is supported by the level of consensus for the moral defensibility of the intervention and reduced through the awareness of the human cost. It could be argued that a greater moral justification creates tolerance for a greater level of risk. However, the level of sustainable public acceptance is the subject of internal debate within military and civilian agencies.[9] If this statement is accepted, then there is one or two ways to improve the viability of sustaining public consent for an action. One is to develop more compelling ways to explain the moral imperative leaving engagement as the only justifiable option. The second is to reduce the risk to personnel of serious injury or death. Ideally, enhancements in both would contribute to an increased probability of popular consent; however, without extraordinary organizational confidence, the mandate for increasingly remote engagement appears inexorable.

Potentially, the problem is that it is much harder to argue conclusively for the reduction in threat than to argue for the potential risks that may exist. It is not necessarily a career damaging or mission threatening problem if high walls protect you against an attack that never comes. However, the failure to protect against an isolated incident of violence may have devastating corporate and personal consequences.

Pakistan and Empathetic Distance

As I visited universities in Lahore and Karachi, I was struck by the recently constructed high walls that blocked views of the architecture, landscape and communities beyond. Mandated by the terrible recent school massacre in Peshawar[10], these government guidelines are entirely justifiable[11]. However, it occurred to me that it would take enormous courage for a future elected official to accept the risk of advising that the walls be reduced in scale – so that once again the universities might engage with the environments from which they originated.

While the inconvenience and compromise of increasingly rigid precautions and restrictions may be tolerated as they incrementally increase, there is the risk of a tipping point being reached without a conscious decision being made. The inherent danger in this intensifying mitigation of danger is that it can ultimately and quite discretely, (indeed mostly invisibly) lead to a profound disconnection with the very context that it defines itself against. As such, as the precautions increase in severity, the clauses increase in length and the walls increase in height – each justifying the growth of each other – there must come a time when we lose a sense of our (once shared) context. This risk of progressive irrelevance, indeed, imbalance, has been recognized by insightful reports and papers commissioned by agencies including the Overseas Development Institute (ODI)[12] and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)[13].

The difficulty is that existing mechanisms for engagement economically and politically prioritize the management of institutional and personal risk over the risk of self-scrutiny. Once the tracks have been laid and the machines built, it is easier to jump on the band wagon than to question if the journey is more sensible to take on foot. There are industries and knowledge-bases that have developed in tandem around the concept of 'risk'. Security consultancies, training providers, high-risk insurance

brokers, logistics contractors, local support systems and sophisticated bureaucracies have developed to facilitate and maintain engagement while mitigating risk. This is not only a political necessity, it is a large and complex economic business model.

I met with research think tanks, community oral history projects[14], university Defence and conflict studies departments and found myself sharing ideas with some extraordinary artists, performers and writers. In Karachi, I met an extraordinary veteran of dance and theatre called Sheema Kermani[15]. She and her partner were working on projects that somehow took place in parts of the city that the police and army had long-since found too dangerous to enter. In a calm and considered way she explained over cups of tea how they managed to negotiate apparently impossible restrictions and survive uninsurable risks. In this living room, with no armed guards, cameras or defensive barriers, we discussed prioritizing the representation of subjectivity in an attempt to say something that was more resonant than illustrative and help avoid the terrible risk of offering an overly extrapolated summative view.

The complexity of social narratives and the vast gulf between their portrayal at UN and local level seemed too great for any individual project to engage with. I started to imagine a place within a broader dialogue as a way to consider ideas in a more considered way. While travelling around Pakistan, I became frustrated by the contradiction between the first-person kindness that I experienced and the institutional security protocols which made all casual and unapproved conversation appear to be an act of audacious risk.

As I explored the contradictory worlds' of street vendors and UN diplomats in Islamabad, I tried to think how I might address my sense of unease at the partial views we so easily accept. In the last few weeks of my visit, I began to be aware of factional fear and threats attributed variably to local, tribal, religious and criminal allegiance fostered by local stereotyping, regional power struggles and global economic empire building. I found myself continually returning to the sense that alternate methodologies might offer the more dynamic and powerful cultural languages needed to challenge some of the tragic perceptual untruths that dominate a mesmerizing landscape.

Postscript

On the last day of my first visit to Pakistan, in February of 2015, I walked for hours across Islamabad through the slums of the Christian colony, past the luxury villas of the elite and through parks with children playing cricket or dueling kites. It seemed a benign enough place, calm but complex – and not without its fair share of inequality, suspicion and ambiguous threats.

As my time came to an end, I believed that I had inadvertently breached most of the British Council's advice. Returning to my hotel, I had just enough time to shake the incriminating dust off my boots before finally returning to the bubble of the armored car for the slightly melodramatic escort to the airport. As I was hurriedly ferried past the landscape that, hours before, I had leisurely explored, the strangeness of the shift in paranoia within a single day appeared both profound and irreconcilable.

I left Pakistan as I had entered but with a perspective which now offered a level of subjective doubt to complement the objective certainty of my carefully constructed and quietly abandoned plans.

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The Story of Contestation of Space in Karachi in the Backdrop of Safety and Security Issues

Prof. Noman Ahmed, PhD

Introduction

Karachi, the largest city of Pakistan, has passed through many transformations during the recent past. Swift and frequent break down of public safety and the security situation is a core issue that has become a major concern for all the stakeholders. Multiple acts of terrorism have taken place in the city during the past fifteen years. These attacks targeted military installations, places of worship, market places, government buildings, residential quarters, buses and public transport vehicles, major streets and intersections and a wide variety of commercial locations. Thousands of people have lost their lives while many more have been severely or partially wounded. Extraordinary damage to the assets and property of people and government has taken place during the course of these events. Trauma, fear, psychological disorders and anger are some of the common conditions that continue to affect millions of residents in the city. Due to weakening of urban governance and gradual decline in the maintenance of public safety, lawless elements have strengthened their stronghold in the city, especially along peripheral and low income neighborhoods. These lawless elements have started influencing the physical outlook and urban fabric of Karachi city. This paper will therefore, put an effort not only to highlight these lawless elements but will also indicate the forms physical spaces have taken in the wake of the alarming safety and security situations of the city. With extraordinary rise in militancy through terrorist groups, sectarian and targeted killings continue unabated. Many elements possessing links and support of some political groups resort to street crimes, robberies, kidnappings for ransom and other heinous deeds. As a response, people have developed several mechanisms to enhance their personal safety and security. They have also resorted to initiatives to safeguard their residences, places of worship, public spaces, work places and other category of spaces. Installation of physical barriers on streets, thorough fares,

alleys, public assembly grounds and similar spaces are a major visible outcome. These interventions have changed the status of conventional public, semi-public, semi-private spaces in functional and jurisdictional manner.

Other stakeholders of the city have taken similar measures. The organized resident groups of the city have barricaded and walled their houses and streets as well as hired private security guards for added protection. Many political parties have constructed fortifications around their headquarters and homes of prominent leaders and offices, after closing access roads for their protection, with armed guards and police patrolling. Police and military authorities have also adopted similar measures for protecting their offices and installations. This paper is based upon an extensive research which was conducted between December 2013 and January 2015 to examine the status of public spaces in Karachi with reference to safety and security issues.[1] The research methodology comprised literature review, field survey, structured and semi-structured interviews from key stakeholders and silent probe and observation in many locations of the city.[2] Whereas the full study included several neighborhoods and spot locations in Karachi, two of them – namely Nine Zero and Block 'C' in North Nazimabad – are included in this paper to conform to the length and scope.

Context

Karachi is the largest metropolitan center in Pakistan with an estimated population of over 20 million. It is the main seaport and financial center of the country, as well as the capital of Sindh province. Within its folds, the city possesses more than 700 squatter settlements, a category of informal neighborhoods which is continuously on the rise. Observers believe that many criminals and terrorists are able to disguise and hide in these neighborhoods due to the porous nature of such settlements.

Karachi plays an important role in the national economic activity. The city generates about 15 percent of the national GDP, 42 percent of value added in manufacturing sector and 25 percent of the revenues of the Federal Government. The city's economy is large and diverse which is highly benefitted by the presence of dynamic industrial enterprises. It is predicted that the city can maintain its important role as the major industrial and commercial center of the country over the next decade, provided peace and stability are restored to an acceptable level.

Being the major seaport of the country, Karachi serves as the shipping and maritime hub for Pakistan as well as for landlocked Afghanistan. It provided hundreds of jobs to skilled and semi-skilled laborers, many of whom came from different parts of the country. As a result, the city has become a target for terror attacks due to its extraordinary importance to the national economy.

Karachi Strategic Development Plan 2020, the recently prepared planning document, informed that during the recent past the city added an average of 200,000 migrants each year from within Pakistan as well as from the neighboring countries, which has had a tremendous impact on the quality of life in the city (see Table-1). As the majority of these migrants are in their twenties and new entrants to the job market, their economic and social needs are not properly addressed due to the poor planning of urban growth. Moreover, they are left to sustain on their own. This age group is the most vulnerable, to whom any radical ideology is easily acceptable. They can become capable collaborators in violence. Because of this, the *katchi abadis* (squatter settlements) and peri-urban locations, in which most of them end up, have become breeding grounds for violent protests and criminal activities (such as drugs and gambling dens). In Lyari for instance, as mentioned by a senior journalist, there are a number of ethnicities including Baloch, Katchis, Pathan, Sindhis and Urdu Speaking. Bihar Colony, Agra Taj Colony, Kalri, where one finds Urdu speaking folks and then Lea Market, Art Chowk and Chakiwara are Baloch dominated areas.

	1981	1998
Migrant as % of population	46.1	23.8
From other country	22.2	5.5
From KP/FATA	7.5	5.0
From Punjab	11.3	6.7

Table 1

Population and Percentage of Migrants. Source: Gazdar 2011

As Karachi's economy is growing, the space requirements/needs of the expanding economic activities deserve appropriate allocation of developed space in suitable locations where these can grow in a harmonious relationship with the rest of the city.

A sizable scale of vacant and unoccupied land also exists in Karachi. The eastern, north eastern and western territories of the city possess a vast expanse of unutilized and underutilized land. Land speculation at the formal and informal level is a formidable investment option. However, as the transactions and operations of land disposal are not usually transparent, they often cause conflicts and disputes which result into violence and long ranging communal feuds.

In terms of transport and public mobility, Karachi has very few decent options. The city lacks mass transit and functions along informal choices. Motorcycles are another prominent mode of transport subscribed by ordinary citizens. The number of bikes is rising exponentially due to its lower cost and convenience in use. However, motor bikes are also a vital catalyst in the conduct of street crimes, target killings and kidnappings. City police is unable to effectively manage the data of bikes, their ownership and transactions. On sensitive occasions, such as religious events or political rallies, the administration imposes a temporary ban on pillion riding. This move helps to a partial extent only. Security barriers, other physical checks and blockages principally target to limit the movement of motor bikes in a bid to prevent crime and terror attacks.

Many lands that were used as sewage farms and other public spaces now face the threat of land grabbing. *Gutter Baghicha* (sewage farm) in South West of Karachi has been encroached to a great extent. In situations of sewage system break downs, flooding of streets and lanes and conflicts and protests erupt in different neighborhoods. It is also important to note that managers of land grabbing along *nallahs* create barriers to prevent undesirable people from entering the localities.

There are areas in the city, such as cantonments and Defense Housing Authority, under the control of the defense authorities. Due to the location of such areas near Arabian Sea and commercial markets, these locations have become highly desirable residential enclaves for the rich. The boards that manage development in these areas have become influential players in the residential real estate markets and are developing and leasing serviced residential plots to non-military and military customers alike. This in turn has made the already porous nature of the city more available for illegal and unlawful activities.

Development of social assembly spaces is yet another development trend in the city. Along major arterial roads, especially in North Nazimabad, Gulshan, Gulberg and Malir Towns, one of the new commercial uses that are replacing large-sized residential plots is social assembly facilities such as marriage halls. These facilities bring large volumes of vehicular traffic, predominantly during evenings and weekends and result in congestion on local neighborhood streets. Moreover, this has made the private residential quarters of the city open to the public, thus accessible for terrorist and illegal activities as well. Yet another trend which can be seen across locations such as Saddar, Gulshan-e-Iqbal and North Nazimabad, is the proliferation of aggressive signage and billboards. These signs appear in all sizes, heights and color. Rather than benefiting the commercial establishments by presenting a coherent message, these signs compete with each other for prominence and result in a highly inconsistent and cluttered visual environment.

Furthermore, there is a densification of planned and unplanned neighborhoods. Issues of ownership, access to public space and amenities remain unresolved which cause an enormous amount of trouble and conflict.

Urban Conflicts – A Review

Karachi has been in the grip of violence for over a decade. From 2003 through 2011, nearly 5,549 people were killed by different types of violence in the city, involving terrorism, target killings and sectarian attacks. The number is persistently on the rise, in the backdrop of intensifying turf wars among land and drug mafias and criminal gangs. The situation looks no different when one observes the trend of other crimes. Be it car snatching and theft or abduction for ransom, all show an upward rise.

The violence, based mainly on sectarian and political grounds in many ways reflects the state of security in Pakistan's urban centers. As Karachi is the largest city of Pakistan, the government has taken several steps in resolving the precarious state of affairs in respect to safety and security of the common people. The situation in Karachi is being reviewed on an urgent basis as a national security issue that impacts the conduction of business of the state.

Different types of conflicts and violence is experienced which is stated below:

- Political violence continued to mar the security scenario of Karachi with a very high number of disturbing incidents taking place since the past decade. Most incidents of political clashes in Karachi were reported between various political groups including the Muhajir Quami Movement (or MQM Haqiqi)[3], Sunni Tehrek (ST) and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). The supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI)[4], the Awami National Party and the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP)[5] were also reported to be into such violence on a political basis. Also, a considerable number of criminal groups in the city which enjoy political backing from one party or the other were involved in violence.

  The poor state of law and order resulting from the 2010–11 surges in ethno political violence enabled militant groups to consolidate their presence and launch attacks in Karachi. There have been unconfirmed reports of the key Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)[6] operatives relocating to the city. The TTP, an umbrella movement uniting militant factions in Pakistan's northwestern tribal areas, has increased its fundraising and recruitment activities in the city and launched several high-profile attacks (Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1

Karachi Terror Profile of 2013
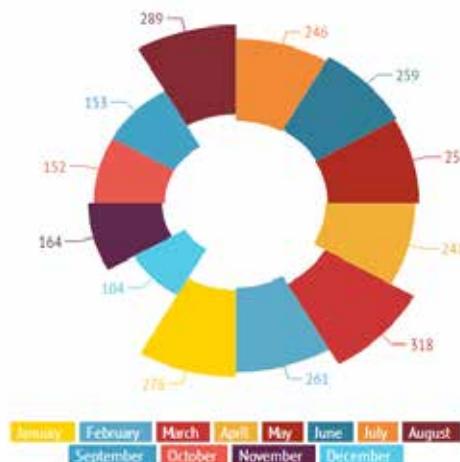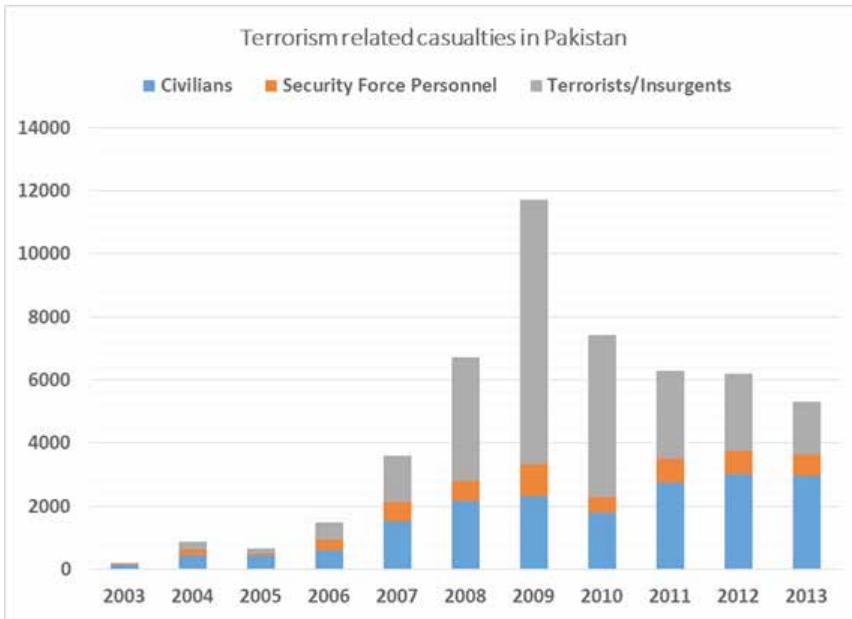

Over 2,700 people were killed in Karachi in 2013

Militant groups, including the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and extremist sectarian organizations have consolidated their presence in the city. In addition to drawing new recruits and generating funds through criminal activities, militants increasingly attack state and security targets in Karachi. The objective of ultra-right religious organizations is to enforce an obscurantist version of the religion. To achieve this objective, these organizations resort to violence, target killings of opponents and terrorist attacks. Easy availability of arms and weapons, existence of internally displaced people from the northern part of the country, poverty and unemployment become catalysts in the spread of such violence.

- Karachi has witnessed a surge in sectarian violence since 2009. Sixty four sectarian attacks took place between January and November 2011, up from fifty one in 2010. A 2010 Crime Investigation Department (CID) report stated that more than half of the 246 terrorists arrested in Karachi between 2001 and 2010 were affiliated with sectarian outfits (Figures 3a and 3b).

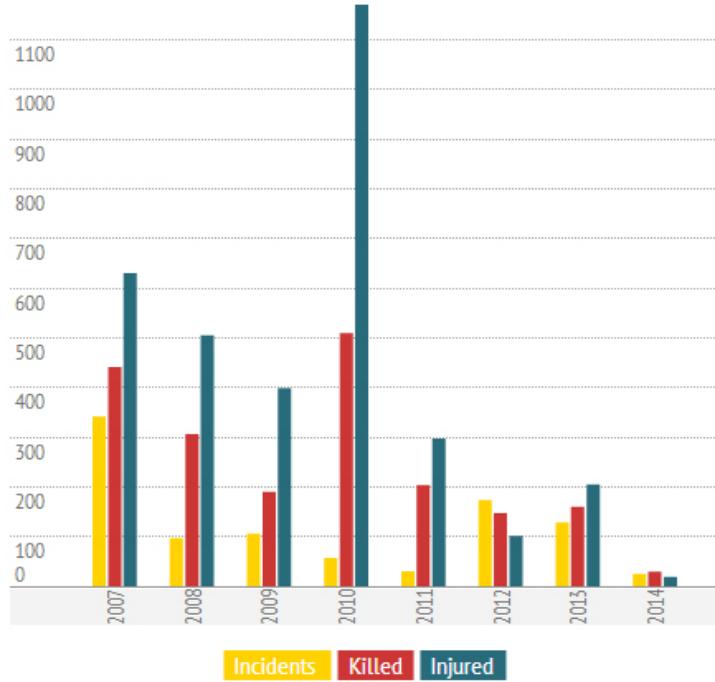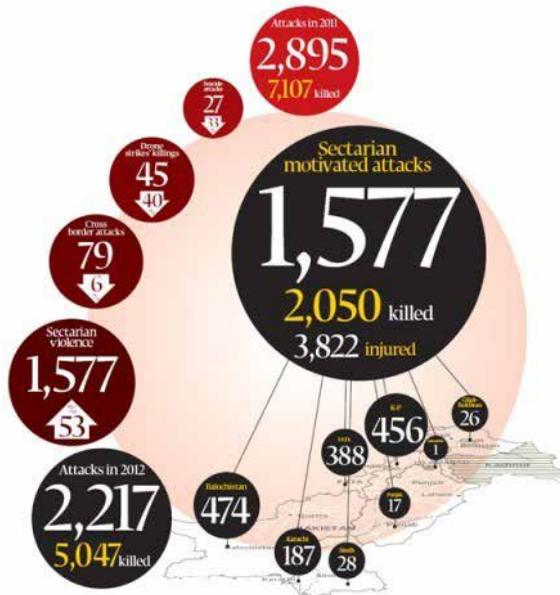- Karachi's ethno-political violence is facilitated by an overall crisis in law and order, as pointed out earlier. Many of the gunmen involved in target killings were not political party activists but members of one of approximately two hundred criminal gangs in the city, many of which boast affiliations with mainstream political parties. The gangs foster a perpetual sense of insecurity in the city by engaging in various criminal activities. The incidence of crime in Karachi is extremely high but criminal activities with political dimensions are the most disruptive to Karachi's stability (Figure 4).

Many criminal gangs patronize land mafias that manage the apportioning and sale of encroached land. These mafias occupy commercial plots, government land and illegal squatter settlements - often through violent or illegal means, including intimidation, forgery, bribery and arson and sell them to the highest bidders.
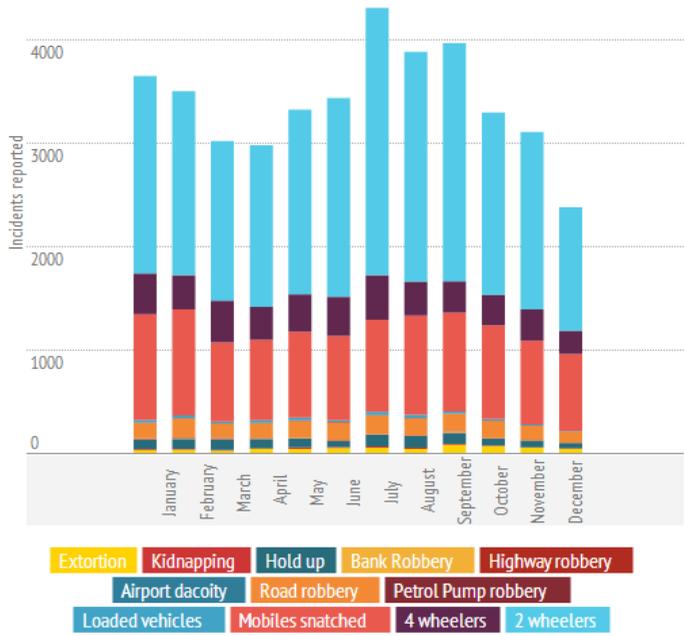

Figure 4

Crimes reported in 2013

- In addition to political power and land, Karachi's political parties have clashed over access to the illegal funds generated through

extortion by both political party workers and criminal gangs. According to news reports, over Rs. 12 million ($0.13 million) are informally collected daily from more than four hundred markets and shopping plazas, transporters and tankers that need to park in the city, small business owners, traders, factories and the residents of the illegal encroachments. Citizens generally believe that supporters of political parties extort money to both fund their activities and to mark their turf across the city.

Between March and June 2012, twenty traders were killed for allegedly failing to pay extortionists and another fifteen were abducted to facilitate payments.

- Karachi's largest and perhaps most powerful criminal gangs operate out of Lyari, a low income settlement with a population of over one million. Historically, Lyari has been a PPP stronghold and a hub of drug smuggling, weapons trafficking, extortion, kidnapping and gang warfare. After the death of Abdul Rehman, who controlled Lyari's warring gangs, the outfit has been headed by Uzair Jan Baloch. He was trying to escape the country but was arrested by Interpol while crossing into Dubai from Muscat on 28 December 2014.

Most of the residents believe that Karachi is a poorly policed city. During its recent past, performance of the municipal bodies has declined and the resource base for usual maintenance and development works diminished. Ongoing administrative friction between provincial government and local institutions is the main reason for this state of affairs. The ethnic, religious and sectarian, socio-political and economic complexities have caused deep fault lines in the overall urban composition of the city. Inflow of arms, gradual development of militant wings and armed gangs under political and sectarian patronage and a weak regulatory capacity of state institutions has caused this schism to grow. Violence erupts to settle dispute (and causing fresh ones), camouflaging criminal enterprises and usurping the control of assets, territories and neighborhoods.

This is a slightly different take on the roots of violence in Karachi. People experience ethnic tensions in Karachi. The political parties, that are largely consistent with different ethnic identities, desire to

sustain power in their traditional constituencies. All these factors are vital to understanding Karachi. Police force and the system of justice are inadequate and incompatible to the present day challenges faced by the city. With an estimated population of over 20 million, Karachi possesses a police force of 32,524 which is dangerously low in number.

Political influence in recruitment, massive corruption in the routine functioning of the force (as confirmed by studies by Transparency International) and inaccurate deployment leave very little room for proper maintenance of law and order. The criminal justice system is in need of reform. The procedures and conduct of trials and disposal of cases are slow and not free from errors. Observers criticize that very few hardened criminals could be given lawful sentences despite their long crime tallies.

Ordinary citizens resort to developing physical barriers and guard posts at the entry and exit points of residential lanes and streets to obtain some measure of safety. The following sections discuss this phenomenon in some detail.

Physical Barriers[7] as Means of Public Safety and Security

Physical barriers such as fences, walls and vehicle barriers act as the outermost layer of security. They serve to prevent, or at least delay attacks and also act as a psychological deterrent by defining the perimeter of the facility and making intrusions seem more difficult. Tall fencing, topped with barbed wire, razor wire or metal spikes are often emplaced on the perimeter of a property, generally with some type of signage that warns people not to attempt to enter. A police officer (who wishes to remain anonymous) during a discussion alludes that containers and physical barriers are temporary barriers put in place to cordon off areas to avoid clashes and to remove any possibility of skirmishes. He further indicates that for events such as rallies, processions and protest sit ins, direct co-ordination is formed with party leaders and main organizers and security is provided according to their demands. Many times interests of two political parties are provided for, while anticipating any need for additional security in case of clashes between the two. Streets and areas are blocked which are understood to be main threat zones and are vulnerable to attacks. Areas are sealed. A route for the main rally is decided and noted. Care is taken that no outsider or

unrelated person is able to enter the demarcated area. Jamming devices are used to ensure no explosive material is activated. The inconvenience to the other citizens, those who are not part of these gatherings, is a second priority. The main focus is the security of the people that are part of the event. He further mentions that street barriers are helpful to the extent that they stop movement of cars and mainly motorcycles which are the main mode of transport for criminals on the street. If a person complains about the blockage in the streets or violation in his right of passage, his opinions are heard and action is taken according to the merit of his argument.

North Nazimabad, Block C

North Nazimabad is a well-planned neighborhood in the north eastern part of Karachi. While it possesses residents from different social, religious and cultural backgrounds, some sub localities have become focal points of specific religious communities. The 'C' block in this neighborhood is dominated by Dawoodi Bohra community which is an off shoot of Shia Muslims. Most of the apartments, single unit houses and other form of residences belong to this community. The Bohras have their *Jamaat Khana* (place of worship) and other communal facilities in this area. Till recently, there were no barriers in this neighborhood as Bohras led a low profile social life with cordial relations with other communities.

Figure 5

Part plan of North Nazimabad, Block-C. Source: Author

However, this community was impacted by several terror attacks which left many people dead and wounded. As a result, feeling of insecurity spread fast amongst the community members. Now all the streets leading inwards to the sub-neighborhood are being blocked with metal and concrete barriers. No vehicle or pedestrian can enter without a check (Figure 5).

Prior to the various attacks on the Bohra Community[8] and that too near their place of worship, the streets of Block C commonly known as Bohra Compound had *chowkidars* (watchmen) but movement was not as restricted as it is now after the attacks. Block C houses a Bohra mosque, a *Jamea* (university), hostel and auditorium. To protect these

buildings from further attacks, all streets surrounding these important locations have been closed including the secondary streets. A long detour has to be taken by a back route to enter the area. National Identity Cards have to be produced to enter the area and inform at the guard post the house one is visiting. The entrance is also the only point of exit.

Social polarization has been on the rise, following the security challenges observed in the city. Block C is such a case where majority of the houses are owned by Bohris and more are being sold out by non-Bohri residents to members of Bohra community (Figure 6).

Azizabad '90' – Headquarter of Muttahida Qaumi Movement

90 (nine zero) is the home of the main leader of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), the second largest political party in Sindh. Although he resides abroad, all party activities take place in the vicinity. It now acts as the head office of MQM.

All streets leading to the house are blocked by arm lever barriers and are monitored by party volunteers. The road leading from Mukka Chowk has been gradually blocked over time. Initially, only one side of the road had been surrounded, now no traffic is allowed on either side of the road. Once a main thoroughfare, it has been completely cordoned off. Entrance is marked by a police vehicle, party volunteers (often believed to be armed), city wardens, concrete and traffic police barriers. One is allowed inside only if he is a resident, wishes to visit a resident or wants to visit the party office. A small cabin servicing as a help desk is where visitors have to register and show identification and state purpose of visit. After entering this checkpoint, visitors are relatively

Rangers outside
Azizabad '90'.[9]

free to move about. However, if visitors wish to visit the Khurshid Memorial Hall - The Rabata (Liaison) Committee office, they have to register a second time and hand over any sharp objects they may have. There are other guard posts as one walks towards the office. As visitors reach the office, their belongings are checked again for any suspicious objects. According to a representative of MQM the physical barriers have now become mandatory in order to have security, especially after the numerous terrorist attacks at their office and the target killings of their party workers. He said that it is the responsibility of the government to provide security to each and every citizen but since the Police Department has failed to fulfill their duty, everyone has taken the matter in their own hands (Figure 7).

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The research clearly indicates that there are multiple stakeholders who exercise influence on the control of space. As observed in the case example of Nine Zero in Azizabad, the periodically stabilized political influence of the MQM plays a vital role in the management of safety and security of residential locations, commercial enterprises and other amenities in the area. The law enforcement agencies have reconciled their role in alignment with this reality. The same status prevails in other locations and neighborhoods of the city where the law enforcement agencies and municipal authorities attempt to align their role according to the overt and covert influence of the stakeholders. This dilution of administrative authority and consequent rise of informal practices has evolved into a spatial anarchy that continues to expand unabated.

The city requires a re-positioning of the roles and responsibilities of state and non-state actors in respect to safety, security and control of public spaces. The absence of this clarity is favoring the various vested interest groups who utilize public spaces to their private advantage. Similarly, spot responses in the form of installing barriers or guard posts only serve to a limited extent. Karachi requires a clear strategy of public space management to enable her citizens to collectively benefit from the existence and access to such spaces.

Endnotes

1   The author acknowledges with gratitude the financial support received from International Institute of Environment and Development, London UK towards this research.

2   The research team included Architects Bushra Owais Siddiqui, Dureshahwar Khalil and Sana Tajuddin.

3   MQM is a secular political party in Pakistan mainly representing Urdu speaking *mohajirs* and other members of the society. MQM is generally known as a party which holds strong mobilizing potential in Karachi, having traditionally been the dominant political force in the city and many other cities in Sindh.

4   Jamaat-e-Islami is a social conservative and Islamist political party. Its objective is to make Pakistan an Islamic state, governed by Sharia law through gradual, legal and political process.

5   Pakistan Peoples' Party is a center-left, progressive and social democratic political party in Pakistan. Affiliated with the Socialist International, its political philosophy and position in the country's political spectrum is considered center-left.

6   Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is the banned umbrella organization of militants and terrorists who claim to enforce a version of Sharia law by resorting to terror attacks and militancy on the state and people of Pakistan.

7   Discussion with a police officer

8   S. Raza Hasan. 19 September, 2012. "Infant, six others killed: Twin blasts hit Bohra community in Karachi". *Dawn*. <http://www.dawn.com/news/750388/infant-six-others-killed-twin-blasts-hit-bohra-community-in-karachi>

9   05 December, 2013. "MQM Head Office- 90- in Azizabad Raided by Rangers". *Siasi TV*.<http://siasitv.com/mqm-head-office-90-in-azizabad-raided-by-rangers/>

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Post Script

This research is based on the field work done from December 2013 to January 2015. Some changes have appeared in the status of barriers after the intensive launch of Karachi Operation under Pakistan Rangers since 11 March 2015. Partial removal of barriers from some locations has been done. The changes during the current time period merit a fresh probe.

Peasants Uprising in East Bengal/East Pakistan (1946 – 1950)

Riaz Ahmed Shaikh, PhD

Introduction

The Tebhaga[1] movement is considered as the most organized and well-planned peasant movement of the 20th century United Bengal. Although there have been several other peasant movements in the past the importance of this movement lies in its political and ideological legacies (Majumdar 2011). This movement was led by the Communist party of India. During the four peak years (1946 – 1950) of this movement, the role of India's two major political parties - Muslim league and Congress - remained either indifferent or in opposition. A significant feature of the movement was the active participation of women. Bengal's area which came under the influence of this movement remained immune to communist riots.

This movement was a struggle of the Bengali sharecroppers for a two-third share instead of prevailing practice of half as their share of the produce. Initially, peasants were the main participants but soon other marginal groups such as agricultural laborers, small farmers and other poor groups in Bengal's villages, including potters and ironsmiths, also joined the movement and had actively participated in it. In this way, the Tebhaga movement became a people's uprising in which beside peasants, several other vulnerable groups contributed equally.

Agrarian Relations in Bengal

Bengal had a long history of individual peasant land ownerships since ancient times (Powell, 1986, p. 178). There was no major change in said structure even during the Mughal era except the increase in state share of produce from Akbar's 35 percent to Aurangzeb's decision to increase it to 50 percent. There was no interference in peasant life from the central government after collection of the revenue.

A major change in the existing agrarian structure of Bengal was introduced by the British East India Company. Almost one-third of the

Bengali population died in 1769-1770 due to famine. As a result, the Company's revenue declined. To tackle any such incident occurring in future, The Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 was introduced. This legislation brought a far-reaching change in the agrarian structure of Bengal. Cultivators lost the rights over their lands and a new class of *Zamindars* (land-owner) was given the land title; they were responsible for paying fixed rent to the government. The action of the Company was, in fact, a convenient solution for tax collection (Sen 1979). This legislation also introduced a class of permanent landlords. In most cases, the British allotted permanent land titles to those who were loyal to them. In this way, besides ensuring revenue collection, a class of influential land-owners was created as the base of support.

The settlement aimed to divert capital accumulation in the hands of rich urban dwellers as it would keep India an agrarian economy, raw material supplier and a market for British furnished goods. This new arrangement of permanent settlement had a serious negative impact on Bengal's society. The future agrarian crisis of Bengal is very much linked with this decision. To meet the revenue targets, *zamindars* indulged in the worst type of exploitation. Simultaneously, it introduced the concept of absentee landlord. The *Haptam* (seventh) Regulation of 1799 empowered the *zamindars* with an arbitrary power of distraint. While under British patronage feudal lords were strengthening their grip, simultaneously with the increase of population in the next decades and due to availability of surplus labor force, *zamindars* started demanding exorbitant rents from the peasants. This unfavorable developing situation made the peasants rack-rented and apprised and increased the *zamindar's* profit (Report 1940, 24).

The phenomena of absentee landlords introduced a new social class of *Jotedars*[2] (rich peasants) in Bengal. They were 'new men' belonging to the trading class or government employees who sought lands from absentee landlords and employed peasants to cultivate on their behalf (Sen 1979, 9). The *Jotedars* emerged as a middle tier between the *zamindars* and the peasants, who played havoc with the economy of Bengal. It increased indebtedness, subinfeudation and eventually land alienation (Majumdar 2011). The intensity of the worsening situation may be understood from the fact that in 1906, 45 percent of the peasant families were indebted. The percentage spiked to 83 percent by 1933. The wage rate of agriculture

labor, which was 100 *annas* (currency unit – 1/16 of a rupee) in 1842, increased by 16 percent reaching to 1600 *annas* in 1943. However, the price of rice per maund during the same duration also increased from Rs. 100 in 1842 to Rs. 3500 in 1933. Such exploitative situation became a ripe ground for the emergence of pro-peasant political parties such as Krishak Praja Party and Nikhil Banga Praja Samiti by Fazl ul Haque and Abdur Rehman respectively in 1928. However, the negative impact of these parties was that they led to communal politics as peasants were dominantly Muslims and landlords were Hindus. A number of laws were debated in the Provincial Legislative Council and laws favouring the Muslim peasants were passed, however, their implementation remained a major issue (Sen 1982).

This situation became more severe with the famine of 1943. Around three million deaths occurred within a few months. However, apathy on part of the government and *zamindars* made the environment conducive for the emergence of a peasant movement in Bengal.

Emergence of the Peasant Organization

1936 was a turning point in India's peasant history. The Indian National Congress in its Lucknow session of 1935, instead of suggesting specific measures to address the peasant question in India (and specifically in Bengal) held British imperialistic exploitation responsible for such a situation and demanded its removal. This demand completely ignored the role of native exploiting classes especially *zamindars* and *jotedars*. This Congress attitude of ignorance towards the peasant mobilization in Bengal resulted in the formation of the All India Kissan Sabha (AIKS) and Bengal Provincial Kissan Sabha (BPKS) in 1936 (Rasool 1974).

It will be pertinent to mention here that besides the Congress, the Muslim League was also not in favor of peasant unity on economic issues. The leadership of both parties was against the peasants' radical demands as they were afraid of losing the support of the influential landowners in rural Bengal. Their own class interest played a role here. Hence, the Communist party of India decided to raise the economic issues of the peasants. The Communist Party (CP) of India took a leading role in organizing AIKS and BPKS. The main objectives of AIKS and BPKS were "to secure complete freedom from economic exploitation and achievement of full economic and political power to the peasants and

workers and other exploited classes". Its manifesto further emphasized that "Kissan Sabha shall be the organization of peasants to fight for their immediate political and economic demands in order to prepare them for their emancipation from every form of political exploitation" (Sen 1947).

It was the CP which brought in for the first time in Indian politics the peasant question on a class basis. BPKS with the support of CP organized *Hattola*[3] and *Adhiar* movements[4] in 1938-1939 in North Bengal. Burdwan Canal Tax Movement[5] of 1938 was another attempt of the said struggle. These movements were the outcome of efforts of the grass root leadership of CP and BPKS. In fact, the formation of BPKS coincided with the release of a number of Bengal revolutionaries after years of detention in the Andaman and Bengal jails in 1937-1938 (Laushey 1969). They had become Marxists in jails. After their release, they joined CP and engaged themselves in working with peasants in villages.

Emergence of the Tebhaga Movement

Agrarian tension was in severe shape in Bengal throughout the 1940s. BPKS and CP were busy in setting up peasant organizations in villages. By the end of World War 2 and early 1946, anti-imperialist sentiments were on the rise. The communal riots of August 1946 highlighted the fragile situation in the province. Any further delay could have resulted in damaging peasant unity due to communal rifts. BPKS and CP decided to launch the Tebhaga movement from October 1946, even though the party was not fully ready to launch such a vast movement.

A wide spread and intense peasant movement like Tebhaga needed a strong organizational structure. The leadership of such a mass movement needed to create sympathizers among women, students, workers and other sections of society. However, despite this, it developed a strong hierarchical structure of leadership and soon extended its structure to most of rural Bengal.

The Tebhaga movement's leadership may be divided into three types (i) urban-based middle class. They comprised of provincial leaders of CP and BPKS. While operating at provincial level they were responsible for providing general organizational guidance, coordination and supervision, (ii) urban leaders working at district level; they were the link between provincial leadership and those working at villages and were

responsible for obtaining policy direction from provincial leadership and handle day to day affairs and (iii) those working at grass root level. These were mostly peasants and operated at village level. The peasants active in villages were in coordination with the leadership active at district level. In fact, it was the grass root leadership that managed and made this movement as one of the greatest movement of 20th century Bengal (Majumdar 2011).

The third type of leadership of the movement established village level committees of the Krishak Sabha. Before the start of the movement, they were responsible for organizing the peasants. After the start of the movement in October 1946, some committees were renamed as Tebhaga committees. The committee members were responsible for looking after the day to day problems arising out of this movement. They provided guidance to the villagers. They established their parallel judicial system in the villages. All disputes were reported to these committees instead of the police. This parallel trial courts system irritated the Muslim League's provincial government.

Village level leadership was asked to generate support for the movement while using *baithaks* (small meetings) in the villages, *Hat Sabha* (weekly market meeting), assemblies and campaigns. They were asked to distribute literature and develop slogans. They developed as a propaganda squad, who was responsible for keeping the villagers informed about the latest information of the movement and policy matters. A volunteer force was raised to keep a watch on the activities of the police and *jotedars*. Legal Aid committees were assigned the responsibilities of contesting the cases of arrested peasants. In every village, volunteers were asked to make local *Bahini* (volunteer committee). Each *Bahini* had ten members without discrimination of gender, religion, caste and age. Out of ten, one was selected as *Nayak* (Captain). Volunteers were provided physical training and they provided effective protection to the peasants from police and *jotedars*. They were asked to wear a red cap, badge and also carry a *lathi* (stick). They were well trained in using the *lathi* in their self defence. This new military-like framework proved as a strong weapon during the peasant struggle.

Slogans in the Movement

Slogans always play a very crucial role in the spread of any movement. Similarly, certain slogans and propaganda played a very important role in the Tebhaga movement. A few of the slogans were (Majumdar 2011, 16 - 8):

- *Adhinai tebhaga chai* (No half share but 2/3 share demanded)
- *Bina raside bhagnai* (No share to be given without receipt)
- *Panch serer besi sud nai* (No interest above five seers per maund for paddy loan)
- *Baje adai nai* (No illegal extraction or *abwab*)
- *Jamin thake uchchad nai* (No forcible eviction from land)
- *Jamindarer dalal nai-majur ra ek hoi* (Agricultural workers unite; don't be the agents of the *zamindar*)
- *Nij ghantar beshi khatuni nai* (Maximum work eight hours a day)
- *Chasir hate jami chai* (Land for the tiller)
- *Jamindari julum chalbe na* (No excess by the *zamindar*)
- *Kamunist party zindabad* (Long live the Communist Party)
- *Dalalra hushiar mazur ho taiyar* (Agents be careful, workers be prepared)
- *Krishak Samity ki jai* (Long live Krishak Samity)
- *Lal jhandar bahire gram nai* (No village without red flag)

Role of Women

The peasant movement under the Communist Party encouraged massive participation of women. The work of organizing women was started by the CP's women's association - Mahila Atma Raksha Samity (MARS) in 1942. Soon it spread to many districts and even reached to the villages as well. A committee of women was established to investigate the charges of rape against police officials and *jotedars.* Women were given training to defend themselves and to attack in case of attempted rape. Women performed several tasks during the Tebhaga movement - they participated in meetings, demonstrations, arranged shelters and food for their comrades. They were an active part of the communication system and did spy work (Peter 1986).

Due to their active participation, a large number of women died in police firings and armed attacks by *jotedars*. Women's participation reached to an unprecedented scale in the post- independence Tebhaga. Several women activists including Bimla Maji, Renu Chakraborty, Mani Kuntola Sen, Lakshmi Bewa, Burima, Sagari Barman, Bidy Barman Dispari, Rashmoni, Yasoda Kamarin and Kaushalya. Ila Mitra was one of the most prominent in this regard.

One of the most glaring cases of state repression and abuse of authority which came forward was of Ila Mitra. She was a graduate of Calcutta University and the member of an upper caste Hindu *zamindar* family. She joined the Communist Party and became part of the peasant movement under the influence of her husband Raman Mitra who had been working for CP for long. He motivated her to start working among the peasants. After partition, their family decided to stay back in East Pakistan and to continue their work among the peasants. She along with her husband started working in the most sensitive area of Nachol, Nawabganj district in East Pakistan. The level of peasant exploitation was at its peak in this area as compared to others. Due to its inaccessibility, *zamindars* and *jotedars* had a free ride and no presence of state writ could be observed in this most difficult area. Taking advantage of the situation, *zamindars* and *jotedars* of this region were getting a two-third share and peasants were getting only one-third instead of the existing practice of half prevailing in the rest of the districts of the province. Besides the women of low caste or tribal origin, the Santals were usually molested by upper caste Hindu-Muslim *jotedars*. In several cases, in some remote villages 'the first night's right' was also practised (Majumdar 2011, 224). She had to start her work under such odd circumstances. Ila made Chandipur village as her headquarter but most of the time she had to work underground. In spite of all difficulties, she extensively toured many villages and prepared the ground for the launching of a peasant movement in this difficult areas. With the support of BPKS, a trained peasant work force was prepared to repulse the attacks from Ansar, police or *jotedar's* men and to defend themselves (Roy 2002).

A new slogan of *Langal yar jami tar* (whoever possesses a plough, the land belongs to him) became most popular here. To set a precedence for others, the Mitra *zamindar* family themselves decided to implement the Tebhaga principle. Soon the peasants on their own started implementing

the Tebhaga policy with the support of BPKS. *Zamindars* and *jotedars* sought police help to stop the peasants from doing this. Cases were registered and hundreds of peasants were arrested. However, this harassment could not stop them from their mission.

The situation became worse on January 5 1950, when police officials of Nachol police station under the command of their officer in charge arrived in Chandipur to arrest Ila Mitra and other peasant movement leaders. Failing to find her and others, as they were out of the village, they arrested other activists and started torturing them to disclose the location of Ila Mitra and others.

On seeing police atrocities, some villagers called other colleagues. Within no time, hundreds of the villagers gathered and encircled the police team and demanded the release of arrested peasants and apologies for torturing their colleagues. Police officials started firing. Peasants also responded violently and all six police officials were killed. Peasants secretly buried the dead bodies of the police officials in their village. Several villagers started leaving their area after the incidence fearing police reaction against the killing of their colleagues (Umar 2007).

After two days, on January 7 1950, more than 2000 soldiers of Pakistan army and East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) arrived in the area to recover police officials and arrest the accused. They surrounded almost all the villages of Nachol. They set on fire 12 villages, tortured male members and sexually abused women. They were looking for Ila Mithra (titled by peasants as *Rani Ma* - Queen Mother - due to her contribution to the movement), her husband Raman Mitra, Brindaban Saha and others. The Tebhaga leaders decided to divide the peasants into groups for border crossing as soon as possible. Ramen Mitra succeeded in crossing the border along with his group but several other leaders including Azhar Hussain, Animesh Lahiri and Ila Mitra were arrested from a small bordering railway station - Rohanpur (Panjabi 2010).

After her arrest, police began torture of an inhuman level on her. She was treated worse than an animal (Roy 2002). In the police lockup she was stripped of clothing, raped by police officials, pressed her legs between bamboo sticks. They pushed a hot egg through her private parts (Umer 2007, 139 – 140).

Phases of the Movement

This peasant movement of Bengal may be divided into four phases (Majumdar, 2011):

(i)   Start and initial days of the movement from October 1946 to January 1947.

(ii)   This phase started with the announcement of the Chief Minister about the Tebhaga Law in January 1947. It continued until February 1947 when the movement spread to many other areas which were out of the movement's influence till then.

(iii)   This phase started from the end of February 1947 till Independence. State and provincial governments used all repressive tactics against the movement.

(iv)   The last phase continued till mid-1950. The movement continued on both sides of the border.

Spread of the Movement

There are different opinions about the extent of the movement and areas which came under its influence. One opinion says that it spread to at least 15 of the 26 districts of pre-partition Bengal (Rasool 1969, 142). Another opinion is that this movement spread to 19 districts of undivided Bengal (Sen 1982, 106). Mukherjee says that the movement affected 21 districts of the province (Mukherjee 1975, 14). Interestingly, secret reports of the police department reveal that out of 26 districts of Bengal, 24 districts were affected. Murshidabad and Burdwan were the only two districts which were not affected by this movement.

Post-independence Period

The Communist Party of India had extended its support to the British government after the German attack on the Soviet Union as per party policy. Simultaneously, they supported the independence struggle as well. Lastly, they also agreed to the Muslim League's demand of partition. CP, immediately after independence, decided to call off the Tebhaga movement before the harvesting season of 1947-1948. The Party directed the peasants not to launch any new action for the time being and to give a chance to the governments newly installed in independent Pakistan

and India to fulfill their pledges to the people (Sen 1947). However, both the governments failed to fulfill their promises. To review the emerging situation, a meeting of Bengal's CP was held in October 1947 and decided to start a movement in 24 Paraganas and Midnapore in West Bengal and Rajshahi and Mymensingh in East Pakistan (Majmudar 2011). The reason behind this decision was that during the pause period, *jotedars,* with the support of Congress and Muslim League, started practising repressive tactics against the peasants. Thousands of cases were registered against them. Raids were carried out to arrest the peasant leadership.

In the same context, AIKS convened a special meeting of its central committee on 16 and January 17 1948, at Burdwan. The committee decided to have separate peasant organizations for India and Pakistan by naming them All India Kishan Seva and All Pakistan Kishan Seva respectively. Moni Singh was nominated as President and Mansur Habibullah as General Security of the Pakistani Chapter. It was considered that West Pakistan was not yet prepared for any such movement; hence, for the time being it may be organized only in East Pakistan and so was renamed as East Pakistan Kishan Seva (EPKS). A secret meeting of EPKS was convened at Lalmonirhat. Although there was no ban on CP and Kishan Seva due to the political influence of the *zamindars*, the arrest of peasant leadership continued. In its three days gathering, they reached to the conclusion that the Muslim League having the dominant presence of *nawabs* and *zamindars* was not serious in the abolishment of the *zamindari* system. For this purpose, peasants had to develop some pressure. Accordingly, a movement was started all over East Pakistan immediately (Gupta 1969, 11). Simultaneously, the Communist Party of India in its meeting held at Calcutta (February 27 to March 2, 1948) decided to approve the policy of armed struggle to over throw the repressive governments in India and Pakistan in line with the B. T. Ranadive thesis.

Following this discussion, EPKS decided to start a new peasant uprising in East Pakistan. Beside the Tebhaga movement, a new movement was started in Nankar areas of Sylhet district. Soon, other communities including tribal, scheduled caste and Santal of Sylhet also joined this movement. Other districts like Mymensingh, Rajshahi also came under the influence of this movement (Umer, 2007, 113).

This movement was started by those peasants who were forced to work on the lands of *zamindars* in exchange for bread. The *zamindars* while

engaging these peasants used to give extra land to them. Peasants while working on the lands of *zamindars*, were expected to spend a part of their labor to produce their own food. They were not entitled to get any food from the *zamindar's* house despite working at their homes like slaves. They had no fixed working time. After spending several hours in the fields they had to look after the cattle and domestic work of the *zamindars*. Having no legal protection, they were one of the most oppressed section of Bengali peasantry (Bhattacharya, 1971, p.13).

The Nankar movement emerged in 1937 but after BPKS's active support it became an eminent movement. The partition of Bengal had no impact on the momentum of this struggle. Many leaders of this movement including Ajoy Bhattacharya, Joad Ali, Abdus Sobhan and others were arrested. After the beating up of a local *zamindar* by a *Nankar*, Mukhles Ali, a movement was also triggered in the Golapunj area. Getting encouraged from this incidence, other *Nankars* also started challenging *zamindars* and *jotedars* and it became even difficult for *zamindars* to move freely. Eventually, East Pakistan's provincial government constituted a tripartite committee (*Nankar* representative, government official and Muslim League representative) to find some settlement for this long outstanding issue. Finally, an agreement was reached between them. However, soon the agreement was violated with the arrests of prominent leaders of the peasant movement including Ismail Ali, Karam Ali and Ajoy Bhattacharya on January 1 1948. The next day, police arrived at Bahadurabad and committed acts of plunder, rape and mass beating (Bhattacharya 1971).

In April 1949, the government decided to establish police camps to counter peasant activities in the areas. However, the peasants found out other means to escape from police vigilance. A clash took place between the police and the peasants in Saneshwar area on August 18 1949. To arrest the peasants, a huge police contingent along with the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and Superintendent of Police (SP) arrived and gathered at the house of local Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) of Muslim League. The peasants got wind that police forces would attack their village after sunset with lethal weapons to burn down their houses. The peasants decided to march out of their houses and gathered about 250 feet away from the house where the police officials were staying. The District Magistrate inquired why the peasants were gathering.

The peasants had assembled to resist the police entry to their village as the police officials always ransacked their houses, tortured them and even raped their women. The peasants suggested only the DC, SP and Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) may enter the village and inspect their houses. During this conversation, the peasants were asked to raise the slogan of Pakistan Zindabad if they recognized Pakistan as their homeland. The peasants said they wanted Pakistan and raised the slogan 'Poor People's Pakistan Zindabad' (Choudhry, 2013). The Deputy Commissioner got irritated from hearing this amended and communist slogan and ordered to open fire. This resulted in the killing of five peasants while dozens were injured but they refused to surrender. This clash continued into the next day as well. Due to this aggravating situation, East Pakistan Rifles were called in to control it.

Another incident took place at Harakunji village on August 24. Three days later, a clash took place at two more villages, Rangjhial and Anandapur. Attackers with the support of police looted and severely tortured the peasants who resisted them. This incident even came up for discussion in the provincial Legislative Assembly on November 18 1949. The Chief Minister of East Pakistan, Nurul Amin, accused communists and defended police action. Despite all these atrocities, peasants continued their struggle and eventually, East Bengal government had to enact a law abolishing the Nankar system in mid-1950 (Bhattacharya 1971).

Bengal's peasants in this duration also protested against another oppressive tradition of the Tonko System – an exploitative system imposed on the peasantry of Mymensingh. The anti-Tonko movement began in January 1949 from the Hajang areas. On January 8 1949, the local *zamindar's* men who were taking away a huge quantity of tonko paddy from a peasant's house in Chaitanyagarh, were intercepted by peasants and after snatching from them, the peasants handed over the produce to the peasant from whom it was taken away forcibly. This encouraged other peasants to resist any such activity in the future. Peasants resisted in the same manner when the *zamindar's* men took away tonko paddy from the peasants of Bot Talg village (Gupta, 1969, p.11). After this incident, on the *zamindar's* complaint the area police in charge reached the spot and tried to take away the paddy after beating up the peasants. Peasants put up a resistance to the police force who had to leave the area without the paddy.

After such successive resistance attempts, 5000 peasants gathered to hold a protest against the abolition of the *zamindari* without any companion on January 28 1949. The Hindu-Muslim peasants of different areas participated in this protest. Three days later, police killed two leading anti-Tonko movement leaders belonging to BPKS - Rashimoni and Surendra. This killing aggravated the situation. While a group of peasants was heading to participate in the funeral of their comrades, police tried to arrest them. One peasant snatched the gun from the policeman and opened fire, resulting in the killing of three policemen. Next day, a large contingent of police force attacked the village and after hours of fighting. they killed two peasants and arrested more than forty (Gupta, 1969, p.119).

To control the increasing influence of peasants, it was decided to establish police camps almost in all villages. Mongalchan, a leader of the peasant movement decided to make an urgent tour of villages to mobilize peasants against the government's plan to establish police camps. During one such visit, Mongakhan and Augendra were targeted by police and killed. This news spread like wild fire and within hours angry peasants surrounded the police camps from all sides. The police fire killed fifteen peasants including women. The peasants did not leave the area despite heavy casualties. At midnight, the police left the camp taking advantage of the darkness but they had to face peasant guerillas at some distance. During this attack, one policeman was killed and six wounded. Next day more than a hundred policemen were deployed at the camp and large numbers of peasants was arrested (Gupta, 1969, p. 12).

This clash of police and peasants became a regular feature. Now the police involved Ansars in their support as well. On the other hand, students and workers showed their support to the peasant struggle. On February 16 1949, a protest meeting of students was held at Dhaka University. As soon as the meeting started, Muslim League students with the support of provincial Muslim League's government started beating them.

On February 16 1949, a heavy police contingent along with Ansar forces surrounded the movement's secret headquarter at Haldigram. The peasants upon finding this out decided to leave the village in groups instead of engaging the police in a fight. A large number of peasants successfully left the village but a few got injured in police firing. Lastly, the police burnt down the whole village and left the place. The next day,

the peasants attacked another police camp at Nonni. They destroyed a bridge, which was used by the police for their movement.

Faced with constant attacks by the police, Ansar and EPR, peasants had to change their tactics. They withdrew themselves from populated villages and fortified themselves at nine guerilla camps in the hilly areas of Ambuluka Berakhali, Meleng, Panihata and such others (Umer, 2007, p-134). Skirmishes and clashes continued between police and peasants from May to September 1949 from these guerilla camps. With the passage of time, police repression also increased. However, the level of peasants' resistance also reached to new zenith. To discourage villagers from extending support to movement leaders, the government decided to impose collective fines on those villages where movement leaders carried out attacks on *zamindars* and police. To get information about the activities of peasants, police hired local villagers as their agents and informers. The peasants also kept an eye on them and in several villages such agents were given death sentences and their properties were distributed among other peasants.

Several leading communists attached with the movement were arrested in Mymensingh in August 1949. This crackdown on the peasant movement slowed down but continued till the first quarter of 1950.

Beside other districts of Sylhet, Mymensingh and Rajshahi, another district of Khulna emerged as a strong center of the peasant movement during 1948-1950. An armed clash took place between police and peasants in Darubussia village of Khulna district on April 24, 1949. In this clash, three killings were reported and ten were injured. On December 20 1949, a police party came under attack. One constable was killed on the spot whereas other two police officials including an assistant sub-inspector were wounded. Since the police officials were Muslims whereas peasants were Hindus, it received a communal color. Governments of India and Pakistan gave it a communal color. Press in both countries published a distorted version of the incident. This situation created a conducive environment for one of the worst communal riots in East and West Bengal since independence. Communal tension resulted in a mass migration of population from both Bengals. This badly impacted the peasant movement in East Bengal.

The government of Pakistan and provincial government of East Pakistan were very determined to crush this Communist Party led peasant movement at all costs. The government of East Pakistan even circulated a leaflet in May 1949 condemning the activities of the Party and almost blamed communists as anti-state. In November 1949, they issued another directive according to which a police report would be required for getting any government job. The government was very worried about the increasing influence of communists on students, teachers and other groups. These peasant uprisings were also looked at in the same context. On one hand, when the government was trying to repress this movement with full force, communists also committed several blunders. Instead of demanding land reforms they decided to follow B. T. Ranadive's line of adventurism (Mukherjee 1975). He gave the policy of over throwing the governments in both countries. Muslims of Pakistan were not ready to overthrow the Pakistani government so early after achieving it. The government of Pakistan, taking advantage of the common Pakistani's sentiments, started a negative propaganda against the communists to malign them. Due to the repressive tactics of the government the peasant movement came to an end in early 1950 (Umer 2007, 146).

It is an interesting fact that during this peasant uprising, both governments of India and Pakistan remained in contact and supplemented with each other's actions to suppress this peasant movement. There was no difference between oppressive methods used by both states against the agitating peasants. Oppressive tactics introduced during the colonial period to tackle such uprisings were freely used by both states even after independence. There was no difference in the level of brutality and tactics earlier used by colonial rule and the new independent states.

Endnotes

1   Tebhaga in Bengali means to divide in three parts.
2   *Jotedars* had direct lease of agricultural holding. They were also generally rich farmers.
3   *Hattola* was an amount recovered by the *zamindars* from the seller during weekly and biweekly markets known as *hats*. Sometimes this tax *tola* was fixed according to the wish of the *zamindar's* men.
4   Adhiar movement was aimed to reduce the interest on paddy loan.
5   Burdwan Canal Tax movement was launched in 1935 with the aim to demand a reduction of canal tax imposed by the government in Burdwan district to recover a part of the capital expenditure for the project.

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Cityscapes of Lahore: Reimagining the Urban

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"The biographies of ordinary people are constructions (or fabrications) in which the imagination plays an important role" (Appadurai 1996, 54)

Introduction

Lahore's forthcoming new Master Plan, the Integrated Strategic Development Plan for Lahore Region 2035 (ISDP-35), will likely represent another in a row of new visions and images of the urban for the city. Meant to replace the previous Integrated Master Plan for Lahore-2021 that was approved in 2004, it is unlikely to include any innovation for addressing the situation and needs of residents with low-income wages. Just like the previous planning document, what is already known from the ISDP-35 suggests that it resembles the usual normative blueprint which remains modernization-inspired and encompasses planning visions derived from non-Pakistani contexts. As a rule, Master Plans have often been produced in Pakistan by international consulting agencies foreign to the local context and unaware of how historical and socio-cultural legacies affect everyday 'urbanism'. One of the phenomena resulting from the particular type of disconnect between externally-led planning and policy on the one hand and local everyday realms of imaginaries and practices on the other hand, has been captured by Mahadevia et al. (2009, 2) talking about India when stating "…the poor find space in the cities through non-implementation of the existing Master Plan rather than in the implementation of the Master Plan!" This observation is also valid for Pakistan in that it indicates that formal planning tools fail to produce just spaces in the city and instead tend to develop patterns of exclusion under the emblem of legality (Marcuse et al. 2009).

Given that the ISDP-35 guidelines are currently in the process of being compiled by an international agency and the inherent risk that policy failures from the past will be repeated, it is valid to scrutinize the rationale for this new plan. We argue that the urbanism from above that is manifest in policy and planning must be paralleled with and take account of the

perspective from below, that is, the perspective of those ordinary people who usually do not benefit and do not have a say in urban planning processes in Lahore. A city cannot be grasped merely as a motor of economic growth with national significance; simultaneously, cities resemble living spaces, inhabited and dynamic, evolving and changing over time. Residents have their own understanding of the city and their own image of the urban space they live in. For each citizen, the lived and experienced city can be assumed to form a different 'cityscape', an image partly derived from the overlapping tapestry of present experiences, imaginaries, aspirations and memories of the past.

Based on long-term observations and empirical fieldwork in Lahore, this paper engages with selective residents' daily rhythms and urban life-worlds - as the experienced everyday practices the inhabitants enact in space and time (Lefebvre 2000, 2004; Schatzki 2010, 81). The notion of 'cityscapes' is employed as a conceptual lens that enables us to explore the 'lived' and 'imagined' urban spaces in Lahore. The purpose of this paper is to map the experienced and imagined spaces of Lahore based on empirical research (Section 3) against the prevailing views on urban development found in academia and policy circles and in comparison to the city form which is contingent on colonial and post-colonial visions of the urban (Section 2). Tracing the daily routines, identification, boundary-making and hardening processes, the paper explores the 'city vision divide': the gap between 'visions of the city from above' ('urbanism' as planning, translated in master plans and such) and the local images produced by its residents ('everyday urbanism') (Section 4 and 5).

Academy vs. Policy, City Form and Cityscapes

From an architectural point of view, cities and their city forms evolve over time as constructions in space – vast, dynamic and complex. From a spatial theory perspective, cities can be interpreted as places constructed through movements and (mobile) practices. From residents' perspective, every citizen constructs his or her associations with the urban space, its images, memories and meanings (what below is introduced as cityscape/s), contingent on his/her positionality, that is background, origin, profession, class, gender, *biraderi*, age and so on. Needless to say, that there are always multiple perspectives and many different angles of looking at the city. Simultaneously, the city and its

city form are constantly being built, rebuilt, transformed, imagined and reimagined.

Lahore´s City Form

Lahore, the second largest city of Pakistan, is rapidly urbanizing and thus, presents a complex and dynamic canvas for study. This is augmented by its historical trajectory, in particular the footprints of colonial planning and post-Partition reconfigurations.

From an urban planning perspective, colonial town planning and its concept of development did not intend to contribute to a homogeneous improvement of urban areas; on the contrary, it nurtured different 'urban qualities', spatial segregation and social segmentation between Lahore's 'civil station' and the 'indigenous' inner city; 'Colonial (anti-) urbanism' (Hussain 2013) and its urban restructuring resulted not only in the change of Lahore's city form, it also changed the way people imagined and made sense of the city, fostering a 'dual' vision of the urban space (Glover 2011). In the decades following the Partition, Lahore absorbed hundreds of thousands of immigrants who settled first in the houses left behind by the India-bound emigrants but mostly established new irregular housing – spaces that have become famous as *Katchi Abadis*. Over the decades, various national and city governments initiated subsidized urban development projects. Targeting specific groups with different programs and plot sizes in selected areas in and around the city, the distinct initiatives augmented spatial-social segregation (Alvi 1997). Today, this segregation is ever more obvious in Lahore´s city form. It is manifest in the form of exclusive elitist housing societies which have developed mostly in the southern urban periphery but are not limited to it. In the inner Walled City, pronounced gentrification processes are taking place. Uncontrolled expansion of commercial areas has drastically reduced residential use within the Walled City.

Over the decades, urbanization has altered the form of Pakistani cities and thereby it understandably transformed everyday urbanism and urban life-worlds. It is important here to note the difference between 'urbanization' and 'urbanism'. Urbanization in the Pakistani context refers not only to the processes of urban sprawl of recognized cities but also to the bottom up processes and unrecognized dynamics

transforming rural areas into urban-level population density spaces (Qadeer 2000, 2014). On the other hand, urbanism refers not only to the discipline of planning ('urbanism from above') but to the changing way of life triggered by urbanization processes – and urban planning policies as well.

Making Sense of Lahore´s Urban Life in Academia vs. Policy Circles

In Pakistan, the neo-liberally shaped policy-debate is dominated by grand 'visions' that proclaim Lahore to become a 'global city' (*The International News* 2014), a 'smart city' (*The Express Tribune* 2014), or more recently, the urge to follow Chinese urbanization models of development. Pakistan Vision 2025, the national development roadmap approved in 2014 by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform as a "blueprint for long-term development" (Iqbal 2014, 128), will also guide the on-going urbanization policies and the development of new master plans such as Lahore´s ISDP-35 and for that purpose "lessons learned from the Chinese [urbanization] experience will be applied in Pakistan" (Ibid).

Notwithstanding such claims and current efforts, Lahore's urban life and everyday urbanism as focus of empirical research has been largely absent in academic reflections that could inform urban planning policies. Except for a few notable critical works — for example: Hasan et al. (2014), Ali (2013) and Mielke (2014) — that engage in the debate on Pakistani cities using empirical data and fieldwork, there is little systematic work that critically investigates the dominant grand visions governing urban planning in Lahore and other Pakistani cities. It contrasts with an alarming, even chronic, tendency of policy-makers to adopt models and ideas of development unfitting Lahore's and Pakistan's urban contexts. The crux is that Northern urban theory is uncritically adopted, resulting in concepts such as 'world class cities', 'global cities', 'creative' and 'smart' cities to be introduced in city visions worldwide because they seem to suggest global relevance and validity. However, as urban theorists, working from the Global South emphasize, "work on southern urbanism is profoundly subversive and insurgent in a theoretical sense" (Seekings 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to engage in new processes of creative theorizing on the city. This can enable scholars to rid themselves of the meta-narratives of

urban theory from neo-Marxist to neo-liberal approaches that have served the development of binary discourses in urban theory debates and consequently failed to address local urban experiences and how ordinary life is enacted through subversive everyday practices that result in a particular urbanism of everyday life.

Cityscapes as Imaginaries and Enacted Everyday Practices
The term 'cityscape' is inspired by Appadurai's concept of 'scapes' as 'imagined worlds' of collective being, specific spatial imaginaries that encompass individually produced and collectively shared spaces of interactions, connecting people across 'translocal' spaces (Appadurai 1990, 1996). This conceptual invention stresses the importance of imagination in the production of social life: "…'scapes' indicate that these are not objectively given relations that look the same from every angle, rather they are deeply perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors…" (Appadurai 1990, 33). Since its first introduction, the notion of scapes has proven fruitful for conceptual discussions in various academic fields with the aim to grasp new imaginaries. The term 'cityscape' has been adopted in urban studies but not always with the theoretical intent that Appadurai's concept of -*scapes* entailed (Lindner 2006); it has mostly been used to refer to the visuality, legibility and imageability of the city form (Lynch 1960).

In this paper, we use the concept of 'cityscapes' because it allows emphasizing the role of imagination in everyday urban life of the city dwellers. As Appadurai says, "…cities are no longer a locality but a complex of localities […].the work of imagination allows people to inhabit either multiple localities or a kind of single and complex sense of locality, in which many different empirical spaces coexist" (Appadurai 2002, 43). We, thus, intend to grasp imagined worlds besides physical and perceived worlds that residents 'access' within the city space and that conversely influence how they structure their lives as they go on with their everyday routines.

Moreover, the concept of cityscapes implies that the lived and imagined life-worlds express and produce themselves through everyday social practices: "…the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work […] a form of negotiation between

sites of agency […] and fields of possibilities […] the imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact" (Appadurai 1996, 31). The concept of scape and thus the concept of cityscapes are related to the phenomenality of practices and sociological writings on everyday practices. Among them, Henri Lefebvre's (2014) 'Critique of Everyday Life' refers to the urban sociology of 'everyday life' as the study of repeated 'human and material practices' shaping 'the urban' and the urban life. Similarly, Reckwitz describes social practices as "routinized ways in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described and the world is understood" (Reckwitz 2002, 250). This literature highlights the role of cognitive activities: routinized ways of making sense of the world, knowing ways of doing things or desiring them. Hence, we argue, it is through the exploration of these routinized social practices that the imagined can be explored. Looking at 'bodily and cognitive routines' of city residents we can ultimately read the city from its recurrent phenomenological arrangements. Routinized practices discovered through residents' interviews and resulting 'images of the city' can reveal spaces of agreement and disagreement, conflict and contestation. As Amin and Thrift (2002, 140) state, "…what better a place than the city as a site of contested practices and aspirations, a zone of agonistic engagement, a place of experimentation…". Hence, we propose that individual 'images of the city' expose how their beholders access resources and situate themselves in the urban social and spatial grid.

Tracing Cognitive Maps of Lahore's Everyday Urbanism

Lahore´s inhabitants – today nearly 10 million (Iqbal 2014) – experience and enact the city from their own position as they have extremely different access levels to urban resources and city space. In so doing, they are not motionless observers. Urban dwellers move in space and, over the years, from one location to another, that is, their residential areas, jobs, leisure activities, along with the expansion of the city and its social transformation. In the process, they construct their own images of the city and specific cityscapes evolve. In the following six ethnographic vignettes, the concept of cityscapes is employed to explore daily rhythms in everyday practices and to grasp spatial imaginaries from the perspective of selective city residents. Ideally, both dimensions will allow first hunches regarding to what extent past and present images

of the city of Lahore can inform about citizens' access to the city and resulting patterns of social and spatial exclusion.

The research presented in the following is based on extensive fieldwork over several months between 2013 and 2015 in the framework of an on-going PhD project. The following questions guided the data collection and preliminary analysis: Which current cityscapes can be traced for citizens residing in different areas of Lahore? How do these cognitive maps overlap? Which areas of agreement or disagreement can be identified? How do past and present images of the city relate to each other? From the body of data that was collected, we present six cityscapes of individuals who have been selected as residents of three case study locales – the Walled City, the northern fringe of Lahore and a housing scheme in the southern urban periphery. The presentation of two cognitive maps from each locale serves to illustrate commonalities and differences in these individuals' cityscapes, that is, their imaginary and access to the city. Given the necessary selectiveness of the cases and the micro-approach with a focus on individual perspectives, the case studies are not representative for Lahore at city-scale. Rather, the paper represents a first step of how the imaginaries, practices and needs of city dwellers may be made legible for planning; in so doing, it constitutes a first attempt to map the differentiated and uneven space/s of the city.

The data collection was based on an ethnographic narrative approach, including qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews and cognitive mapping. The schematic representations of the cognitive maps were drawn based on drafted maps developed in participatory sessions during the interviews. The questions revolved around different activities that the respondents would carry out on an everyday basis – now and/or in the past, depending from the case study (see below). They were asked, for instance, to describe their daily routines, the places in the city they recurrently visit and the frequency and the purpose of these visits. Further questions were related to locations in the city where they would visit friends or relatives, spaces for leisure or work-related activities and ultimately about their perception of the neighborhood and other residential areas in the city. Moreover, their future plans and aspirations informed the discussion and map-sketches during the interactive sessions.

Lahore's Cityscapes Shared from the Walled City of Lahore
The first case study presents interviews and representations of the cognitive mapping conducted with two residents of the Walled City of Lahore. The first interviewee lives in a *mohalla* which benefited from a refurbishment project launched by the government. The second interviewee is a resident of a close-by neighborhood not benefiting from the project. The underlying assumption behind presenting these two interviews is that the arrival of the project might have triggered not only changes in the neighborhood benefiting from the project but might have also created a new imaginary of the locality (and of the city at large) among the residents.

The Sustainable Development of Walled City Lahore Project was initiated around 2006 with international donor support. It aimed to refurbish the old houses of the Walled City area and to improve service provision in demarcated locations along the royal trail from Delhi Gate to the Badshahi Masjid in four phases. To date, the first phase of the project has been completed; the second phase was launched recently. The first phase involved the refurbishment of the buildings' facades and services provision (sewage, water supply, drainage and electricity). For a 'demonstration project', most houses in a selected *mohalla,* Gali Surjan Singh, were chosen for interior refurbishment at a minimal symbolic cost for their residents. These houses have since been presented by the Walled City Lahore Development Authority (WCLA) as a model of replication for future development of the area.

In the interview with the respondent from the *mohalla* that has benefited from the refurbishment project, it became clear that the arrival of the refurbishment plan nearly six years back had initially made little sense to local residents. In response and also following specific requirements of the international donors, the oversight authority organized an on-site office that housed the Social Mobilization Team (SMT), which was made responsible for building trust among the community and to inform about the project and "develop Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)". In the process, female and male community leaders were chosen to speak on behalf of the *mohalla* residents and to negotiate and discuss the development of the project with WCLA officials. In the course of the project, several residents – and among them the interviewee – were employed as 'CBO's leaders', construction workers, field survey assistants, 'field activists' and other functions.

Because most of the cost required for the improvement of the *mohalla's* services and the refurbishment of the buildings was provided by the project budget, the interviewee's family had initially feared that once the work completed, they would lose the ownership of their house. The old three-storey building had belonged to the family for at least three generations. In order to allay their fears, an informal contract was signed between WCLA and the residents ensuring that the house would remain their property after completion of the project. After three years work experience with the project, the respondent obtained a job in a travel agency. His daily routine is since then largely structured by his bike trips from the Walled City (close to Delhi Gate) to his office located near the Press Club, about three kilometers from his house. It expands sporadically because of work-related visits to distant areas of Lahore, such as the airport or Defence. His relatively high mobility in the city has given him a comprehensive understanding of the city structure and resources, which does not necessarily mean that he is able to make use of them. Except for a few visits to hospital facilities near Punjab University and a limited number of visits to Fortress Stadium, his narrative is mostly centered in and around the Walled City.

Subsequently, the interview sessions resulted in a cognitive map that encompasses two major spaces around which the narrative of the interviewee revolved. On the one hand, his current life centered near the Walled City; on the other hand, his aspirations to move to Bahria Town, one of the exclusive upper-class housing scheme in the southern periphery of Lahore (see Figure 1). In between, a large number of areas never (to be) visited (labeled as 'no go areas' in the map) have been traced.

His account of the Walled City includes positive and negative, at times contradictory, interpretations. He would first praise the social networks that characterize the Walled City's daily rhythms and the amenities the project brought for both, his entire *mohalla* and his house almost free of cost. Then, he would criticize the deficient facilities in the Walled City area, the congested streets and gentrification processes that have disrupted social ties. Many of his relatives and friends, for instance, have moved out of the Walled City limits to other locations such as Shad Bagh, Shahdara, Samanabad or Chauburji. In the same interview, the discussion would meander to him disclosing his own
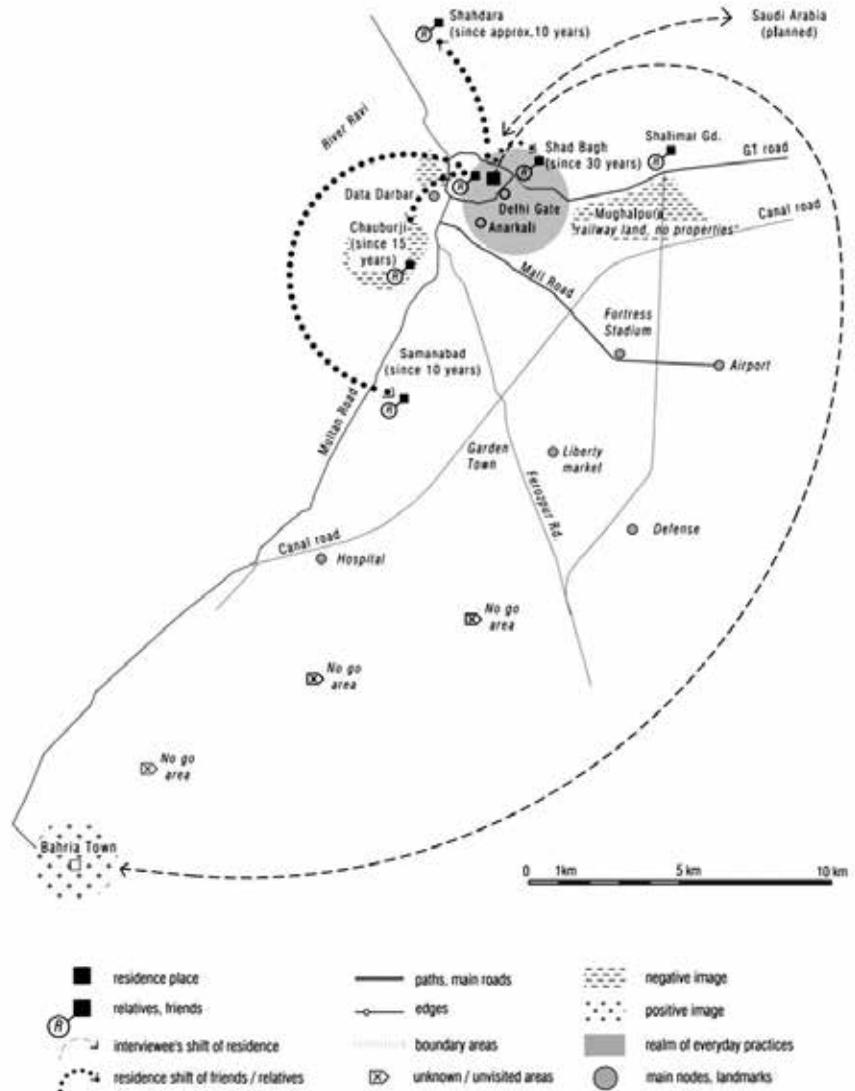
aspirations to shift to Bahria Town. This was articulated in contrast
to him previously describing Model Town, Defence and the southern
periphery as areas never (to be) visited, speaking of "deserted housing
schemes where people do not relate to each other and facilities are not
available at night". As it turned out, the imaginary about moving is
already quite definite – thanks to the refurbishment project – and not
just a mere desire. He has an already detailed plan to move out in a few
months — provided he can first earn well in his intended trips to Saudi

Arabia and sell his house, which, since the refurbishment project he believes, has tripled in value. When asked to elaborate on the specific reasons for shifting to a new housing scheme, he would speak highly of the security offered by gated housing societies.

The mapping of the interviewee's cityscape – facilitated by combining everyday practices and aspirations – indicates that despite refurbishments and remaining social networks in the Walled City, the imagined and aspired city lies in a faraway periphery that represents upward social mobility and is considered safe.

The second interview involved a female resident living in a *mohalla* close to but not benefitting from the first phase of the Walled City project. The neighborhood does not have an efficient sewage system and deep cracks in various houses are visible. Fearing the collapse of the building, WCLA has repeatedly instructed the interviewee and her family members to vacate their house. The family, unable to cover the expenses required to stabilize the construction, continues to reside in the place. The schematic representation of the cognitive map of the interviewee is depicted in Figure 2.

From a spatial point of view, the narrative about the interviewee's everyday life revolves around the Walled City, with few exceptional visits to the area near Model Town and Defence for medical purposes and visits to Samanabad and Ichhra. A large number of areas never visited ('no go areas') can be located in the southern periphery, Model Town, Defence and Cantonment. The interviewee could name only specific locations such as Fortress Stadium and Liberty Market; all other areas remain outside her everyday realm. The respondent's narrative mostly emphasizes on the transformations and social change in the Walled City that have disrupted traditional social networks. The positive images the interviewee recalls from the Walled City in terms of social ties thirty years back, are a thing of the past. With a large number of her neighborhood's acquaintances and relatives shifting progressively to areas such as Shahdara, Samanabad, Shad Bagh and the vicinity of Data Darbar shrine, the interviewee complains that she has to confront everyday issues such as drugs and juvenile crimes without the support of a strong social network. These concerns, adding to the visible decline of houses and services in her *mohalla,* have contributed to the construction of an image of decay of her immediate

living environment; an image that she extends to the whole Walled City.

Figure 2

Representation of the cognitive map from interview 02. Source: H. Cermeño 2015, based on fieldwork interviews

■	residence place	——	paths, main roads	▨	negative image
■	relatives, friends	—○—	edges	∴	positive image
Ⓡ	interviewee's shift of residence	········	boundary areas	▨	realm of everyday practices
••••	residence shift of friends / relatives	⊠	unknown / unvisited areas	●	main nodes, landmarks
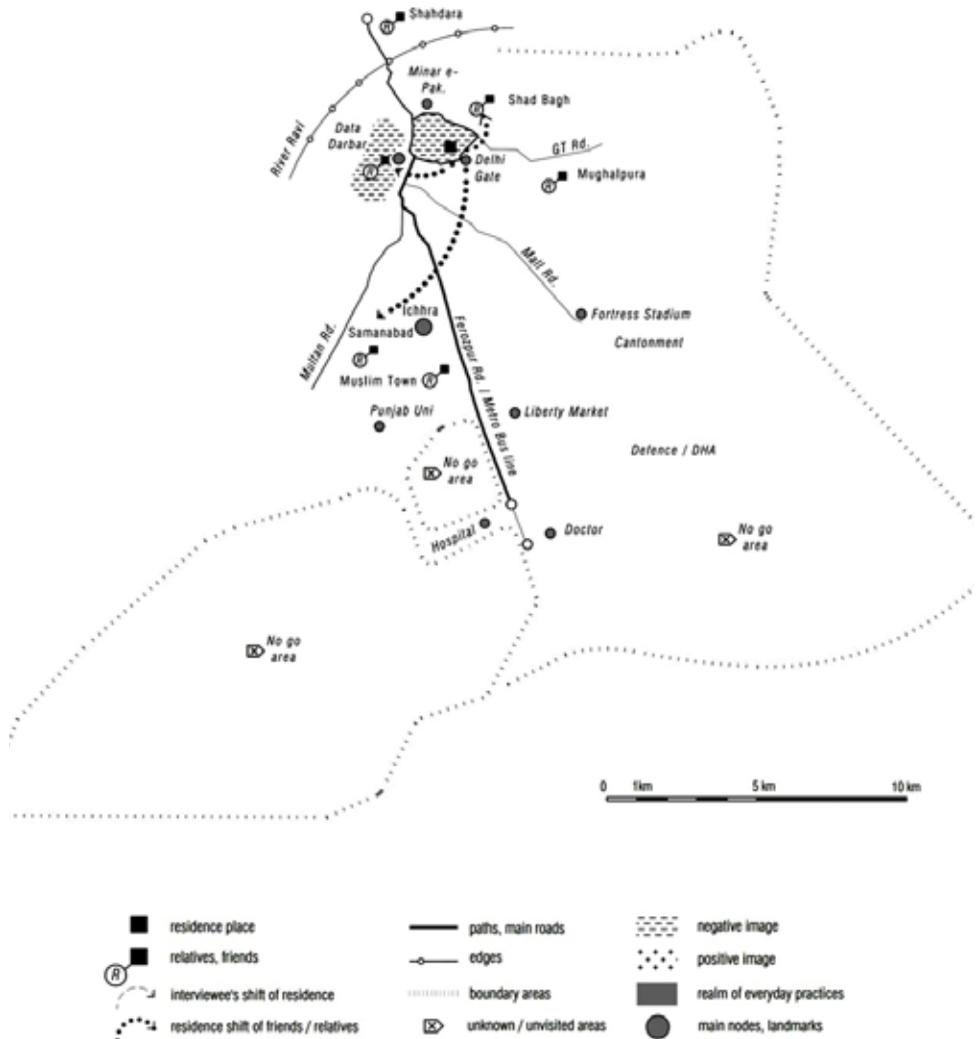
While this image of deterioration seemed not to apply to the area under the first phase of the Walled City project in her initial statements, she nevertheless revealed the same desire to move out of the Walled City later in the interview. The changes and prospects the refurbishment program has brought for neighboring *mohallas* has caused residents in her own *mohalla* repeatedly to approach the WCLA to be included in the Walled City project as well, however, with negative responses. As a result, many residents live with a mixture of disenchantment and hope

that gives way to frustration. Amidst deteriorating living conditions, the interviewee hopes to be 'selected' to benefit from some future development programs or similar initiatives to come. This hope is tied to the ultimate goal of being able to sell the house after it is refurbished and to move out of the Walled City once its value increases.

The major difference between the two respondents' cityscapes is that in the first case, the project was somewhat arbitrarily 'imposed' on the residents who had no previous knowledge, stakes and thus no expectations, while in the second case, these expectations have arisen by learning from the experience of the 'developed' *mohalla*. This suggests that the pilot phase of the Walled City project has nurtured the aspirations of residents, both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, to move out of the Walled City.

Lahore's Cityscapes Shared from the Northern Urban Periphery
The second case study presents interviews and representations of the cognitive mapping conducted with two residents of Khuda-Ki-Basti, a low income housing scheme in the northern periphery of Lahore. The settlement is a Pakistani NGO-initiated housing scheme launched in 2005 and located a few kilometers north beyond the river Ravi. It has often been presented as a replicable housing scheme for low-income settlers, which provides affordable land for residential purposes to the urban poor excluded from the formal housing market. In contrast with the previous section, this case provides an image of the city shared from its periphery by residents who had previously resided in other locations of Lahore and had therefore shifted not only their residence but the position from where they look at the city. In the interviews, respondents were asked to chronologically depict the different localities they had inhabited in Lahore and to describe their experiences and everyday practices.
The first interviewee is a retired railway employee who shifted to this settlement in 2007. His narrative of the city goes hand in hand with different accounts of political struggle against military rule, the surge of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), the railways unions' movements and early *Katchi Abadis* regularization programs. The drafted cognitive map (Figure 3) recollects different locations in the city the interviewee mentioned and which served as milestones in his chronicle.

Born a few months before Partition in a Hindu property in Dharampura,

which his family had managed to occupy in wake of the disorder and mayhem that accompanied Partition, they soon had to shift to Bhagwanpura *Katchi Abadi* in Mughalpura, when their house was allotted to refugees from India. Bhagwanpura was one of the many informal settlements that grew on encroached federal land that developed in Lahore after Partition. Many of them settled in Mughalpura, a vast area known for being the largest railway workshops site of the sub-continent
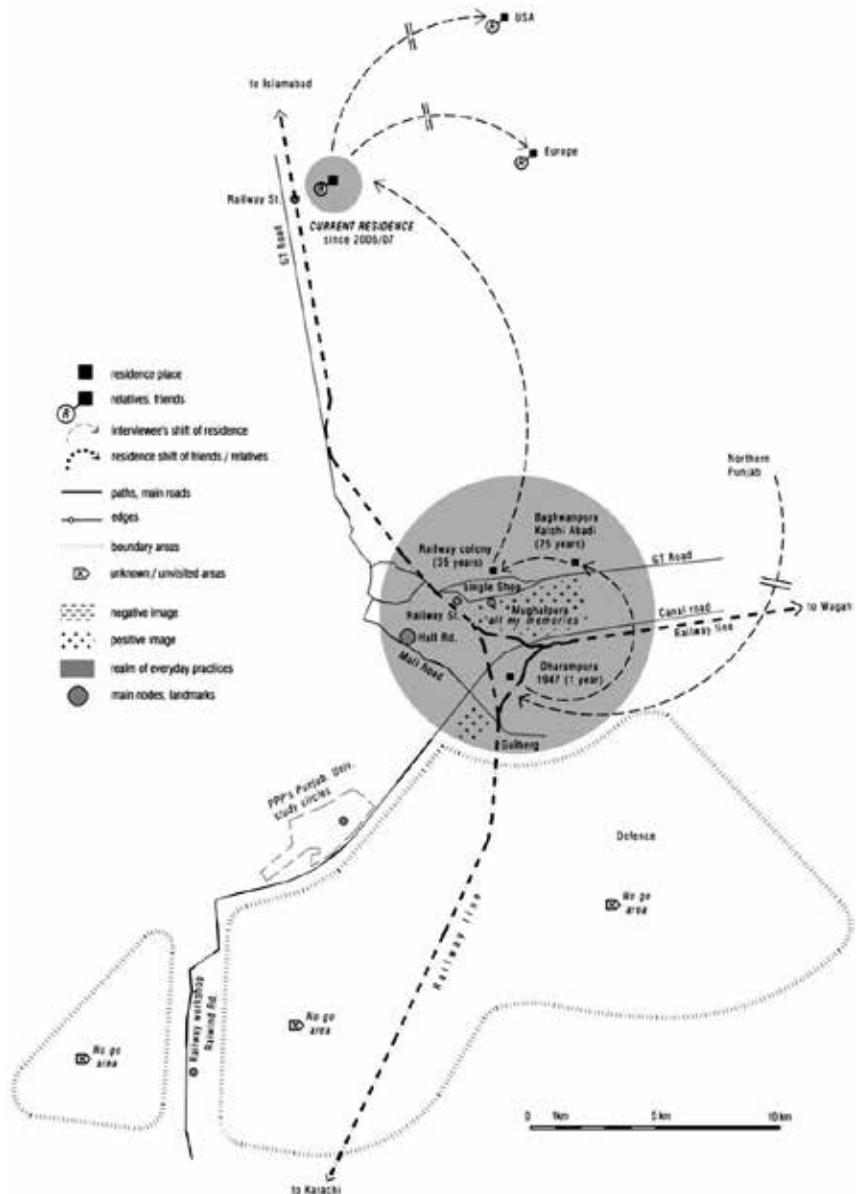
and where the Pakistan Railways, as a federal agency, owned large stretches if not most of the land. The interviewee took active part in the popular unrest and protests against the military rule of Ayub Khan and was imprisoned more than once. Due to his later employment in the railways, the interviewee shifted from Bhagwanpura *Katchi Abadi* to a railway housing colony in Mughalpura, where he lived until his retirement. Mughalpura was the center from where local *Katchi Abadi* associations were organizing to lobby for regularization programs. The interviewee participated in these activities recalling his personal experiences in jail along with left-wing activists.

Discussing other locations in the city that he would frequently visit or has visited in the past, he referred to the railway workshops at Raiwind Road, the Punjab University, where 'People's Students Federation' (the student wing of the PPP) used to conduct their 'study circles' in the 1970s and to particular locations at Hall Road, where he would attend meetings with scholars and left-leaning activists until today. Thus, from his spatial and temporal position in the city, the interviewee experienced Lahore as an activist, frequently partaking in political rallies and demonstrations; from his affiliation in the PPP to his involvement in different, subsequently established railway unions. The engagement with the railway unions enabled him to move beyond the limits of the city. He would regularly travel to other locations of Pakistan, especially Karachi, where he tied-up with other left wing activists. These activities related him to the NGO sponsoring the housing scheme where he currently (year 2015) resides in Lahore.

From the position of his current residence in the northern periphery of the city, his everyday life has significantly changed and his ties with Mughalpura have naturally loosened up due to the distance. Still, his perception of the city today is determined by memories of the past. When asked about other specific locations in the city such as Defence or Gulberg, he would distance himself from them saying, "these places are not for people of my class…all my memories are related to Mughalpura [...] if I had to move somewhere else, I would go back there". However, this does not match his aspiration to move abroad to either his son or daughter, who moved to Europe and the USA respectively. The connectivity provided by new technologies such as Skype and Viber has altered his perception of his own positionality in the world and in

Lahore considerably. Living and daily routines in both the USA and Europe have become an essential part of his own everyday life.

The next interviewee, a female teacher working in a neighboring village, has been living in the settlement since 2008. Her narrative, like the previous interview, follows a chronological description of the different locations where she has lived in the city and the different perceptions she has obtained of the city due to her socio-spatial positionality.

Originally from Gujranwala, her family shifted forty years ago to the

Figure 4

Representation of the cognitive map from interview 04. Source: H. Cermeño 2015, based on fieldwork interviews
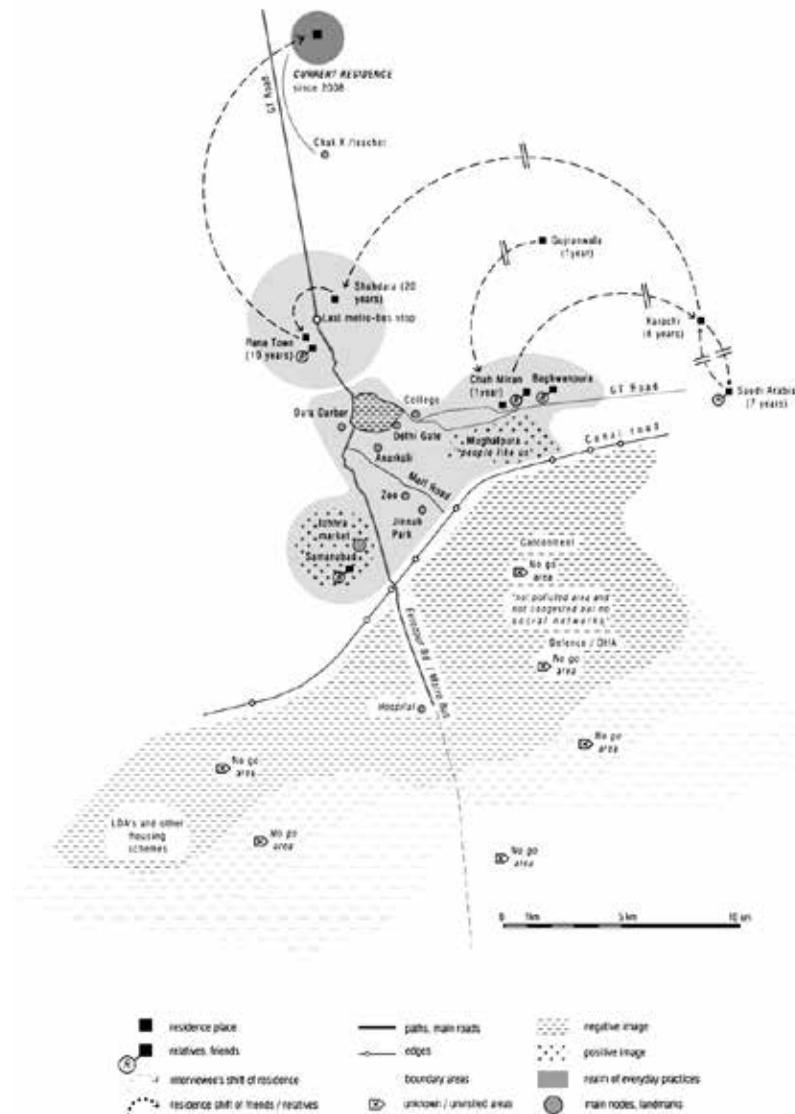
vicinity of Mughalpura. Only a few years later, the family moved to Karachi from where her father migrated to Saudi Arabia. Remittances and savings from this period enabled the family to purchase a house in Shahdara eight years later. Her narrative is mostly centered in the area comprising Shahdara (where she lived for about 20 years) and Rana Town where she moved after her marriage and stayed for about ten years before shifting to her current residency, ten kilometers north. About her time in Shahdara, she would particularly recall the floods of 1988 to illustrate that the area was a backward location that has only slightly improved since. Rana Town, she explains, had a large number of informal settlements that underwent regularization processes in the 1990s under Benazir Bhutto's government but this did not improve their living conditions substantially. Hence, the location remained an underdeveloped area. The time the respondent spent in Shahdara and Rana Town (about 30 years) and especially her student years in a college on the Grand Trunk Road, gave her exposure to many locations in the city. As main landmarks (depicted in Figure 4), she would note Anarkali, Delhi Gate, Urdu Bazaar and Ichhra Market, while the spatial range of her movements beyond Shahdara would include the Walled City, Samanabad, Mughalpura and Mall Road. Her marriage, her profession as a teacher in a village and her current residence have significantly affected her daily routine. Her mobility in the city is nowadays limited to Shahdara and Ichhra Market for weekly purchases (of food items, clothes and such) while she would access cultural sites in the city very rarely, once or twice per year with her students.

Since the metro bus line still does not reach the settlement where she currently lives, it has not radically improved her mobility, though she hopes it will in the future. Only for medical purposes has she sporadically crossed the line of Canal Road that, in her view, separates the city she knows from the 'unknown' southern periphery. Although unfamiliar to her, she has a certain opinion about these areas she never visits, such as Cantonment, Defence and the southern fringe: "I have heard that it's not polluted and not congested like the Walled City, but I would not like to live there, people are 'alienated', they do not relate to each other, they do not socialize […]". In contrast, she presents a positive account of Mughalpura saying, "… it's a place I would like to live in, because there people are just like us".

The mapping of the interviewee's cityscape indicates that a clear edge along the Canal Road divides the city space that she is familiar with and the space beyond her range of knowledge and access. The edge illustrates a clear binary vision on the city – nurtured in part from a perspective on social class and identity.

Lahore´s Cityscapes Shared from the Southern Urban Periphery
The last case study presents the interview insights and representations of cognitive maps (Figures 5 and 6) of two residents of Ashiana, a low income housing scheme in the southern periphery of Lahore. The low income scheme was launched in 2011 by the Punjab Government in an area dominated by private and public sector efforts for exclusive real estate and housing. Portrayed by its developers as a model and a pilot project for housing for the poor, the project – although still incomplete – is being replicated in other cities of Punjab and along Berki Road in eastern Lahore.

The first interviewee is a thirty-two years old female resident. Born in a village close to Muridke, she moved to Shahdara after her marriage ten years ago, before shifting to her current residence in 2012. In contrast with other interviewees, she demonstrated a profound knowledge of locations in Lahore and could easily point out different places, thereby emphasizing the roads and related infrastructure.

The representation of the cognitive map shows three main peripheral structural positions from which the interviewee experiences the city. They are (i) her previous residential area in the vicinity of Shahdara that gave her exposure to the Walled City and old Lahore; (ii) her current residence on the opposite side of the city (southern periphery), where she conducts her daily routine in a state of relative isolation from other city spaces and activities beyond household chores and (iii) an exclusive housing scheme about ten kilometers away on the western side of Defence Road, where she aspires to move in the future and which in her mind represents the ideal of a "good house" and "a good neighborhood". Main roads mentioned by the interviewee (depicted in Figure 5) together with the three structural nodes form a spatial grid along which the interviewee makes sense of the city. However, this well understood reference grid constructed by lines, roads and a few specific landmarks (mostly related to a network of relatives scattered all over Lahore involving visiting Raiwind Road, Shalimar Garden,

Samanabad, Ichhra, and Shahdara) is paralleled with a rather empty understanding of the spaces in between. This is for instance the case of Walton Road that she uses regularly to visit relatives in Shalimar

Figure 5

Representation of the cognitive map from interview 05. Source: H. Cermeño 2015, based on fieldwork interviews

Garden. On both sides along the road, the cognitive map shows areas she has never visited. Similarly, along Defence Road and Raiwind Road, beyond the structural understanding of the traffic ways, the spaces beyond the roads remain unexplored because of lack of respective experiences.

Based on her specific positionality in relation to the city, she anticipates processes of urban sprawl in the southern periphery of the city: "DHA [Defence Housing Authority] is expanding southeast and at one point will engulf the settlement". In her view, urban sprawl and expansion of DHA would benefit the settlement since residents consider DHA positively, as a sort of 'brand value'. She would refer to residents in DHA as 'educated' in contrast with areas like the Walled City or Mughalpura, that she describes in a derogatory way as "poor, illiterate, third class people, [and the area is] not safe". In contrast, Defence and DHA are described as "expensive locations only affordable for high class". Nevertheless, her ultimate desire, similar to the interviewee in the Walled City, is to move to Bahria Town, an exclusive housing scheme in the southwestern periphery of Lahore, that she imagines provides "…all facilities: cinema, shopping, security […] so much so that residents do not have to go anywhere in the city, everything is there…".

Thus, the cognitive map of the interviewee's cityscape suggests a grid construction and holistic view of the city based on experienced and imagined spaces. The production of locality here is the result of both imagination and aspirations that for instance determine the way she makes sense of different areas in the city, such as Bahria Town, Mughalpura or DHA and material constructions related to her experienced spaces of the city where she has lived or visited, for example Ashiana and Shahdara.

The last to be presented interviewee is a seventy-five year old man also residing in Ashiana. He shifted with his eight family members to a three Marla house in this location in 2012. Born in district Jalandhar in India before Partition, his family migrated when he was four years old to Faisalabad, where they lived until 1963. Later, they moved to Lahore where they rented a house in Dharampura. The financial compensation given by the government after Partition did not allow them to purchase a house initially. After having been employed for a few years in the

border police and then as a conductor in the public bus transport company of Lahore, he opened a small business in Ichhra and shifted with his family to a house in Clifton Colony in Allama Iqbal Town. His daily routine at that time included his travels to his office on Mall Road, then his journeys with the public transport that gave him a good perspective on the city structure of the 1970s. He would recall that at that time the Canal Road was the boundary between the city and the "jungle". The few existing housing schemes beyond Canal Road, such

Figure 6

Representation of the cognitive map from interview 06. Source: H. Cermeño 2015, based on field-work interviews
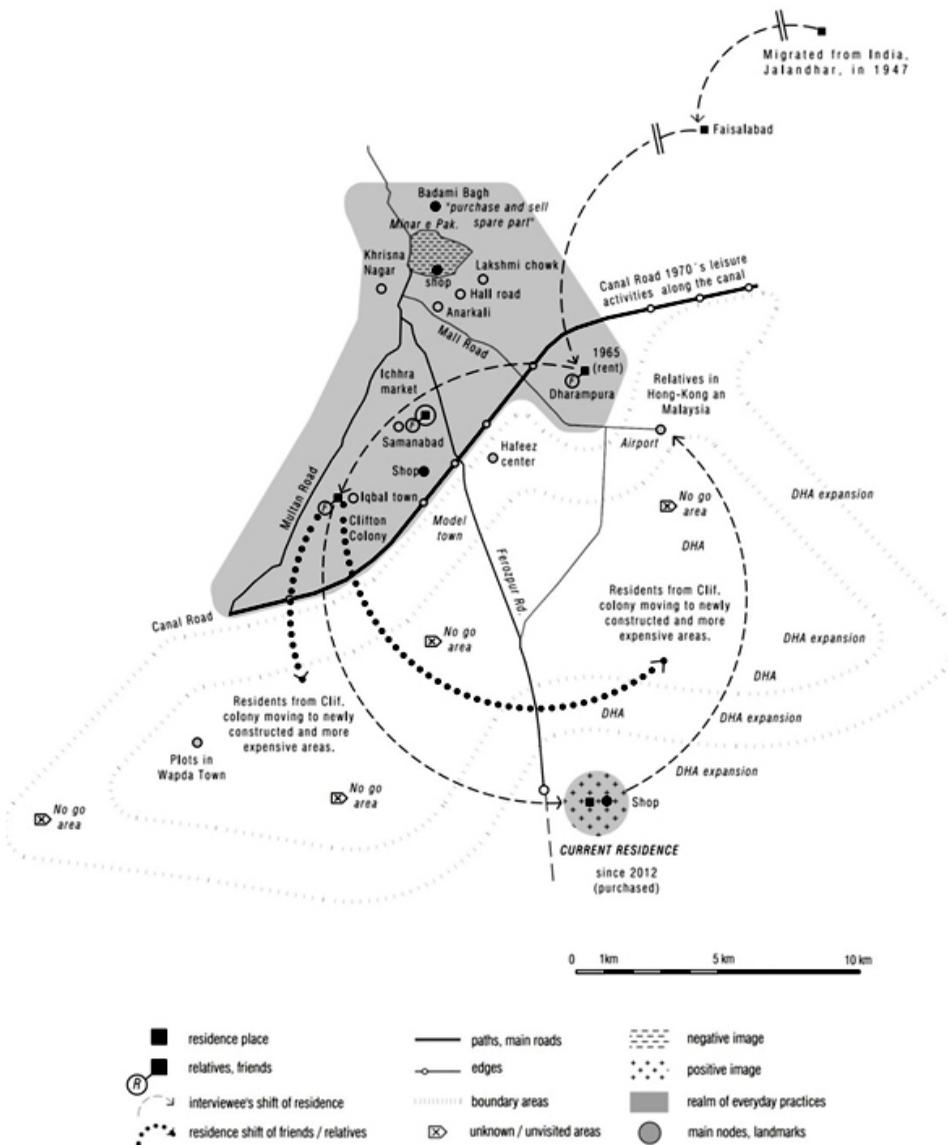
as Model Town, were surrounded by forests and fields then. His daily routine included managing the shop and purchasing in Ichhra Market and Badami Bagh next to Minar-e-Pakistan to acquire spare parts for his business. During the last thirty years, he has owned different small shops with more or less success in Ichhra and the Walled City and most recently in Ashiana.

In 2012, the interviewee and his family decided to purchase anew and move to a bigger house in Ashiana. They sold their property in Clifton Colony and plots in WAPDA Town for that purpose. From his current position, he has also witnessed the expansion of DHA, "half of Lahore seems to be owned by DHA […] soon this settlement will also become part of it", he claims. Those of his previous neighbors in Clifton Colony, who could afford it, have progressively shifted to DHA and similar housing societies on the southern fringe. In contrast, the Walled City, for instance, is not attracting new residents because of its congested space and its increasing commercialization: "It is becoming gradually the business center of the city, not any longer a residential area". The prospects of his family, as in one of the previous cases, are related to the fact that one of his sons lives and works abroad, in this case Hong Kong, and that the second son will follow soon.

The mapping of the interviewee's cityscape (Figure 6), which includes his different shifts of residence and past and present everyday routines in the city, highlights the boundary along the Canal Road which divides the realm of his access to the city and the spaces excluded from his everyday practices. Interestingly, spatial 'proximity' — residence in a low income housing scheme on the southern fringe — does not entail access to this part of the city. The current mobility patterns and future aspirations of the family members are represented in 'translocal' imaginaries which connect beyond national borders.

Reflections on Preliminary Insights from the Research Project

The case studies from different localities in Lahore showed that the individual residents navigate between 'translocal' micro-spaces that span lived and imagined urban grids and result in cityscapes. A comparative reflection of the case study vignettes allows identifying areas of agreement and disagreement by tracing residents' diverse practices of cognitive boundary-drawing and enactments of spatial exclusion.

▪ *Urban planning and development strategies affect the way the city is imagined, aspirations are generated and everyday life is experienced. The urban poor are less able to reconcile imagined vs. experienced spaces.*

The two first cityscapes traced in the first case study highlight that the Walled City development project has influenced the image of the city held by residents – both, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries – in the sense that it has contributed to the construction of new aspirations and provided the concerned residents with a viable strategy to achieve them. This is problematic because the individually constructed and collectively shared image of decay of the Walled City has remained despite the implementation of the project. The long-held desires of interviewed residents to improve their living conditions have given way to ambitions of moving out in gated societies and the know-how acquired by residents from their exposure to the project includes particular speculation strategies. Thus, the outputs of the project might ultimately enhance already existing processes of gentrification; many local residents might gradually move out of the Walled City. As a result, social networks are perceived to get increasingly disrupted. Individuals frequently refer to intimacy, friendship, attachment, routine and the importance of community in their everyday life. Most of these values are of contingent nature as they are produced and reproduced in the context of developmental projects and socio-spatial transformation in particular localities and beyond that in the urban geography of Lahore at large. Therefore, if for instance attachments are disrupted, the sense of belonging is also altered, producing a different imaginary.

Although development strategies in the Walled City affect both, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, the former gained the means to fulfill their aspiration and the latter can only still dream of moving. The first project implementation phase in a neighboring *mohalla* opened a virtual world of prospects for the non-beneficiary interviewee and caused her to imagine a host of potential possibilities while her de facto living conditions declined. She might be forced to move out with her family from their house in the Walled City, most likely to the urban periphery.

▪ *Current urban planning practices are largely promoting a city form and housing solutions that envisage to 'congregate' and 'segregate' urban residents in specific places which are often distant from commercial centers*

and job markets, under-serviced in terms of amenities and cut off from traffic arteries and access to affordable transport.

When residence in the Walled City, in *Katchi Abadis* or popular neighborhoods such as Shahdara, Ichhra or Mughalpura, becomes congested, alternatives for low income housing in these localities are simply non-existent. Those who can afford it can eventually move to newly constructed housing schemes, many of them gated communities, while the urban poor are confined to and 'congregated' in low income housing schemes mostly on the peripheries. Considering the insights from cityscapes from the second and third case studies, it can be concluded that current processes of urban governance and implementation of urban planning in Lahore resemble a centrifugal force for the urban poor, expelling them towards the far peripheries of the city where homogenous locales of urban poverty are endorsed. Processes of 'congregation' and 'segregation' can ultimately sharpen existing borders (boundaries in the making), thus, increasing internal homogeneity of a location or group and territorializing it in a certain place (Giddens 1986; De Landa 2006). Here, by definition and from a planning perspective, both settlements have been imagined and designed to shelter and 'congregate' the urban poor statically and immobile, and in so doing they are 'segregated' from the rest of the city. Hence, the already existing social and spatial segregation is being reinforced.

▪ *Imagination plays a key role in processes of spatial segregation and boundary making: residents engage in processes of 'identification' with specific 'localities' while developing a sense of segregation and dissociation towards others. However, a change of imagination and vision also bears the potential to alter the way the boundaries are configured; thus, it could be instrumental to contest social exclusion.*

Existing social and spatial segregation in Lahore is not only the result of current processes of urban planning and colonial and postcolonial antecedents; imagination also plays a key role for how residents make sense of the city in their everyday lives. The past memories of individuals, for instance, are key building blocks in the configuration of present cityscapes. This is most obvious in the second case study. It illustrates how the cityscape is constituted of past memories of the railway unions - politics and participation in social and political

struggles based in Mughalpura. In this particular case, the biographical experiences enabled the interviewee to develop a sense of 'difference' towards other areas in the city, in a process of 'identification' for the specific 'localities' related to Mughalpura and broadly speaking to the railways. 'Locality' here entails more than only a spatial dimension of the locale; it suggests that the production of locality is as much a work of the imagination as a work of material construction (Appadurai 2002, 34). Instead of referring to the term identity, the term identification is used here in order to emphasize its dynamic nature: 'identification' is not fixed and stable but a process of constant becoming in which people engage in a range of possibilities based on their flexible positionality. Identification processes always include a degree of dissociation and boundary-making by ignorance or explicit rejection of other localities in the city. In both interviews of the second case study, for instance, the past memories have left a positive image of Mughalpura, contrary to the image held by other interviewees in the additional case studies. Ultimately, the different perceptions of boundary-making towards Mughalpura overlap in the sense that all respondents agree in their boundary-establishment concerning this locality. While some 'identify' with the locality, others distance themselves from it in articulation, indicating cognitive boundary-drawing. The resulting perceptions and cityscapes influence the way residents relate to this part of the city. The specific ambivalent views on Mughalpura point to the potential scope of variance in sensitivity towards any urban locality.

Similarly, most of the interviewees supported the idea of an imagined boundary along the Canal Road indicating that they would never visit the area beyond it towards the southern periphery, where exclusive housing schemes and gated communities are spreading. These housing enclaves also demarcate boundary-drawing processes at the neighborhood level where gateways and ramparts enclose spaces and communities, thus signifying markers and practices of inclusion and exclusion amongst areas and communities. Interviewees' narratives also point to changing modes of everyday urbanism and contradictions in lived versus imagined dimensions of their life-world. In the first and third case studies for instance, interviews revealed this gap most clearly. While initially talking fondly of the memories of everyday practices that characterized everyday life in the Walled City and other neighborhoods, thereby mentioning a degree of mobility, diverse

social interactions and dense social networks, these accounts were contrasted with newly constructed aspirations of moving and settling in "private communities, away and in isolation from the city", at the expense of community life and social belonging but in exchange for amenities ("all facilities") and safety. If we recognize cities as dynamic configurations which are constituted by people's everyday practices that span distances through social interactions and imaginaries, the disruption of webs of social relations by increased boundary-drawing and hardening processes risk to disrupt the city at a more aggregate level. In this sense, exclusionary urban planning practices facilitate the emergence of an 'anti-city' or 'anti-urbanism' approach.

All cityscapes in the study show that individuals do not (and they are unlikely to continue to) inhabit only one particular locality over time, neither do they feel excluded or included solely from one locality, nor do they always have coherent and consistent aspirations and imaginations. The city can be seen as a complex of localities that form a grid along which people navigate. The lens of cityscapes suggests that the production of locality (and space) is the result of both imagination and material construction. Consequently, a change of imagination and vision could also alter the way the boundaries are configured. Since urban planning visions and their implementation impact on the way the city is formed and imaged, and how aspirations are generated among residents, planning would need to move towards creating a new image of the city that reconciles urban dwellers' aspirations with their everyday practices.

Implications for Planning and the 'City Vision Divide'

The conceptual lens of cityscapes has proven instrumental to explore how urban planning and development strategies impact on the way the city is imagined, everyday life is experienced by city residents and aspirations are produced. By building on ordinary people's narratives, the cityscape concept does not carry an inherent bias for a particular group of residents; it allows capturing the views of the urban poor just the same as of the middle class and the elites, depending on the sample. However, in the case of Pakistan, or Lahore in particular, the greatest potential of the cityscape lens derives from its unique ability to grasp imaginaries, everyday practices and needs of the socio-economically marginalized residents. Such insights can hardly be obtained by other

means. In comparison to regular quantitative surveys, the mapping of cityscapes does not merely provide knowledge about city dwellers' reactive strategies but allows considering future trends and dynamics for planning based on assessing the disconnect between any de facto situation and aspirations. The combination of material construction and role of imagination in the exploration of processes of 'identification', 'congregation' and 'segregation' shed light on boundary-making processes and dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. By tracing how residents navigate in the city, both physically and cognitive, their access to the city and their ability to benefit from urban resources may be analyzed.

Acknowledging the role that imagination plays in the configuration of boundaries and the construction of localities, all cityscapes presented in this paper illustrate that the city is closely related to movements and flows in public perception; static views of settlements and residence do not exist outside the planning realm. This finding affords some further reflections on how planning is inducing spatial boundary-making and thus, generating urban spaces of exclusion. The awareness about exactly these mechanisms is a first step towards avoiding the popular *laissez–faire* approach in the urban housing sector which has facilitated the development of numerous self-enclosed housing schemes throughout the city and especially on the southern fringes. Taken further, the shift in perspective from global 'grand visions' to cityscapes of ordinary residents could result in rethinking urban planning and design processes and lead to reimagining the city by doing equal justice to perspectives from above and below. Such a reimagining of the urban would entail efforts of looking at the urbanism of everyday life, understanding everyday practices of residents, exploring the flows and movements in the city, the resources from which residents do or do not benefit, and for developing new guidelines for more inclusive planning on the city scale and neighborhood level.

In this study, we have chosen to illustrate and hint at the potential of the cityscape approach by focusing on selective cases and few images of Lahore held by individual residents. The analysis presented here is preliminary and necessitates further engagement. A systematic expansion of cityscape-mapping to other areas of the city and to include more residents will yield more representative results and at some

stage will allow generalizing to speak of, for example, neighborhood-based cityscapes. The recording and accumulation of a larger number of individual mental maps will aid the creation of a public cognitive map of the city, pointing out areas of agreement and disagreement. Through developing this approach systematically further and with the appropriate degree of reflexivity, the derived cityscapes might reliably inform planning and policy about citizen's access to the city and ultimately about patterns of social and spatial exclusion. We suggest that the exploration of residents' cityscapes through empirical research and primary data collection should precede and inform all urban planning strategies.

Looking ahead, we urge the need to further explore the detected city vision divide: the gap between the cityscapes that reflect residents' everyday urbanism on the one hand and the top-down city visions translated into planning practices like master plans on the other hand. Studying residents' cityscapes as derived from everyday cognitive and material practices aids a better understanding of urbanization processes, changing dynamics of urbanism and processes of social exclusion. Theoretical discussions alone are no remedy for ongoing processes of social-spatial exclusion and gentrification. Planning strategies need to reconsider their inherent goal orientation and objectives by focusing on questions such as: whom do they aim to benefit, how and why.

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Stories of 19ᵗʰ Century Painters of Lahore

Kanwal Khalid, PhD

Artists are an integral part of society and have their own way of telling history through their art works. For present research, five paintings have been selected that represent a unique manner of telling the contemporary events of the troubled period of Sikh Rule. However, this has been done in a subtle manner and goes almost unnoticed. In the present research, the paintings will be studied not only from an artistic perspective but will also be dealt with from the socio-political and historical dimensions present in them.

An important contribution of Lahore, during the 19ᵗʰ century, was in the art of painting. The first fifty years of the said century celebrated a style that had acquired a distinctive characteristic of its own in the past centuries. This style continued till 1860s before it changed under the British government. The artefacts produced in those days had a true spirit of oriental arts with a special flavor of Lahore. British influence was yet to come and we experience the pure taste of the fine arts of the subcontinent.

Many types of paintings were executed in Lahore but the most important were miniature paintings, book illustrations, frescoes and ivories. They may be categorized in the following subjects: portraits, court scenes, equestrian figures, religious themes and domestic scenes. Most of the art produced was based on the portraits of Sikh rulers as they were the main patrons and liked to have their likenesses painted.

We have references of innumerable painters working in Lahore. Hukama Singh, Muhammad Bakhsh, Jivan Ram, Abdullah Painter, Muhammad Azeem, Mian Noor Muhammad, Kishen Singh, Bishan Singh, Lal Singh, Hira Singh, Habib Ullah, Qazi Lutfullah and many more. They were all painters of high merit.[1]

A very important name in the list is Keher Singh. He was a man of great talent. K. C. Aryan wrote a very interesting story associated with Keher

Singh of how he painted the picture of a dead sparrow and "coaxed a sweeper of Lahore court to place it on the throne of Ranjit Singh. The trick worked and Keher Singh was hired as a court painter".[2]

Darbar **Maharaja Sher Singh**

'*Darbar* (court) Maharaja Sher Singh' is an important painting of Keher Singh (Figure 1). Sher Singh was born in 1807 but Ranjit Singh refused to acknowledge him as his son. Later, at the insistence of his wife Mehtab Kaur and her mother Sada Kaur, he accepted him.[3] After the death of Naunehal Singh, Sher Singh was enthroned in 1841, defeating the party of Chand Kaur, wife of Kharak Singh. As Sher Singh came to power he confiscated the property of the Sindhianwala Sardars who had helped Chand Kaur. This made the Sindhianwala Sardars his mortal enemies. Sher Singh was killed in 1843 by Ajit Singh Sindhianwala.[4]

The painting shows Maharaja Sher Singh sitting in the middle and in front of him are courtiers of the Sikh *Darbar* including Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Dhian Singh, Wah Mian Singh, Sardar Itar Singh Kalianwala, Raja Hira Singh and Sardar Budh Singh Sindhianwala, Lehna Singh Sindhianwala and Ajeet Singh Sindhianwala. Behind these courtiers are two servants standing, holding falcons in their hands. The detail of these falcons is amazing. At the back of the Maharaja are three men who are servants and guards. The Maharaja

is heavily jewelled with a decorated crown (Figure 2). There is a sword resting on his shoulder. The courtiers are looking at him with an intent look in their eyes.

The location of the painting is Naulakha pavilion inside Shish Mahal, Lahore Fort. River Ravi can be seen outside the fort wall. The arches of Kamran's *Baradari*, minarets of Jahangir's tomb and a faint outline of the dome of Asif Jah's tomb are visible in the distance (Figure 3). Dark clouds are also seen on the top of Naulakha Pavilion where Sher Singh is sitting and if we look at the clouds very closely, we see five tiny angels throwing petals on the Maharaja (Figure 4).

This painting was painted after Sher Singh was murdered and these were the troubled times of Sikh rule and Lahore *darbar* was full of intrigues and treacheries. The courtiers were divided in many groups and every group was bloodthirsty for the other. Since the artist is a product of society, he cannot detach himself from his surroundings.

This rule applies on this painting where we see the cunning faces of some of Sher Singh's courtiers who were plotting his murder at that very moment. Each and every figure has been carefully observed and painted. Study of the faces of the characters painted reveals some interesting facts. Three people sitting in front of Sher Singh were not involved in the conspiracy of his murder and they were Bhai Ram Singh, Wah Mian Singh and Itar Singh. They are looking at the Maharaja quite innocently but the rest who were involved in the Maharaja's murder have a very intense look in their eyes. The artist has not only observed but also recorded this phenomenon very carefully by making the eyes of all the traitors wider than usual and showing the white in them (Figure 5).
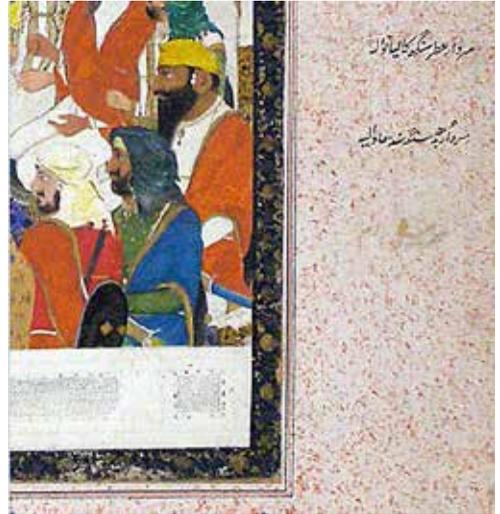
At the front is Dina Nath, holding a pen and paper. There are many utensils around and it looks as if he is making entries of these objects. Opposite Dina Nath is a servant with a tray of jewels in his hand. An interesting character to notice is a painter sitting beside Dina Nath, working on an incomplete painting of an equestrian figure (Figure 6). The face that we see is that of Keher Singh, the painter himself. We can identify him by the features that are the same, which can be seen in his self-portrait published by K. C. Aryan titled 'Keher Singh at Work' (Figure 7).

This painting is also a testimony that it was some special occasion on which Sher Singh is receiving gifts and a list of the objects is being prepared. To record the whole event, the court painter was asked to paint it, which is evidence of the fact that the artists were allowed to sit in the court to portray the royal personalities and events. An interesting point to notice is a painting on Keher Singh's knee that reveals an incomplete image of Maharaja Sher Singh on a horseback.

'Maharaja Sher Singh on a Horseback' by Keher Singh, 1842-46, Faqir Khana Museum, Lahore.

Maharaja Sher Singh on Horseback

This is the completed version of the painting that could be seen in '*Darbar* Sher Singh' (Figure 8). The Maharaja is wearing a helmet embellished with jewels and a plume, holding a spear in his hand that is going diagonally across the picture frame. He is wearing European style trousers indicating the direct influence of European officers in his court.

It was understood that the artists of the subcontinent did not sit with the model but painted with the help of memory. However, here in this painting, the artist Keher Singh is sitting in front of his model and painting him on the spot.

Bawa Lakh Ram

One museum that has never been associated with Keher Singh is the National Museum Karachi where one of his signed paintings has been discovered. It is titled '*Bawa* Lakh Ram'. On the lower side of the painting, an inscription says '*Baqalam Banda Keher Singh Musawwir*', that is, 'From the Pen of Humble Keher Singh Painter' (Figure 9).

The dominating figure in the middle is a *Bawa* (old gentleman), sitting near a burnt tree trunk, with a *Huqqah* (smoking pipe) and smoke is coming out of his lips. He has a dark complexion with long white hair and a beard. His head is covered with ash and there is a vermilion *Tilak* (dot) on his forehead. His naked body is draped with a wrap that has a beautifully colored design. He is a huge tall person as compared

Figure 9

Bawa Lakh Ram'
by Keher Singh,
1830-40, Karachi
Museum.

to the people around him. Two women are serving him. The features and the dresses of the women are of nomadic origin. Respect and fear are prominent on their naïve faces.

A man in the back is sitting on a tiger skin. His upper body is also covered with tiger skin and a red string is used as loincloth. He is holding some very colorful pieces of clothes and among them one can observe a small grotesque face painted in blue color. This is a strange element that shows that the painting has some kind of symbolic value.
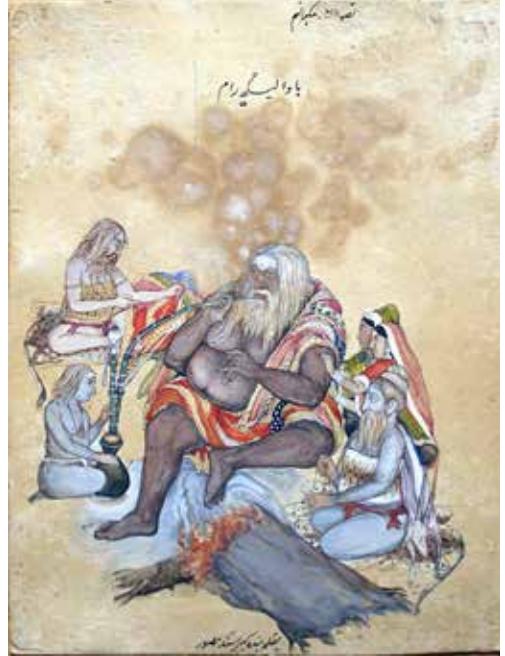
Although there are detailed accounts of a few other ascetics who belonged to Ranjit Singh's era published in various books[5] but Lakh Ram is not one of them. Initially, no reference was found but intense research revealed that a *Mahant* (chief priest) named Lakh Ram lived during Ranjit Singh's time. He was mentioned in the memoirs written by Faqir Sayyad Qamar ul Din who was the son of the Maharaja's right hand man, Faqir Sayyad Noor ul Din. These memoirs have a very interesting narration about *Bawa* Lakh Ram. Faqir Qamar ul Din narrates, "During the Sikh era, *Mahants* were very well respected and people provided them with the finest food. As a result, they would become very fat and extremely lazy. One such example is Lakh Ram who could not travel on anything but an elephant due to his extraordinary weight. One day this *Mahant* came to visit Faqir Sayyad Noor ul Din. He used the high platform of the house to get down from the elephant with the assistance of three or four men and even this small exercise tired him so much that it took a while before he could catch his breath.

When Lakh Ram could talk, Malik Saif ul Din, who was teaching the children of the Faqir family, asked the *Mahant*, "*Mahant ji* please tell me how much you eat?" First, the *Mahant* complained about the weakness

of his stomach. Then he said very sadly, "Early morning I can only eat two big *Koondas* (big containers) of curd with five *ser* (almost a kilo) of *Khand* (sugar). Since I cannot digest *Roti* (bread), so I survive barely by drinking *Yakhni* (stock) of two goats but in the evening I have some craving for sweets and six *ser Mithai* (almost 6 kilo sweets) is all I can eat." He felt sorry for himself that he could not drink milk late at night because of lack of appetite. At that time, Faqir Sayyad Noor ul Din heard about Lakh Ram's arrival and came to see him. He gave the *Mahant* five hundred rupees as he was leaving and all the men around him had to go through the ordeal of mounting 'one elephant on the other one'.[6]

The style of this painting is quite different from Keher Singh's other paintings that have been discussed earlier. From some angles it looks like a caricature of the main person, which supports the humorous description of the *Mahant* by Faqir Sayyad Qamar ul Din.

There are innumerable paintings in a number of museums of the world that were painted by the artists of Lahore. Unfortunately, most of them are not identified as Lahore paintings and are labelled either as unknown, Sikh, Punjab or Pahari paintings. Nobody knows about the artists but many of them are of high aesthetic value. Raja Dhian Singh and Maharaja Sher Singh is one of them.

Maharaja Sher Singh and Raja Dhian Singh

Sher Singh and Dhian Singh were two important members of the Sikh regime after Ranjit Singh. Dhian Singh was the second brother of the three Dogra brothers who rose to prominence in the court of Ranjit Singh. He was the father of boy favorite, Hira Singh. After the death of Naunehal Singh, Dhian Singh very strongly advocated the cause of Sher Singh and as a result was later killed by the same Sindhianwala Sardars who murdered Sher Singh.[7] This painting has been mentioned in the memoirs of

Figure 10

Maharaja Sher Singh and Raja Dhian Singh' by an unknown artist, 1840-50, Lahore Museum.

Faqir Khana archives. According to the records, every Sikh Maharaja received unusual gifts from the British Governor General, including clocks and watches. Here, Sher Singh has been given a watch and he is showing it to Dhian Singh who is looking at it with amazement. Both of them are sitting opposite each other (Figure 10). Maharaja Sher Singh's jewels are magnificent and he is wearing the Kohinoor on his arm. The background sky is of particular interest where three angels are partially hidden in the clouds (Figure 11). The style of these angels is a clear influence of Europe and the artist seems to be aware of the young science of perspective. They are showering red petals. A very peculiar thing to notice is a devil like figure camouflaged in the dark clouds of the sky. It is concealed so cleverly that it goes unnoticed unless someone looks closely. The same style of angels hidden in the sky can be seen in the painting titled '*Darbar* of Maharaja Sher Singh' previously discussed.

A Man with a *Huqqah* and Dancing Girl (The Amazons of Ranjit Singh)

A very interesting aspect of the Sikh *Darbar* were the Amazons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, which consisted of one hundred and twenty five very young and beautiful dancing girls. The maximum age for these girls was twenty-five and after that they were bestowed to some important courtiers. To maintain their numbers, new girls were brought from the cities of Punjab and Kashmir. They are mentioned in many books. W. G. Osborne also encountered these lovely warriors, "In the evening, a detachment of the Amazons arrived with music and fireworks".[8] He gave another detail that they used to appear on horseback, mounted *en cavalier*, for the amusement of the Maharaja.[9]

The attributes observed in this incomplete painting are of the same girls, which is one of the rarest depictions of Ranjit Singh's Amazons (Figure 12). They were trained to dance with shield and sword and here we can see a fragile looking girl trained by a huge man who is teaching her how to dance while carrying such heavy armour.[10] There is a smaller man who has two tambourines tied around his waist. Another musical instrument *Sitar* is lying in front of them. The painting is devoid of any details and it merely depicts the three characters. Musarrat Hasan described this picture as "an unfinished water color, small picture which must have been the forerunner to the many small water color finished paintings".[11]

Faqir Waheed ul Din in his book, *The Real Ranjit Singh,* gives details about these girls that at one time the *prima donna* of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's *Darbar* was a singer known as Billo[12] who also commanded the company of Amazons. There is also a description of their dress code by Faqir Waheed ul Din, "Their uniform was as follows: a lemon yellow *Banarsi* turban with a bejewelled crest; a dark green jumper over a blue satin gown, fastened with a gold belt; deep crimson skin tight pyjamas of *Gulbadan;* silk and a pair of golden shoes. As for jewellery, they wore a pair of gold earrings set with stones, a diamond nose stud, a pair of golden bracelets and a ruby ring on the middle finger."[13] These were

colorful creatures of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's *Darbar* and this sketch/painting is a rare depiction of those girls.

Paintings with such details are another dimension of people's history told by the artists. They have their way of communication and these stories are told in such an effective manner that they reach out to the spectator even today.

Endnotes

1   Musarrat Hasan, *Painting in the Punjab Plains 1842-1945* (Lahore: Ferozsons Private Limited 1998), 131.
2   K. C. Aryan, *Punjab Painting* (Patiala: Punjab University, 1975), 20.
3   F. S. Aijazuddin, *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1977), 80.
4   Surwarcha Paul, *Sikh Miniatures in Chandigarh Museum* (A Hand List) (Chandigarh: 1985), 61.
5   W. G. Osborne, *Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh* (London: 1840), 123-129.
6   Memoirs of Faqir Qamar ul Din, Archives of Faqir Khana Museum.
7   Surwarcha Paul, *Sikh Miniatures in Chandigarh Museum* (A Hand List) (Chandigarh: 1985), 62.
8   W. G. Osborne, *Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh* (London: 1840), 95.
9   Ibid., 96.
10   In one of his interviews, Faqir Saif ul Din, curator/director of Faqir Khana Museum, confirmed the identity of the dancing girl as one of the Amazon girls of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
11   Musarrat Hasan, *Painting in the Punjab Plains 1842-1945* (Lahore: Ferozsons Private Limited 1998), 66.
12   Waheeduddin, *The Real Ranjit Singh*, (Karachi: Lion Art Press 1965), 177.
13   Ibid., 178.

Life of the Meek: Shall They Inherit the Earth?

Khataumal Lohano, MBBS

It is quite unfortunate that the combination of societal customs, rigid interpretation of religious texts and patriarchy have managed to maintain hegemony over the marginalized sections of the society. People are generally not interested in either serious reflection or in engaging in debates that could ensure equality and social justice for all. Most of those who study in English language schools become so outward looking that they try to reach the Silicon Valley, or live a materially satisfying but disconnected life in Pakistan. On the other hand, those rooted in vernacular cultures become fatalist and inward looking; they fail to realize the simple yet subversive idea of equality. How does an ordinary, down-to-earth folk counter it with arguments when all he or she is concerned with is survival and livelihood amidst chronic poverty. In addition to this, the lack of opportunities also works as a catalyst in the process of 'otherization'.

This paper looks into the trials, tribulations and struggles of those who are 'otherized' with the help of life histories of three denizens of Tharparkar. All three selected cases are from different communities: Rahimdino Samoon is upper-caste Muslim, Chanpo is Bheel and Mahavji is low Kolhi. The latter two are considered low-caste and are part of the scheduled caste and tribes.

Rahimdino Samoon of village Karmali near Mithi was my class fellow in school in the late 1960s. He preferred to look after goats which was their family business rather than getting a government job. When he started rearing, then it was taboo to sell milk but only those survived who could sell milk otherwise they were not able to afford fodder during drought. He is now facing difficulty with coping the outbreak of disease in animals which is a routine phenomenon but during the 1970s, he was curing animals from faith healers who were not only easily accessible but also quite successful in their trade. He is now considered socially inferior as he is a blue collar due to livestock rearing. The white collars neglect him during social gatherings and family events. Due to climate

change, the monsoon is late and rain is scattered so *bajra*, which is the staple food, has been replaced by wheat flour which is imported from neighboring districts. There is no *chakki* (grain grinder) at the household level so gone are the days when eating *bajra* and butter at breakfast was the norm. The multinationals are purchasing milk at the rate of Rs. 40 per kg and the same milk is sold to the Tharis for Rs. 120 per litre after packing. This is how the market works - we sell on cheap rates but buy expensively. In the 1970s, he owned around 500 goats and sheep but he lost around 10 percent every year due to drought. In the meantime, they divided goats among five brothers. So now, it is difficult for them to survive. Mostly, he used to sell male goat-kids but during drought, he sold female goat-kids to purchase staple food. Due to the migration of Rajputs, the *kandi prosopis* (cineraria trees) have decreased and the goats do not have their favorite plant to eat. The Rajputs used to provide grains to both peacocks and the Manghanhars (a group of people famous for their classical folk music). Now the death rate of peacocks has increased, and the Manghanhars have left music and have become isolated and alienated instead of becoming part of the mainstream.

Chanpo Bheel had to migrate to Mithi from Phull Trai for the primary education of his children. Belonging to a lower caste he was unable to find work. Now he faces the same situation as that of ghost teachers in *katchi abadi* schools. No one invites him to attend *valima* (wedding ceremony) gathering due to his low caste. There is no electricity and water supply near his house. He purchases milk at the rate of Rs. 80 per litre, firewood for Rs. 200 per 40 kilogram and water tanker for Rs. 2000. He has very little storage capacity in his *chounra* (thatched hut). The above mentioned essential items are available in the village at no cost. His son also feels alienated and feels inferior as he sees others wearing school uniforms and trousers who reach school on motorcycles or *chingchi rickshaws*. Despite good rain levels (around 500 mm), Chanpo leased his land to fellows due to uncertain future and preferred to stay in town for other livelihood options and also to continue the education of his children. It is a new thing for him to cast a vote of his choice.

Mahavji is originally from Nangarparkar area of Tharparkar but lives in Mirpurkhas. As an observant person, he has been talking about the change in the attitudes and outlook of the younger generation and by extension, families and communities. These days no one offers boarding

and lodging and everyone is only interested in shaking hands. So he prefers to remain away from the homeland due to the paradigm shift in the attitude of Parkari relatives (the Parkari community is settled in Nagar Parkar, Tharparkar District and majorly consist of peasant farmers).

Before the 1990s, Tharis (capital city of Mirwah Subdivision (Mirwah taluka) in Khairpur District, Sindh) used to struggle to get the highest numbers in the matriculation examination to study in Hyderabad but now we have Thari Dalits who have gone to the USA on exchange programs and also attended the South Asian University in Delhi, India. Folk songs are still popular among the Tharis which are sung during the monsoon, funerals, marriages and the time of departure of daughters from parents' home. The womenfolk remember and sing hundreds of songs on cultural, social and economic transformation of landscape and life.

Every year in November, around 60% of people migrate to canal areas for waged labor and return to their homes in April. Although the economy of Tharparkar is agro-pastoral, it is slowly transforming to waged labor mainly after the advent of metaled roads. The myth has been shattered and people have started visualizing an agro-pastoral lifestyle as a menial job and so their choices have increased. Migration was common among those who were not multi-skilled and were suffering more due to drought, flash floods and earthquakes. The rain pattern has been disturbed due to climate change. Due to this, there is very little growth of *bajra* and the food security situation of people has been disturbed. Once very common, the stone mills (to grind grains) have mostly disappeared from homes. Malnutrition has increased among the marginalized, that is, women and children of Dalits. Before metaled roads, it was a taboo to sell milk but now milk is sold without any guilt and shame. In towns, there is now livestock rearing for harvesting and selling milk. It is indeed a quotable quote that in the good old days people used to consider milk and sons to be equal and not as a commodity to sell in the market.

Before metaled roads in mid 1980s, very few people dared to visit Thar. It can be said that only those who read the poetry of Bhittai ventured but now after seeing photos of Thar on Facebook, several thousand people visit Thar in August. These visitors have been boosting Thar's economy. Handicraft shops have been setup in towns and guest houses have been established to cater boarding and lodging of outsiders throughout

the year. Previously, it took two weeks to plough the land by camel or donkey but now the tractor takes only few hours to do the job.

There was a saying in Dhatki, popular fifty years ago, "*hovey bai ta panji bhai na ta khai kandi meen phae*" - if you have a sister then you will marry soon otherwise it is better to commit suicide. Earlier, divorce and separation were considered to be taboos but now norms have changed.

We used to receive newspapers – The Sindh Observer and others – by post and urgent messages by telegraph, now Facebook helps us share photographs and videos within seconds. Similarly, talking to people living abroad is easy, thanks to Skype and other such tools. Before Partition, Thar exported clarified butter and male kid of cow to Gujrat and importing silver and berry leaves from there. Male kids of goats were exported to Karachi and religious books in Sindhi on Hinduism and *phattakas* (crackers) on *Dewali* (festival of lights) were also imported.

Earlier, people especially farmers waited for sunlight and those who were rearing livestock anxiously waited for full moon because they needed moonlight for cattle grazing but now the latter has been transformed into a ritual. Now hundreds of men and women worship the full moon every month. The Rajputs who stored spikes of millet which was the staple food for decades, have transformed into *Vaish* (entrepreneurs) so peacocks and Manghanhars, who were under the patronage of the Rajputs, are at crossroads. So is the fate of folk lore. It seems inevitable that the children of the E-generation will explore local wisdom with the help of Google. With the advent of modernity, urbanized Tharis have no time to receive guests and chat with them from dawn to dusk. Everyone is busy in livelihood activities to bear daily expenses and purchase goods by multinationals which were not available earlier. I am of the opinion that if one is rearing livestock then it is better to organise it on the lines of a modern dairy farm which is easier to manage and maintain during drought. Traditionally, women received livestock in dowry but rearing it throughout life is not possible now.

If one migrates to towns and cities for education of children then one will have to face several teething problems in the early stage but later on after completing education the next generation would become part of the mainstream. The mainstreaming means leaving the vernacular languages, which is a requirement of the market but it is painful as doing so takes away the traditional knowledge and conventional wisdom.

Early Portrayal of Punjabi Women

Prof. Pran Nevile

There is reference in literature to portraits of women but none has been preserved from ancient times. Images of women are, however, a recurring theme with the miniaturists of both the Mughal Courts and the Rajput Kingdoms. The aim of this art was not realistic portrayal of persons but to depict the essence of human joy, ecstasy and anguish. These pictures highlight the elusive nature of a woman because of her seclusion from the public gaze and represent the exotic and almost unattainable beauty that the ideal woman was conceived to possess.

Women of the sub-continent have been considered among the most beautiful in the world and their charms have been celebrated by poets and bards down the ages. Among them, the pride of place has been held by Punjabi women, extolled for their extraordinary beauty, grace and seductive charm. Mughal kings and nobles sought them out to embellish their *harems* (the separate part of a household reserved for wives, concubines and female servants). There was Anarkali who became a legend as she allured Prince Salim with her grace and charm and even led him to stage a revolt against his father, the Emperor Akbar. Salim, on ascending the throne as Jahangir, built a mausoleum for Anarkali in Lahore and the famous bazaar of the city is named after her as well. Rana-Dil was another Punjabi woman who enchanted Dara-Shikoh, son of Emperor Shahjahan, who allowed him to marry her and she was granted the same privileges and honor as other princesses. During the later Mughal period, we come across Lal Kunwar, a dancing girl, whose glamour and charm became part of folklore. Her romance with Jahandar Shah, the grandson of Aurangzeb, was the most adventurous one. A consummate singer, her melodious voice, sparkling wit and vivacious dance movements endeared her to one and all. When Jahandar Shah ascended the throne, he conferred on her the title of Imtiaz Mahal, the Chosen one of the Palace, who also came to be known as the "Singing Empress".

Figure 1

Maharani Jind Kaur, wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, painted by a Punjabi artist at Lahore (c. 1860)

During the Sikh rule, there was a young Muslim beauty called Moran who enchanted the Lion of the Punjab - Maharaja Ranjit Singh - and became his favorite mistress. Then there was Maharani Jind Kaur, the youngest wife of the Maharaja, famous for her attractive looks and domineering personality. The surviving portraits of her bear testimony to her loveliness and eye appeal (Figure 01). According to Sir Herbert Edwards, she had more wit and daring than any man of her nation.

The institution of the *Zenana* (part of a house reserved for the women and girls of a household) and the *Purdah* (a veil or screen used to separate the women from men or strangers) had come into vogue with the advent of Muslim rule and it continued till the beginning of the 20th century. Punjab came under the British Rule in 1849. By that time the racial gulf between the ruler and the ruled was firmly established. Till the early decades of the 19th century, it was quite common for the British civilians and soldiers to have native women as their *bibis* or unofficial wives. This practice came to be frowned upon and virtually vanished by the time the British came to the Punjab.

Figure 2

Portrait of Bannu Pan Dei, wife of General Allard of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army, by a Lahori artist, presumably Imam Bux Lahori (c.1837)

Some European generals employed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh had married Punjabi women. There is a portrait of General Jean-Francois Allard's Punjabi wife, Pan Dei by a famous Lahore artist Imam Bux (c. 1837) (Figure 02). Sir Charles Metcalfe, one of the most distinguished and talented officers of the East India Company, lived with a Sikh lady he had met during a diplomatic mission to Ranjit Singh's

court in 1809. His romantic and unorthodox liaison with this Punjabi woman was then a common topic of gossip but Metcalfe made no secret of it or about his three sons from her.

As a great patron of performing arts, the 'Lion of the Punjab' maintained a troupe of 150 beautiful dancing girls and entertained his guests with nautch parties (Figures 03 and 04). W. G. Osborne, who accompanied Governor General Auckland to Ranjit Singh's court at Lahore, recalls in his journal an interesting

Figure 3

Nautch girl with musicians by a Lahori artist (c.1860)

conversation with the Maharaja about these beautiful girls. "How do you like them", asked Ranjit Singh, "are they handsomer than the women of Hindostan? Are they as handsome as English women?" Osborne replied that he admired them all very much and named the two he thought were the handsomest. Emily Eden, the sister of Auckland, who also

accompanied him to Lahore, was invited to meet the *Ranis* (queens). She was struck by their beauty and grace and wrote that "four of them were very handsome. Two would have been beautiful anywhere". Sher Singh's wife is also described as really beautiful, "petite, very fair with enormous black eyes and a pretty, clever expression". Henry Stenbach, a German soldier with the Maharaja, pays a glowing tribute to the valor, daring and fortitude of the *Ranis* of Ranjit Singh as they

Figure 4

Portrait of a dancing girl of Lahore by G. T. Vigne (c. 1835)

performed *sati* (the former Hindu practice of a widow throwing herself on to her husband's funeral pyre) on his death. In his vivid description of the event, he wrote: "His four queens dressed in their most sumptuous apparel, then followed, each in a separate gilt chair and before each of the queens was carried a large mirror and gilt parasol, the emblems of their rank. To the last moment of this terrible sacrifice, the queens exhibited the most perfect equanimity; far from evincing any dread of the terrible

death which awaited them, they appeared in a high state of excitement and ascended the funeral pyre with alacrity".

Until the middle of the 18th century, there was practically no visual record of the Indian population based on first hand observation. Travellers had carried home tales of kings and their hordes of dusky beauties dripping with pearls and diamonds in gauzy veils, lying in the *harems* or reclining in marble palaces or in royal gardens which bore little relation to reality. British artists began arriving in India from the 1760's onwards in search of fame and fortune. Most of them applied their talents to landscape painting, portraits of the ruling elite and Indian princes or historical events of imperial interest. There were some, both professional and amateur, who were inspired to depict the real India with its exotic people, especially the native women. Historian Robert Orme (1753) had already aroused their curiosity with his remarks, "nature seems to have showered beauty on the fairer sex throughout Indostan (sic) with a more lavish hand than in most other countries".

Ladies of the aristocracy in the cities, whether Hindu or Muslim, used to observe *purdah*. This practice was considered a mark of delicacy and refinement as well as an essential part of a respectable way of life. Hence, there was much curiosity about these ladies and their daily life. The *Zenana* was perceived as a world of mystery and intrigue. These women were inaccessible to artists until the beginning of the 20th century. Other women who came into contact with English *Sahibs* (a polite title or form of address for a man) were the *bibis*, the nautch girls and the female servants. In the countryside, however, they saw women young and old out in the open as rural life was generally free from *purdah*. Fairs, festivals and religious processions also offered the best opportunities for viewing native women from all classes.

Just as landscape painting was influenced by the British concept of 'picturesque,' the Western concept of beauty had its impact in the portrayal of native women. William Hodges, the first British professional artist to visit India in 1780, acknowledged that his portrayal of Indian women was based on ideas of classical beauty. He was in raptures after seeing village women at the *ghats* (s stepped well). He watched them bathing, observing that the younger women in particular delayed and lingered, "sporting and playing like Naiads or Syrens". He remarked that, "To a painter's mind, the fine antique figures never fail to present themselves

when he observes a beautiful female form ascending these steps from the river in wet drapery, which perfectly displays the whole person and with vases on their heads, carrying water to the temples".

The delightful sight of women at the river *ghats* inspired many a Company official and soldier to record his impressions in diaries and journals. Lieutenant Thomas Bacon was captivated by the grace and charm of women at the *ghats* of the Ganges and noted that they would make any Englishwoman envious. Bishop Reginald Heber of Calcutta (1823-26) was not immune to feminine charms and has made many references to pretty young women in his journal 'Narrative of a Journey'. Heber was also greatly attracted by their skin color and pointed out that "the deep bronze tint was more naturally agreeable to the human eyes than the fair skins of Europe". This view was also endorsed by William Huggins in his 'Sketches of India' (1824) as he wrote that "Indian woman's soft expression and delicate tournure of countenance make us forget the difference of complexions, or rather convince us that complexion does not constitute the desirable in a woman".

British artists have left behind many paintings and drawings of native women of different classes. There were also Indian artists patronized by the British. They imbibed some of the western techniques and adapted their painting style to meet the taste of their patrons. There is an enormous collection of their drawings in different museums and galleries in India and abroad and these are defined as 'Company School' paintings. The British officials and travellers employed local artists at Lahore and Amritsar to make drawings for them depicting the famous monuments of the Punjab and also the local people. Punjabi women, however, rarely figure in this collection.

Among the few British artists who came to the Punjab in the 19th century were G. T. Vigne, A. F. P. Harcourt, H. A. Oldfield and William Simpson. Their works chiefly depict the Punjab's picturesque landscape, historical monuments and such. Even Emily Eden, an accomplished artist who had an access to the Royal *Zenana*, did not portray any Punjabi ladies in her monumental work, 'Portraits of the Princes and People of India', which include magnificent paintings of Ranjit Singh, his sons and other Sikh personalities.

The Punjabi women observed strict *purdah* and would not expose themselves to any male artists, whether foreign or native. There are practically no true to life pictures of Punjabi women of the upper classes. There is one by a local artist of Maharani Jindan who had come out of the veil to become the regent of Duleep Singh. The only women who readily agreed to pose for artists were public entertainers and dancing girls. The Princes and aristocracy took pride in patronizing accomplished dancing girls and usually invited the ruling *Sahibs* to their dance parties. Those belonging to lower working classes agreed to appear before the artist in exchange for monetary reward. At times, the artists were able to sketch the village women as the *purdah* custom was not prevalent in rural areas.

It was observed that Punjabi women were particularly fond of jewelry. A variety of ornaments made by highly skilled craftsmen were worn from head to toe. Emily Eden describes in her journal the gorgeous costumes and ornaments worn by the royal ladies at Lahore. She wrote, "Their heads look too large from the quantity of pearls with which they load them and their nose-rings conceal all the lower part of the face and hang down almost to the waist. First, a crescent of diamond comes from the nose and to that is hung a string of pearls and tassels of pearls and rings of pearls with emerald drops". Their dress consisted of silver gauze veils, tinselly tunics and very tight trousers. An Austrian artist Rudolf Swaboda (1859-1914), commissioned by Queen Victoria to make portraits of her Indian subjects, painted a young Punjabi girl of the sweeper caste wearing jewelry (Figure 5). The most striking portrait of a Punjabi woman titled 'Native Lady of Umritsar', wearing a traditional rich costume embroidered with gold and loaded with jewels from head to toe, by a British artist Van Smith c. 1880, adorns a wall in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Figure 6).

Figure 5

Portrait of Munni Mehtrani of the Sweeper Caste, Lahore, painted by Rudolf Swaboda (c. 1887)
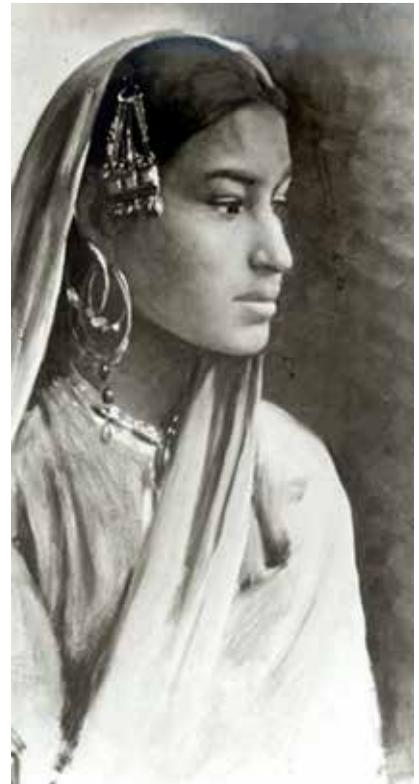
The women in the Punjabi hills were neither shy nor followed the *purdah* custom. They are described in contemporary accounts as tall and straight, free from guile and quite talkative with a good sense of humor. Among the British artists drawn to the scenic beauty of the Punjab hills and the local people were A. F. P Harcourt and William Simpson. Their portrayal of hill women captures their romantic image and charm. Little wonder, some *Sahibs* captivated by their alluring appearances and winsome manners took these 'daughters of nature' as their partners and chose to settle down with them in the exhilarating environs of the hills. Some British professional artists, notably William Carpenter and Simpson, did succeed in making sketches of women of the Punjabi hills (Figure 7).

After the advent of the camera, commercial photography rapidly replaced painting by artists. Here again when it came to Punjabi women, they did not want to face the camera wielded by a man. It was only after the spread of education and the emancipation of women in the 20th century that the old taboos of *purdah* and seclusion were slowly discarded. I recall that considering the market potential in this field, an enterprising Punjabi lady in Lahore set up a special photo studio for women in the late 1930s.

The romanticized image of Punjabi women has been vividly captured in the folklore and love legends of Punjab such as Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahiwal, Mirza Sahiban, Sehti

Figure 6

Portrait of a native lady of 'Umritsar' wearing a ull set of jewelry and a gold embroidered costume, painted by Van Smith (c. 1880)

Figure 7

Portrait of Hira Mal from Chini, Punjab hills, painted by William Simpson (c. 1860)

Murad, Balo-Mayia and more. Poets and bards have used superlative terms to describe the fair and wheatish complexion of Punjabi women. Others have sung praises of their chiseled features, lustrous eyes and robust health. That reminds me of an old Punjabi lyric '*Shishe nun taredh pai gayi, wal wondi ne dhyan jadon marya* (The force of her gaze drove a crack in the mirror as she looked at it while combing her hair). A mid-19th century folk song portrays a young maiden from the Maja region of the Punjab.

> *Maje di mastani jati/Amarsar navan chali/Amarsar jaiyai te ki/Kuj liahiye/ Mauli, dandasa, kangi patti/Patti oh maya- Maje/di mastani jati.*
>
> The happy go lucky Jat maiden is going to Amritsar for a dip in the *sarovar* or holy tank and from there she would do her shopping of red thread, dentifrice, comb and ribbon.

The romantic expressions used by young lovers contain the most extraordinary similes. The lover is addressed as *chan* (moon) or *sona* (handsome) and the beloved as *soni* (the beautiful or the gilded one). Some ardent lovers use the simile of a rose bud as in the following couplet: *Sun kudiye Punjab diye,/Dukh tainu kis gal da hai Soniye/Sun Kale gulab diye.* (Listen dear Punjabi beauty, what is troubling you my rose bud). Another noteworthy point is that the lover treats the beloved and vice versa as equal partners in the game of love as is evident from the expression of calling each other *Hani* meaning companion or partner.

The women's costume both in the rural and urban Punjab has been *suthan jhaga* or *salwar kameez* for over a century. In spite of various changes in fashion, this attire has not only survived but has now been universally adopted by women of all age groups throughout the sub-continent. The *chuni* or the head cover, which goes along with the dress, is the most graceful part of the costume.

Punjabi women were known to be fastidious about their personal appearance. They used traditional cosmetics and beauty aids for their hair, eyelids, eyebrows, teeth, lips and hands. For their face, they used a kind of pomade made of orange peels ground fine upon a stone and mixed with *besan* or a paste of wheat flour mixed with butter, cream and ghee. They used *kajal* (kohl) to add glamour to their eyes. There is an amusing couplet about it: '*Kinwain pavan main akhian ch kajala, ke akhian ch tu wasd*a' (How can I put *kajal* in my eyes because you are residing there).

Postscript

All these pictures are sourced from 'Beyond the Veil' and 'Marvels of Indian Painting' authored by me.

History of the Invisible: A People's History of the Transgendered Community of Lahore

Qaisar Abbas and Ghiasuddin Pir

E. P. Thomson famously described people's history as being a historical narrative which attempts to account for historical events from the perspective of common people rather than political leaders (Thomson: 1966, 279-280). Keeping this in mind but at the same time moving on from major events and looking at them from a change of perspective this paper has attempted to highlight some everyday forms of lived experiences of the transgendered communities. James Scott in his influential work *Weapons of the Weak* claimed that:

> "Most of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in the overt collective defiance of power holders nor in complete hegemonic compliance but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites". (Scott, 1985: 136)

The territory that Scott refers to is what the paper explores by stressing upon Levi-Strauss' notion that the simple opposition between mythology and history is not a clear cut one (Levi-Strauss, 1978). By incorporating folklore and myths along with what may be referred to as 'objective' history, the paper aims to show how history as subjective truth, inclusive of power relations and belief systems, is essentially made up of a series of discourses which lead to a phenomenological experience of the present. Three main things covered in this paper are 1) The manifestations of an important myth of the *Hijras* (transgender) and its connection with the present lived experiences of the community, 2) The State and hegemonic societies' creation of the *Hijra* identity and how it was seen affecting one of our informants and 3) A history of celibacy and its connection with the *Hijra* community and how the community uses it as a 'weapon of the weak'.

We begin with an origin myth of the *Hijra* community amongst the targeted sample during fieldwork. The main protagonist in the myth is Mai Nandi, also referred to as Bahuchara Mata and Murgi Mata in Indian society. The character of Mai Nandi has been described orally

during fieldwork in the Hira Mandi, Wahdat Road and Barkat Market area of Lahore along with a textual version of an origin myth narrated to Serena Nanda (Nanda, 1999) in Ahmedabad, Gujrat.

Mai Nandi, a *Khusra* (transgender) by birth was free from worldly desires; she was a *Faqir, Olia Allah* (holy person). People used to visit her and ask her to bring them peace and fulfill their desires. She used to sing and dance at public gatherings and wherever she went, people gave her offerings in the form of money. A man inspired, once approached her and asked if he could become her *Chela* (disciple), a request she accepted. After performing, upon returning home Mai Nandi used to give one third of her earnings to her *Chela* and kept two thirds herself. Feeling that the split was unfair, once the *Chela* demanded more money from Mai Nandi, over which she stood up and said "Should I reveal my genitals to show how different I am to you – This is why I deserve more money". This silenced the man and the split continued as before. With the passage of time, as Mai Nandi became older, people started taking more interest in the *Chela's* dancing and singing which again led him to believe that he deserved more of the split. Upon raising this concern he was yet again met with the same response. Notably frustrated and distressed, he left Mai Nandi and went to another village and then after much anguish decided to castrate himself. He did this with *Akk / Kikar* tree leaf and due to heavy bleeding he fainted. Local villagers found him lying on the ground, and treated his wound with ash and with the passage of time he recovered. After 40 days, he put on make-up, dressed as a woman and went to meet his *Guru*. Upon seeing the *Chela* and inquiring about the reasons for his long absence, the time to split earnings came again. With the money laid down in front of her, Mai Nandi started towards making the same cut. The *Chela* declared with a confidence till now not expressed, that today the earnings shall be split equally. Again, the goddess revealed her genitals, however, was shocked by the *Chela*'s response. The *Chela* took off his clothes and revealed his castrated genitals. "I am just like you now" he proclaimed. Upon witnessing that his penis and testicles had been castrated, the goddess went into turmoil and asked for the ground to open up and swallow her. As the goddess was being sucked into the earth she cursed the *Chela* and left him with some final words. "There will be millions of you around but there shall only be one in a thousand of me."

A twist to the end of the myth was given by another informant in whose version, the last words of Mai Nandi to her *Chela* were, "*Sing, dance and earn*".

This myth outlines some important factors leading towards *Hijra* identity formation of the present: 1) Like the majority of origin myths, this myth has an etiological function, that is, it explains a puzzling phenomenon, 2) It creates two types of hierarchies – one relating to the biological features of the *Hijras* and the other relating to the *Guru-Chela* relationship and 3) It determines division of labor in society. This myth explains the social order and organization of Pakistani *Hijra* community. Firstly, they live in tightly knitted *Hijra* groups. The individuals living outside are "pulled" or "pushed" towards the community due to several socio-economic factors. These communal groups are their safety and survival places from discrimination, hate and hostility. As far as hierarchy is concerned two types are pointed towards: biological features and *guru-chela* relationship. Our informant described three kinds of *Hijras*:

1) The first place belongs to people who are *khusras* by birth and have deformed genitals,

2) Second are those who have a penis and male body but have feminine souls, that is, their "souls are trapped in the wrong body".

3) Third type of *khusras* are males but have disguised themselves as *Hijras* (for several reasons the foremost being the economic one.)

In her ethnographic study on Pakistani *Khusras*, Pamment (2010:30) also finds the first type as "true" *Khusras* as portrayed by her interviewee and Hahm (2010) also refers to them as *"asli"* (real). The ones that castrate themselves are considered infidels as they go against the will of God. This is the popular perception amongst *Hijras* in Pakistani society.

Secondly, all *Hijras* live in a *Guru Chela* structure. One *Guru* can have many *Chelas* but a *Chela* can have only one *Guru* at a time. *Chelas* can change their *Guru* but this is not considered a respectful act. A ritual is performed for *Guru-Chela* binding – a sum of Rs 125 is given to the *Guru* by the *Chela*. The *Guru* does not work but teaches *Chelas* the necessary skills needed to earn a livelihood through singing, dancing and *vadhai*

(alms) collection whilst providing them with a roof over their head, food and other such necessities. In this way the *Guru* creates an alternative family. It is the duty of *Chelas* to work and give a proper share of their income to the *Guru*. All *Hijra* community members interacted with were seen to have been part of this particular social structure.

The second version of the myth also sets the nature of the work of *Hijras* that is "sing, dance and earn". Singing and dancing at birth and wedding ceremonies is a widely practiced work of *Hijras*. In contemporary times, they also perform at other private functions and celebrations and are indulged in prostitution and begging as well. The marginalization of *Hijras* at the hands of modernity and the moral terror of Islamized society are the reasons behind prostitution and begging (Frembgen 2011). Further details on this particular issue can be seen in the works of Pamment (2010), Frembgen (2011) and Taparia (2011).

In Indian mythology, the character of Mai Nandi has been replaced by Bahuchara Mata or Murghi Mata (Figure 1) who is the virgin goddess for both Hindu and Muslim *Hijras*. For *Hijras* the "goddess is patron and protector" (Shah 1961:1327, cited in Sheikh 2010:84). There are several versions of myths associated with Bahuchara Mata, yet nearly all of them depict gender transformation and/or bodily mutilation.

According to one myth she became a goddess as a result of protecting herself from rape. She cut off her breasts when a bandit named Bapaiya attacked her while she was traveling with her two sisters. She cursed him resulting in him becoming a eunuch. Hearing this, the bandit begged for mercy, which she granted, ordering him to build a shrine (*sthanak*) for her at the spot. He would then be blessed, and if a naturally emasculated man arrived at her shrine and lived in women's clothing and sang her praises, he would certainly reach her favor. She [Bahuchara] then died (Sheikh 2010:89). In another version of the myth a king requested the goddess for a son; a wish she granted. However, the prince born as a result was impotent. Through a dream, the goddess ordered the prince to remove his genitals, wear women's attire and be her devotee, which he did. Following the myth, *Hijras* in India emasculate themselves in order to identify themselves with the goddess and become her devotees for life. In one story, Bahuchara Mata blesses a princess with a male body that saves her lineage (Sheikh 2010:94).

Another version states that there was a prince whose parents married him to a beautiful goddess (namely Bahuchara). However, the couple never had sex and the prince would disappear every night. His wife followed him one evening and witnessed him having sex with men. Enraged, she castrated him and declared that such men as her husband had to be emasculated as a condition for a better rebirth but she also said that if those same cursed men worshipped her, she would protect them (Qualia Folk 2011).

A Muslim association with Bahuchara Mata is narrated through a story in which once the Muslim army of Sultan Allodin II while destroying the temples in Gujrat came to Bahuchara's temple. They saw many chickens (as pets) at a temple. The Muslim soldiers ate them. At this Mata cursed the soldiers and the chickens tore apart the bellies of soldiers and came out alive. (Desai 1937:21 cited in Sheikh 2010:92). The army was destroyed which worried the Sultan, who came to Mata to seek her forgiveness. The Sultan promised not to destroy the temple. Upon which the Mata raised the dead soldiers from the ground, bringing them back to life but asked them to keep a mustache on one side and wear bangles on one arm (Bookseller 1919:9 cited in Sheikh 2010:93). The leader of the army, Kamal was put into the personal service of Bahuchara.

In all these versions of the story, the concept of celibacy, particularly male celibacy achieved through removal of genitalia and the transformation of gender are repeated. However, this cannot be generalized since the Mata herself in one version of the myth diminishes her sexuality by cutting off her breasts and blessed a princess with a male body (Qualia Folk 2011).

Bahuchara Mata is the patron deity of *Hijras* in India. She provides them spiritual legitimacy in Indian society. *Hijras* hold powers to bless male children and curse people by making them impotent. They draw those powers from Bahuchara Mata after having gone through a rite of passage, that is, a ritual of emasculation which proves that they are her

true devotees and authentic *Hijras*. (Nanda 1999; Jaffery 1998; Sheikh 2010). This ritual of emasculation is called "Nirvan" meaning "re-birth" (Ibid). In India, the individuals who do not undergo *Nirvan* are looked down upon (Taparia 2011:180). The concepts of intersexuality and male-female characteristics in one person are not unusual in Hindu mythology, though different interpretations can be contested (Hahm 2010:11). Ram (acknowledged and blessed intersexual), Vishnu and Krishna (share male-female elements) and Shiva even after self-castration not only possessed male-female features but became the symbol of fertility and eroticism (Jaffery 1998:31, Nanda 1999:13-20 cited in Hahm 2010:11).

At the level of celibacy, the myth of Bahuchara has similarities with the myth of Mai Nandi; however the difference is the self-initiated act of the removal of genitals. In the Pakistani version, the authentic *khusra* is the one who is born "this way" (by God's will). The removal of genitals is considered a sin amongst Pakistani *Hijras*. The foremost reason is that in Islam castration is forbidden. It is also against the state law. There is evidence that some *Hijras* pass through the process of emasculation in Pakistan as well (Pamment 2010:30) but it is kept secret. In their struggle to survive, Indian *Hijras* (both Hindu and Muslims) take refuge in religion by identifying with Bahuchara Mata, Shiva, Rama and Arjuna. Similarly Pakistani *Hijras* associate themselves with *Harimain Sharifain*, Islamic Mughal Courts and celibacy tradition among Sufis which will be discussed in detail in later sections.

One of our informants, after narrating the Mai Nandi Myth, spoke out on the idea of what a *Hijra* was. Surprisingly, however, there was a complete rejection from the informant's point of view of having anything to do with the *Hijras.* "I am not one of them", she exclaimed. At one level she clearly was one of them to an outsider, however, she explicitly claimed that she was not. The question then arises, what does "one of them" really mean? What is the identity of "them", which was being overtly rejected by our informant? This is different from what is normally noticed when a member of a misrepresented group is asked about who they are. The more common response is that "yes, I am one of them; now you see how misinformed you were". Anecdotally speaking, responses of the latter type have been given by transgendered personnel from the upper classes, as well as the few that still work as domestic servants in households. However, all responses, whether they revolve around not being "one of

them", that is, rejection or "public misrepresentation" revolve around a set identity of what a *Hijra* is, either you embrace it, or reject it. The space to change it seems is missing.

In order to unpack this issue, the *Hijra* identity construct has to be studied; or rather the *Hijra* label which then attaches a sense of identity which has to be studied together with the psychological impact that this has on the *Hijras*. We find ourselves in a situation that the *Hijras* lifestyle, just like everyone else's is being formulated through the social, cultural and economic capital they acquire. However, the space that society provides them obviously shapes their values, dispositions and lifestyles (Bourdieu: 1987). Historically speaking, the Mai Nandi/Bahuchara Mata myth, along with State and societal patronage/marginalization (depending on the way you look at it) of *Hijras* as artists, artisans, dancers or even beggars has manifested the common labels associated with the *Hijras*.

A prominent historical example of State level marginalization took place in the British colonial era. In a recent interview given to Dawn News (May, 2015), Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, a prominent transgender activist and the first transgendered person to represent the Asia Pacific region at the UN in 2008 states, "The community has been marginalized by the British; we've had 250 years of complete non-existence". She goes on to state that "Before the Britishers came, we were at least treated with dignity and respect in society and we were discriminated against Tribes Act". Laxmi is referring here to the Criminals Tribes Act of 1871 which categorized the *Khawaja Sara* (transgender) community with the "habitually criminal" groups such as thugs and additionally the British criminalized revelation of genitals publically (Ibid). This marginalization took another turn when over the suspicion of kidnapping or castrating children, *Hijras* were marked as "dangerous outlaws" in the Criminal Tribes Act in 1871 (Hahm 2010: 13-4). Even public appearances in female clothing or the possibility of being seen in a woman's dress from a public place and acts of their public singing, dancing and exhibition were liable to arrest and imprisonment for two years or fine or both (Ibid; Pamment 2010:35). They were not allowed to share gifts, making testaments or adopting a child and *Chelas* (Jaffrey 1998: 231-3, Reddy 2005:26-7 cited in Hahm 2010). The transfer of land from *Guru* to *Chela* was not allowed. Provision of food and other things by households to them was also banned in certain areas (Nanda 1999:50-1). The criminalization of *Hijras*

and the removal of benefits and squeezing of cultural performance space at the hands of British effects the present day marginalization of this community. *Hijras* were deprived legislatively from the lands which they did not inherit through blood relations (Reddy 2005:27 cited in Hahm 2010:13-4). Furthermore, Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, criminalized sexual activities "against the order of nature", that is, any form of homosexual activity. Once formalized and made into laws, there came a perpetual decline in the *Khawaja Sara* communities' existence within the public domain leading towards being marginalized and led in many ways to the invisibility that this paper refers to.

Examples such as this fundamentally shape what people are at present and can be in the future. Society historically has always acted as the normative agent through which all of us are not merely expected to act but by and large do act. Due to this, our informant uses the *Hijras*' stereotype, for example, begging on the streets, entertaining for money, indulging in prostitution and such other acts as a frame of reference.

A rejection of identity solidifies the societal identity construct. This is due to the fact that one automatically claims that the particular identity exists but one is not part of it; there is no space to appropriate that identity. What we feel is at play here is the Lacanian notion of the "Big Other" (Lacan 1962). What is seen in the informant's case is a rejection of the "Big Other". A "Big Other" in Lacanian psychoanalysis is a product of self-consciousness. According to Lacan, a "misunderstanding" takes places (*méconnaissance*) which constitutes the Ego, that is, the "me" (*moi*) becoming alienated from itself through the introduction of an imaginary dimension to the subject (Ibid). What this means, is that we are in a constant state of reflexivity, that is, relentlessly self-conscious of who we are – analyzing our moves. However, at one level there is an object-label that we have to live up to, on the other resides our agency. This is something that we all find ourselves doing, for instance, we find ourselves constantly thinking of ourselves in terms of objects, for instance, "What should an Anthropologist do?" to get some footing rather than merely thinking along the lines of "What should I do?". Similarly, our informant fights for agency in her rejection of the society's imposed *Hijra*–construct, which is passive and does not resist the categorization of transgendered people. However, using this as a frame of reference is something she cannot escape.

History of Celibacy in Islamic Tradition and its Connection with the *Hijras*

Another important feature of the *Hijra* identity construct is the notion of celibacy. When asked about their origin and connection with Islam, Pakistani Muslim *Hijras* proudly explain that no one is allowed to enter the *Ka'aba* except them. They also connect themselves with the Mughal courts where they were treated as honorable members while performing several duties. According to one of our informants, the reason for this is that *Hijras* have transcended from worldly desires, making them pure and allowing them to enter the *Ka'aba*. The same query was put forward to a *Mutawali* on a shrine in Kallar Kahar who replied that *Hijras* are pure and *paak* as God Himself has created them in a way that they have no worldly desires at all. They are actually *Faqirs* and *Walis*.

To elaborate his answer he gave an example of a peacock. The peacock is the only animal/bird whose feathers are placed in the Quran, as the peacock is considered *paak* (pure). Similarly, *Hijras* are *paak* and only they have access to the *Roza Paak* (Prophet's Tomb) in Madina. *Hijras* used to clean the *Roza* from inside and put water there.

In this context, *Hijras* in Pakistan identify themselves with the *Mukhanath* (Arabic word which is used for a man who shares the characteristics of a woman; an effeminate man) of *Harimain Sharifain* (The Two Sanctuaries – Mecca and Madina) (Jami 2005:7) which gives them a status of piety and holiness among people and grants them spiritual powers of blessings and curses. The fact of *Hijras* being custodians of Prophet's Tomb and the *Ka'aba* has been validated by several academics including Bashir (2007:135-145), Pamment (2010) and Scholz (2001). From the mid of 12th century, the tomb of Prophet was guarded by 40 eunuchs. Through affiliation to the Prophets 'shrine, they became members of the venerated family (Bashir 2007). Eunuchs are still found at both sites (Scholz 2001: 200, cited in Hahm 2010:13). Marmon provides two reasons of appointing cunuchs to religious sanctuaries: closeness of eunuchs with royal powers and maintaining order in sanctuaries by being able to cross the boundaries between male and female.

Hijras largely identify themselves with *Sufis* and *Faqirs*. In his anthropological research on *Hijras*, Frembgen (2011) also states that

"*Khusre* classify themselves explicitly as *Faqirs*". They regularly visit shrines of Lal Shahbaz Qalander, Bari Imam, Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah and others (Ibid). During fieldwork when contacting an informant from Heera Mandi, once she was at the *Urs* of Shahbaz Qalander and at another time she was attending the *Urs* of Baba Farid.

There might be diverse reasons behind the identification of *Hijras* with *Sufis* and *Faqirs*; however, the foremost is the practice of celibacy among various *Sufis* in denying all the worldly things. Bashir (2007:134), exploring the celibacy tradition in Islamic thought identifies three streams of celibacy practice: first "celibacy as a component of ascetic practice among *Sufis*", second "celibacy as a form of religious and social protest among antinomian *Sufi* groups in the later medieval period", and thirdly, forced celibacy to gain political power in medieval Islamic societies. The first type of celibacy is a norm based on personal choice among *Sufis* and other Muslims and is practiced on temporary basis to renounce material concerns, curbing sexual desires and avoiding family. For example, whilst fasting during *Ramzan* and *Hajj*, temporary celibacy is practiced.

The second type of celibacy was practiced by antinomian *Sufi* groups from the lands of North Africa to India as a radical critique of other Muslims and *Sufis*' lifestyles who devoted their life to material gains by becoming power brokers in the religious, political and economic life of societies throughout Islamic lands; they strived for a metaphoric death of the material world before their physical demise. In doing so, they rejected all social practices and gave up bodily as well as other material desires. Celibacy tradition has influenced people throughout the world. Some of Haydari *Sufis* even castrate themselves or pierce their penises with irons to stop the possibility of intercourse. In the subcontinent, there has been a strong *Sufi* tradition and most of the radical *Sufis* and *Faqirs* have been celibate. Mushtaq Soofi writes that Madhu Lal Hussain, Bulleh Shah, Mian Muhammad Baksh and Warish Shah all share the feature of celibacy. Soofi argues that the reason for celibacy and avoiding the family was their philosophical position against the unjust and biased social order. Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Sachal Sarmast and Shah Abdul Latif also lived as celibates. Data Sahib also preferred celibacy over marriage in his book *Kashf ul Mahjub*. (Bashir 2007:138). By practising celibacy and taking a position against the social order,

these classical poets of *Sufi* and *Faqiri* tradition stand in the same row as antinomian *Sufis*. Due to this very practice, *Hijras* of contemporary times identify with these *Sufis* and *Faqirs*. This identification elevates their status in a hostile socio-political and religious environment.

In order to understand the association of *Hijras* with the *Harimain Sharifain* and Mughal courts, the third type of celibacy needs to be discussed. Forced celibacy was used for political arrangements of Islamic states starting from 8th century to the Mughal period. The Islamic empires forcefully castrated slaves mostly with African backgrounds and employed them on various administrative and other posts including the protection of *Harems*. Castration and making them eunuchs was a way to gain more loyalty by disconnecting them from any form of present or future family ties.

> "It is noted already that there was widespread castration of slaves in Bengal during Mughal Emperor Jahangir, which had become a widespread practice across India. It appears that since Bakhtiyar Khilji's conquest of Bengal in 1205, it had become a leading source of enslavement and castration for supplying eunuchs. On his way back to Venice from Kublai Khan's Court, Marco Polo visited India in the late 13th century; he found Bengal as a major source of eunuchs. Duarte Barbosa in the late sultanate period (1206 - 1526) and Francois Pyrard in the Mughal period (1526 - 1799) also found Bengal as the leading supplier of castrated slaves. Ain-i-Akbari (compiled in 1590s) also affirms the same. Some 22,000 individuals were emasculated in 1659 in Golkunda during Aurangzeb. Said Khan Chaghtai of Jahangir's reign owned 1,200 eunuchs. Even kind-hearted Akbar employed eunuchs in large numbers. …. Marco Polo (1280s) and Duarte Barbosa (1500s) witnessed large-scale castrations in India; the same was occurring in the reign of Abkar (d. 1605), Jahangir (d. 1628) and Aurangzeb (d. 1707)". (© 2013. Secular African Society)

Castrated slaves or eunuchs have remained on key posts of various dynasties such as Iranian Safavids (1501 – 1722), Ottoman *Harems* and Indian Mughal courts (1526-1857). Eunuchs had been given high education and training to serve the elite families (Bashir 2007:144). At the price of their service, they received material privileges and comfortable life. Some of these eunuchs received high ranks in the court.

As described earlier, Pakistani *Hijras* connect with their times in Mughal courts and refer to the period as a golden era. It is also a popular perception even among academics that today's *Hijras* are descendants of those eunuchs (Hahm 2010:12). In India, eunuch slaves were brought by the masters who built Islamic Empires, namely Delhi Sultanate (13th century) and the Mughal Empire (Taparia 2011:170). European travelers have also witnessed the eunuchs among the ruling families of medieval India (Bernier 1989; Tavernier 1977 in Taparia 2011:170). The rulers castrated young slaves to eliminate their reproductive capacities and ensure their unconditional loyalty to masters. In Mughal courts, they were called *Khawja Sara* (today's eunuchs also want to be called *Khawja Saras*) and wore male clothes and turbans and served and guarded the ladies in the courts (Ibid, Nanda 1999). They performed prestigious roles and the chief eunuchs linked to queens were very influential (Knighton 1790 cited in Jaffrey 1998:144). Being the lovers of kings and princes, some of them received enormous gifts and money and "were buried in lavish bejeweled tombs" (Bernier 1656-68 cited in Jaffrey 1998:56, Hahm 2010). Malik Kafur, a general in the army of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) who won many riches for the kingdom was a Persian eunuch (Lal 1995 cited in Pamment 2010:37). Ikhtiar Khan, a lawyer in the service of Jahangir and Firoz Khan, founder of Firozabad in Akbar's era were also eunuchs (Sharma 2000:31 in Pamment 2010:37). However, with the decline of the Mughal nobility, their esteemed positions also weakened.

In this context, it can be understood that the association of eunuchs with *Harimain Sharifain* and to quote Nietzsche (1988) their 'monumental history'/golden past in the Mughal courts was arguably a product of political arrangements. However, these historic associations grant them a sacred position in contemporary Pakistani society and provide them with what James Scott refers to as "Weapons of the Weak". These everyday forms of resistance, manifested through myths, stories, singing and dancing provides the *Hijras* with space, allowing them to critique the present society in a much more visceral and palpable way than any ideological discourse has till now.

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People's History through 'Trees'

Saba Samee

What classifies as 'people'? Are 'people' only humans or can any living entity be treated as 'people'? Would a human narration developed through observing the historicity of any object be acceptable as 'people's history'? For me, trees became the 'people' for this paper. These silent yet'living entities are the co-author of my paper and it is to them I dedicate this narration.

Since the beginning of time, the most important thing for human survival was 'Trees'[1]. The analogy of a tree commonly referred as the forbidden tree[2], the tree of temptations or the tree of eternity and the interaction of our ancestors with it became the reason for humans to inhabit this world. Trees are witness to our desires, our weaknesses and ultimately our survival. Whenever humankind needed something, trees were there to deliver. They silently provided us with food, cloths, shelter and when we demanded more, like medicine, transport and paper, the tree was there to provide. These trees gave their entire body for our consumption, even their breath - a rich source of oxygen - purified the air for us to breathe and stay alive.

This cannot be the entire story of our trees. Likewise, the botanical and popular names of trees, categories and images of its fruits, leaves and seeds and the medicinal uses of various trees, also do not provide the entire story of a tree. This is information we need and so we tend to propagate it more. This research, however, is not about documenting trees but an exercise to investigate the interaction between trees and humans and to understand the mythological stories of these trees created out of our own curious minds. The urgency to understand this dawned upon me from the city of Hiroshima and its surviving radioactive trees.

During a workshop in Hiroshima[3], our group had the fortunate chance to meet with one of the survivors of the A-bomb blast along with the representative of the Green Legacy Hiroshima[4]. Sharing her

devastating experience of the blast and life after, she told us that she was 8 years old when this happened; her skin bears the black marks from the black acid rain which poured down minutes after the blast. She married, had three healthy children and assisted her husband in setting up the collection for the Hiroshima Peace Museum, developed terminal cancer due to radiation exposure and now has set the record for the longest living survivor, reaching the age of 78. She has been the custodian of the story of the A-bomb blast for 70 years and after her death, the 'Survivor Trees' will take on this responsibility.

This expression of trees taking on the responsibility of telling your story was what inspired me to look into my own trees, the trees of my city Lahore. Curiosity led me to interact with Nassrine Azimi, co-founder and representative of the Green Legacy Hiroshima and former regional director of United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Japan. I found out that at the time of the A-bomb blast, the city of Hiroshima and its surroundings had 86.3% green coverage. After the horrid incident, only 170 tree trunks survived, their outer bark, branches and leaves completely burnt, the tallest trunk measured was 6.4 feet. These trees were within 2 kilometer radius of the A-bomb hypocenter. The trees started to germinate again only after 2 years. This was the land for which it was declared that nothing will grow for a hundred years. These trees with their lighter green leaves and brown branches upon a blackened fragile trunk gave hope to people to live again, to rebuild their lives just as the trees have done by sprouting green.

Figure 1

Survivor tree with new growth, Hiroshima, Japan. Photograph by Saba Samee

Recognizing their importance, the Hiroshima City Prefecture for Peace located these 170 survivor trees and mapped them within 50 locations. Through time these trees were observed and cared for by the citizens' group of Hiroshima and are now registered with the Hiroshima City Municipality as 'A-bombed Trees'. With name plates and a unique reference, *hibakujumoku* (survivor tree), they are termed as 'Hiroshima's special residents: trees that lived through the atomic

blast'[5]. The Green Legacy protect these trees, prepare their saplings and seeds and spread these throughout the world, especially to countries who proudly call themselves nuclear powers. It is their belief that the survival of the residents of nuclear active countries is through these radiation-tolerant trees.

What is the story of our trees? We once had stories knitted around trees, poetry praising them and human nature decoded through them, about the cool shades of trees, of the whistling air whilst it passed through tree leaves, the sun filtering through its branches and leaves making thousands of shimmering stars. Do these trees still exist and what were their stories?

My reconnection with trees affirmed my understanding that mankind has always been curious about their surroundings and it is through myths that their explanation found expression. During my research, I came across many such myths regarding the origins of trees, each one different for a different variety. Half way through, I realized that I can now, very easily, recognize some of the trees, as I could remember their bizarre, yet fascinating, descriptions cleverly knitted within these mythical stories.

Our story starts from the ancient epic poem of *Mahabharata*[6]. In the times depicted within this poem, the region of the Punjab was known as 'Aratta'; its geography is described through rivers and forests with an abundance of *Pillu* (Peelu) trees:

> *Panca nadyo vahanty eta yatra piluvananyapi*
> *Satadrusca vipasa ca trtiyeravati tatha*
> *Candrabhaga vitasta ca sindhusastha bahirgatah*
> *Aratta nama te desa*
>
> "Where these five rivers, viz Satadru (Sutlaj), Vipusa (Bias),
> third Iravati (Ravi), Candrabhaga (Chenab) and Vitasta (Jhelum) flow
> and where there are Pilu forests and where Sindhu (Indus) is the sixth
> to flow out, this county is called Aratta"[7]

This tree was again praised through the Punjabi poetry of Khawaja Ghulam Farid, in his famous poem, *Pillu Pakian Ney, Aa Chunno Ral Yar*.

This popular poem is about getting united and celebrating nature. The poem also has a romantic metaphor discussing the ripening of one's desires, the unique state of separation and how the heart longs for its beloved. Human emotions become one with nature, even the changing colors of Pillu fruit during the process of its ripening, green, yellow, brown and earthy blue, become analogous with different human emotions.

In the first book of the *Mahabharata* titled *Acquisition of the Kingdom*[8], a detailed list is provided of the flowering and fruit bearing trees native to this land of the five rivers, whilst describing the city of Indraprastha[9]. The text illustrates the prosperity of the kingdom by describing the wealth of its gardens that "surrounded the city" having "many kinds of trees, always adorned with flowers and fruits and swarming with many different kinds of birds". The trees mentioned in Table 1[10] belong to many varieties of commonly found trees of that time.

The ancient *Puranic* text[11] mentions four distinguishable mountains, the distinguishing feature being the species of trees planted on each of the sacred mountains. The first mountain of Mandara had *Kadamvas* (Kadamba trees), the second mountain of Gandhamandra had *Jambu* (Jaman trees), the third mountain of Vipula had *Aswattha* (Peepal trees) and the fourth mountain of Suparsa had *Vata* (Bohr, Bargad or Banyan trees). Furthermore, the text mentions a story of Shiva and his consort Parvati. Irritated by the unwelcomed intrusion of goddess Agni in their privacy, Parvati curses the Trinity Gods to turn into trees, whereupon Brahma converted into *Palash* or *Plaksha*, Flame of the Forest Tree; Vishnu into *Aswattha*; and Shiva into the *Vata*. Her curse fell upon herself as her beloved, Shiva, also turned into a tree.

The sacred text of *Ramayana* describes the towns and villages of its time having houses with private gardens[12] with both sides of the roads lined with shadowy *Chandan* (Sandalwood trees), both varieties, white and red. In this poem, the favorite trees of Sita are mentioned as *Arjuna*, *Kanair* (Oleander) and *Japa-Puspa* (Hibiscus). While describing the place

where Ravana had kept Sita a prisoner, the text describes a garden full of *Asoka*, *Champa*, *Neem* and *Aap* trees.

Names of Trees in Sanskrit	Name of Trees in Urdu / Hindi	Name of Trees in English	Botanical Names / Classification of Trees
Amras / Amra	Aam	Mango	Mangifera Indica
Aswattha	Peepal, Bodhi	Peepal	Ficus Religiosa
Vata	Bohr, Bargad	Banyan Tree	Ficus Bengalensis / Ficus Indica
Amratakas Vadari	Bair / Ber	Indian Hog Plum	Spondias Mangifera Wild Zizyphus Jujuba
Kadamvas	Kadamba, Kadam	Kadamb / Burr Flower Tree	Anthocephallus Cadamba
Ashokas	Asoka	Asoka	Saraca Indica / Saraca Asoca
Nimba	Nim or Neem Tree	Nim or Neem Tree	Azadirachta indica
Champakas	Champa / Gul-e-Cheen	Temple Tree, Frangipani	Plumeria Acutifolia
Pumnagas	Aanar	Pomegranate Tree	Punica Granatum
Amlokas	Amlok	Black Persimmon	Diospyros digyna / Diospyros texana
Amlaki / Amalaka	Amla	Indian Gooseberry	Embelica Myrobalan
Lodhras	Lodhra	Lodh Tree	Symplocos racemosa
Jambus	Jaamun	Rose Apple Tree	Syzygium jambos
Mandara	Pangri, Pharad	Indian Coral Tree	Erythrina Indica
Parijatas / Parijatak	Har Shingar	Night Flowering Jasmine	Nyctanthes Arbor-Tkistis
Palash / Plaksha	Palas / Gul-e-Nishter	Flame of the Forest, Parrot Tree	Butea Monosperma Butea Frondosa
Amaltash Rajvriksha	Amaltas	Indian Laburnum Tree	Cassia Fistula
Bilva / Vilva	Bael	Wood Apple	Aegle Marmelos
Sala	Sal	Teak Tree	Shorea Robusta
Tala	Palm Tree	Palm Tree	Borassus Flabbifera
Salmali	Sumbal	Silk Cotton Tree	Salmalia Malabaricum

Table 1

List of commonly found trees of the Punjab. Source: 'Book 1 – The Book of the Beginning: The Acquisition of the Kingdom

Mango Tree

In *Mahabharata*, the origin of the Mango tree is associated with the daughter of the Sun god, Suryadeva. She was married to a mortal king who was much devoted to her, making his other wives jealous. Amongst them was an enchantress who tried to kill her. In order to

escape, the daughter of the Sun god threw herself into a pond and changed into a lotus flower. The enchantress plucked the flower from the pond and burnt it. From its ashes, a tree sprouted with golden light rays coming out from the fruit it bore. When the fruit ripened and fell on the ground, the daughter of the Sun god reappeared and was united with her king. The golden yellow color of the fruit is attributed to the Sun. the leaves of this tree are considered auspicious and are tied over entrances during marriage and birth ceremonies. The Mughal gardens were dominated with these trees. The first and third terraces of Shalamar Garden, Lahore, are filled with mature Mango trees.

The Mango tree in our garden does not bear fruit. When we planted the *Totta Pari* mango, our gardener warned us that this is a dying variety as it bears little fruit, if any. For three years it matured and for another three we kept on waiting for the mangoes. Chacha Bashir, our gardener, asked around for a remedy and found one which involved inflicting deep cuts on the lower bark area of the trunk and putting a greasy organic mixture in them. That year the tree bore fruit, six mangoes of the prettiest colors, green at the bottom, yellow in the middle with a red top. For two years it kept on giving mangoes and then it stopped. None of us have the courage to repeat the process again; marks of the last procedure are still visible. We all are waiting till our tree is ready to bear fruit again.

Asoka Tree

Figure 3

Asoka Tree. Photograph by Saba Samee

In mythologies, trees have always been treated like humans, having emotions and endowed with a soul. Asoka tree means 'without grief'. It is believed that this tree removes sorrow by absorbing it within itself. In the *Ayurvedic* text, Brahma says, "He who eats eight buds of Asoka flowers on the eight day of the moon, will suffer no ailments in life". The text further states that the dried flowers of Asoka cure diseases related to women's reproductive organs while the bark relieves indigestion and depression. In *Ramayana*, the Asoka tree surrounded the garden imprisonment of Sita at Lanka and is said to share her grief by absorbing it within its bark and flowers.

In Buddhist text[13], Asoka tree is the 'Birth Tree' of Buddha. This tree is identified through the texts of Emperor Asoka and travel logs of Chinese travellers[14]. A very clear indication of this tree is present in many stone reliefs showing the Birth of Buddha. Mayadevi is shown as holding a tree branch and the leaves have been identified as that of Asoka tree.

Peepal Tree

The first mention of Peepal tree is found upon an Indus Valley seal discovered at Mohenjodaro[15], where the tree is being worshipped. This discovery provides evidence that the cult of tree worship is older than civilizations. In *Mahabharata*, the sacred tree is described as:

"*Aswattha*, having its roots above and branches below, is eternal.

Its leaves are the *Chhandas* (pure knowledge). He, who knows it, knows the *Vedas*."

"*Aswattha* is from the highest world to the lowest creations, it is everywhere. The knowledge gained through this tree is pure and divine. Its form cannot be known; it neither has an end nor a beginning, it is eternal."

In the *Vedic* text[16], the tree gets mentioned as the "one that is not the same tomorrow". For Buddhists, this tree holds special importance. For them it is the Enlightenment Tree. Buddhist literature and the depiction of a Peepal tree sanctuary in numerous sculptural panels showing the scene of enlightenment leaves little doubt that Buddha received divine knowledge while seated under a Peepal tree. Hence, it is also known as *Bodhi* tree.

My earliest memories of the Peepal tree come from Aziz Bhatti Road, Lahore. As children, we used to get mesmerized by the chirping of the birds returning home to their Peepal trees which lined both sides of this road. Twice a day, the chirping of thousands of birds filled the entire atmosphere with music.

In a Punjabi *Lok Geet* (folk song) the poet asks from the leaves of the Peepal tree,

> *"Peepal Diya Patiya, Ke Kharh Kharh Lai Ae"*,

> "Oh leaves of the Peepal tree, why are you making loud noises?"

The tree replies,

> *"Jharr Gayey Puraney, Waari Nawiaya De Aiye Ae"*

> "I am shedding the old leaves as it is time for new ones."

Bair Tree

The *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, both texts hold Bair/Ber tree sacred. This was the tree which tried to stop Ravana from kidnapping Sita by entangling its thorns in her *sari* (a garment worn by women of South Asia). When Rama was searching for her with his brother Lakshmana, the tree pointed towards a torn rag of Sita's *sari* dangling from its branches. It was due to this tree that Rama could find the direction in which Sita was forcefully taken. For this effort Rama blessed the tree with eternal life so that it could survive in arid climates.

Kadamba Tree

In *Mahabharata*, the mention of *Kadamba* tree/Burr-flower tree is due to its flowery and earthy aromatic scent. It is said in the text that this tree blossoms at the sound of the monsoon thunder[17]. This ancient text frequently associates this tree with Krishna. His nature to attract Gopis is paralleled with the aromatic fruit borne by the tree, its aroma attracting pollinators such as

bees, hoverflies, butterflies and humming birds. The enchanted Gopis represented the five senses of smell, touch, taste, sight and hearing, all of which get stimulated by the tree and its fruit.

Bael Tree

The Bael tree is mentioned in reference to Shiva. The formation of its tri-foliate leaves resembles a *Trishul*, the weapon of Shiva representing his three functions: Creation, Preservation and Destruction. These leaves serve as a container for offerings to Shiva. The Bael fruit is associated with Lakshmi through a story which

Figure 7

Bael Tree.
Photograph by
Qamar Mehdi

originated from her worshiping Shiva daily under this tree and offering one thousand lotus buds. One day she got short of two lotus buds and in her devotion, thought of cutting her bosoms in place of the two lotus buds. Shiva, watching from within the tree stopped her in time and rewarded her devotion by granting the shape of her bosom to the Bael fruit. Thus, the tree gained the attributes of Lakshmi: luck, fortune, fertility and prosperity.

Neem Tree

The ancient myths of creation provide the story of Nim or Neem Tree. Indra, the King of the Devas and the gods, retrieved a golden pot of *amrita* (ambrosia) from the milky ocean at the beginning of time. He accidently dropped a few drops of this *amrita* upon the earth while heading back to the heavens. From these drops, the tree of Neem sprouted, having noble qualities of curing almost all diseases, warding off evil and protecting from harmful insects. In *Vedic* text, this tree is

Figure 8

Neem Tree.
Photograph by
Qamar Mehdi

mentioned as *Dhanvantri*, the Aryan god of medicine. In *Mahabharata*, the leaves of Neem are compared with sharp swords protecting from evil spirits and deadly diseases.

Bohr Tree

The great Bohr or Bargad tree is called "the crested one" in *Mahabharata*. The ability to support its ever growing branches through roots originating from them and hanging down like props supporting an ever widening canopy, symbolizes eternal life. In the 'Book of Forests', *Mahabharata*, the *Puranic* legend of Satyavan and his wife Savitri is associated with this tree. In a gest, the story establishes the importance of this tree by describing its power to restore life. In Buddhist *Jatakas*, this is the second Enlightenment Tree. Buddha spent fifteen years of his life at a monastery in the city of Kapilavastu. This monastery was constructed within the Banyan forest. It is said that Buddha cut all his hair while sitting under this tree and announced that he is going to Banaras to set the wheel of Dharma in motion.

Champa Tree

It is universally accepted by all faiths that the Champa tree represents immortality for its extraordinary capacity to continue flowering even after uprooted. Only a small piece of its branch is needed for it to re-grow. Many perfumes have the scent of Champa flower as its base. The famous poet, Sultan Bahoo mentions this tree as "*chambray di booti*" which the divine has planted in our hearts. This *booti* (herb) creates the desire for eternal knowledge in us and it is this quest for knowledge that makes the *booti* grow. When it blossoms, the mysteries of life are revealed to us and our bodies acquire its eternal scent.

Teak Tree

The earliest mention of the tree named Teak is in the Buddhist text. It is described as having the strongest wood. The King of Benares wanted to construct a palace having only one strong column. The spirit of the *Sala* tree came in his dream and informed him that if he really wants to find a strong wooden column, then he should look for a *Sala* tree which has been growing in his own garden for centuries. However, the spirit of the tree had one request from the King before the cutting. As the *Sala* tree was growing for centuries in his garden, many deities, birds and animals had started living on it. The King should first worship so all the living beings are alerted about the coming danger and have a chance to protect themselves. Then the King should first cut the top half and then, if needed, the rest of the trunk but he should not cut the tree from its roots, neither let it fall because then the roots will break. Upon asking the reason, the tree spirit said that it can germinate again through the old roots and the King will not be blamed for its death. Furthermore, the *Sala* tree is the 'Death Tree' in Buddhist scriptures. Stone relief panels show Buddha dead in between two *Sala* trees. Some sculptural panels show Buddha achieving Nirvana lying in between two *Sala* trees.

Parijatas Tree

The origin of *Parijatas* goes back to the churning of the milky ocean. According to the *Puranic* text, upon its birth the entire universe was filled with its scent and the tree was taken to the heavens. One day, Krishna's wife, passing through a jungle, smelled its scent and desired to find this tree for planting in her Dwarka palace. Krishna acquired this tree for her from the heavens but it did not have any flowers, thus no scent. Saddened by this, she decided to sleep under the tree, accompanying it through the night. She found herself buried under Jasmine flowers upon waking up, surrounded by their scent. A later popular myth tells a story of a *Rani* (queen) who fell in love with the Sun god. The Survadeva broke her heart by deserting her. She killed herself and from the ashes of her cremated body arose this tree. The tree cannot bear the sight of the Sun and hence blossoms only at night.

Gul-e-Nishter Tree

Gul-e-Nishter gets mentioned in the *Puranic* text as a tree born out of Shiva. According to the text, the flower of the tree is shaped like a flame and is of bright red color, similar to Shiva when he transforms into Shakti while slaying demons. When in full bloom, the tree seems to be on fire, similar to when Shiva becomes Kali, the Destroyer and the Creator. For the Buddhists, in their *Jatakas*, this tree signifies cleansing of the soul, its flaming flower symbolically burning all earthly desires.

In *Vedic* text, the tree is associated with the story of the King of Benares and his four sons. Upon their desire to see this tree, the King sends them off, one by one, in different seasons, to visit the *Plaksha* tree. One son sees the tree when buds were sprouting from the stem and the tree has shed all its leaves. The second son saw the tree full of green leaves. The third one saw it in full bloom and the fourth saw the tree in its fruit bearing phase. When asked to describe the tree they saw, all four sons had different images. The first described the tree as resembling a burnt stump; the second said that the tree he saw resembled a Banyan tree, full of leaves and green; the third, surprised by the descriptions of his brothers, said that the tree he saw looked like meat as it was full of red flowers. The last son said that none of the above is true because the tree he saw was neither barren, nor green or red, but had long golden brown pods of fruit. The King laughed and told his sons to never boost to know the entire truth before you experience it in all seasons. Amir Khusru compares the red flame-shaped flowers of this tree with the blood stained claws of a lion.

Sumbal Tree

The Sumbal tree was first mentioned in *Mahabharata* when the eldest Pandava sons, Yudhishthira, sought advice from Bhishma, their grandfather, for how a weakling should encounter a powerful enemy who has been provoked by him in ignorance. Bhishma gives

the example of the tree of Sumbal and tells Yudhishthira that if the weakling sheds some of his burden by admitting the truth, the strong enemy might show mercy. In the story, the tree of Sumbal stands strong and straight, loaded with leaves, fruit and heavy red flowers. Birds of diverse species have made this tree their home. A sage sees this beautifully blossoming tree and praises the wind god, Pavana, for showing his friendship towards this heavily loaded tree. Sumbal, getting jealous of Pavana, says that the wind is no friend, it is I who is strong enough to carry my entire load by myself. Unfortunately, Pavana was listening and challenges Sumbal to test his strength against him. Fear of ridiculing himself, the tree of Sumbal sheds all his leaves, flowers and fruits and dries up all his branches. If he is without any load the wind cannot harm him. On the day of the challenge, Pavana is shocked to see the state of Sumbal. Taking mercy towards the fearing tree, Pavana grants a boon to the tree; Sumbal was converted into an evergreen tree. However, he will not be able to carry his heavy red flowers, nor his fruit, which will fly with the wind like cotton balls.

Tulsi Tree

The famous Tulsi, according to *Mahabharata*, came out from the churning of the milky ocean at the beginning of time. This tree is considered as the meeting point of heaven and earth. After being born out of the milky ocean, Tulasi gets married to a demon to whom she is fully devoted. The demon is blessed with a boon of invisibility till his wife remains faithful to him. Frustrated by his mischievousness, Vishnu goes to Tulasi in the appearance of her demon husband. When the demon becomes visible, Vishnu kills him, making Tulasi a widow. She becomes enraged upon finding the truth and insists on performing the ritual of *sati*. Vishnu, touched by her devotion towards her dead

husband, grants her a boon of eternal life and fidelity. He informed her that those women who will worship her will never get widowed. From the ashes of the *sati, Tulasi* the tree known as Tulsi was born.

Niazbo, Sweet Basil, belongs to the same variety. Our grandmother used to tell us that any house planted with this tree will directly enter paradise, as this is among the trees of heavens.

Jamun Tree

The popular tree of Jamun is first mentioned in the *Ramayana*, as the fruit eaten by Rama during his 14 years of exile from Ayodhya. In the Buddhist texts, this tree is regarded as the First Meditation Tree. The story of a young prince Siddhartha witnessing the three stages of human life and afterwards his meditation which altered the course of his life happened under this tree. A stone relief panel discovered from Sahri-Bahlol shows this event with the Jamun tree located behind Buddha's head.

Jand Tree

The *Jhand*, Jand tree is very popular amongst women, as it is a commonly believed that this tree has the gift of bestowing children upon the childless and of uniting couples in love. In the Punjabi folklore of Mirza and Sahiban, Sahiban upon eloping with Mirza, prays to the Jand tree planted in the courtyard for justice by uniting her with her beloved.

Figure 13

Jand Tree. Photograph by Qamar Mehdi

Anar Tree

My favorite is *Anara*, Anar or Pomegranate tree; it is the happiest tree in our garden. Every spring new green leaves sprout from its dry branches. Orange flowers blossom onto the tree and it bears golden pomegranates.

Some of the favorite trees since the times of the *Mahabharata* till the Mughals are the *Amaltas*, *Kachnar*, *Aak*, *Saru*, *Shahtoot*, *Marwa*, *Oukan*, *Chinnar*, *Gularh*, *Amrood*, Apple, Indian Coral, *Tahli*, *Kikar*, *Kafoor*, *Amlok* and *Amla*. I believe that one day their myths will unfold at least before they are chopped down like the 3000 trees of the Lahore

Figure 14

Anar Tree.
Photograph by
Qamar Mehdi

Canal Bank Road. These trees of Lahore, in the name of development, have tolerated so much destruction from our hands, yet they sprout again, from buildings, behind poles, from roads and pavements.

Endnotes

1　　　Husain (2012)

2　　　These words refer to the Biblical and Quranic story of Adam and Eve.

3　　　UNITAR Workshop: Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites – World Heritage Nominations – Protection and Management Require ments. 20th to 24th April, 2015, Hiroshima, Japan

4　　　The Green Legacy Hiroshima. Accessible at <www.unitar.org/greenlegacy hiroshima>

5　　　Ibid

6　　　Debroy Bibek (2010) *The Mahabharata: Volume 1 to 12* (1 to 4 are published whilst 5 to 11 are translated, the rest are still under process of translation and printing). Penguin Books; New Delhi.

7　　　Shendge (1977)

8　　　Debroy Bibek (2010) *The Mahabharata: Volume 1.* Penguin Books; New Delhi.

9　　　Ibid – p. 491-2

10　　　Ibid. Para 40 of Book 1 – *The Book of the Beginning: The Acquisition of the King dom*

11　　　Vishnu Purana

12　　　Ibid

13　　　Bidari (1996)

14　　　Fa-Hsien and Yuan-Chawng

15　　　Kenoyer (1998), p 104. Other references can be found on p 106, 193

16　　　Bidari (1996)

17　　　Gupta (1971)

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Popular Culture and Political Cynicism in Pakistan

Sadia Pasha Kamran

Introduction

In 'popular perception', national and international politics appear as the only stimulus for the contemporary social discourses in Pakistan. For example, contemporary Pakistani art has often been described as "the global political conversation" or merely as an "attempt to locate the answers to Pakistan's present-day socio-political predicaments at the intersection of international politics".[1] Such 'popular perceptions', rather misconceptions, deplete the Pakistani art from the intellectual discourses it has been propagating as well as devoid the same from the historical facts and many intense social points of interests that we hold as a nation. However, the abundant occurrence of political statements in contemporary discourses cannot be ignored. In an effort to find a reason for this repeated visual and literary agitation the study probes into the prevailing socio-political scenario that encourages pessimism, cynicism, mockery and satire as the popular culture[2] of Pakistan. This culture of cynicism appears in all forms of expression and in all genre of intellect, be it literature, fine art, television or newspaper. However, contemporary art of Pakistan leads from up front as it projects such ideas to international proportions.[3]

This study is divided in three parts. The first part briefly discusses the 'popular'[4] political history of Pakistan, the ideologies, the dogmas and the doctrines that have shaped up the general mindset of Pakistani people. Second part examines the recent world order that places Pakistan in the limelight of global politics.[5] The questions of a distinct identity and ideology for Pakistan and its people as an aftermath of such demands and their impact on the society are also taken into consideration. The third and the final part, while analyzing the role and involvement of the artists in responding to the above mentioned calls, explores the archival nature and satirical character of our popular cultural expressions that are loaded with political cynicism.

Political History of Pakistan and the Culture of Humiliation

The history of Muslim rule in the Indian Sub-continent is as old as the 8th century. It is the time when Mohammad Bin Qasim first came to India and established a Muslim empire in the South Western part of it. With brief hiccups and short intervals, Muslims remained the rulers of the Indian Sub-continent till 1857 when it became a British colony. Muslims, who were once the sovereign rulers of the Indian Sub-continent, became third grade citizens in their own homeland. Ruled by the British and dominated by the Hindus, Muslims of India without higher education, jobs and social status were left behind in all socio-political, cultural and economic milieus of life. Soon this socio-economic inequality resulted in political instability and turmoil. The Indians gathered against their foreign rulers, forcing them to free India in 1947.

Independence changed the face of the issues though the social anarchy and the chaos remained the same and in certain cases it worsened.[6] With the death of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the political and nationalistic verve also perished that could have otherwise led Pakistan as a country and as a nation through the chaos of independence and towards an ideal state where 'the Muslims of India could live a peaceful life according to the *Shariah* of Islam'[7]. This dream of the founders of Pakistan was never materialized. Latter leaders lacked the political vision of Jinnah and were merely self-centered. Thus corruption, injustice and lawlessness prevailed, leaving the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with no choice but military dictatorship. These Martial Laws suspended the basic human rights and for time and again the people of Pakistan were deprived of 'the freedom of speech, right to criticize and to the freedom of written language and culture' which was promised in the States' law[8]. These restrictions tattered the socio-cultural fabric of the society. The table below shows the regular intervals between military and civilian rule in Pakistan.

Year	Type of Rule	Important Milestones
1947---1958	Civilian Rule	Pakistan gets its first constitution, turning the country from an autonomous dominion into an "Islamic Republic".
1958---1971	1st Military Rule	The second constitution outlines a presidential form of government.
1971---1977	Civilian Rule	Constitution is enacted declaring Pakistan a Parliamentary Democracy.
1977---1988	2nd Military Rule	Zia ul Haq's Martial Law
1988--1999	Civilian Rule	Four General Elections in ten years and a Nuclear test
1999--2008	3rd Military Rule	Pervaiz Musharraf's Martial Law
2008---2013	Civilian Rule	1st time in the democratic history of Pakistan the parliament completes its term of 5 years
2013-present	Civilian Rule	Most of the political parties declared the election as 'unfair' and refused to accept the results

Table 1

The year and type of political governance in Pakistan since 1947

This hide and seek between Martial Law and democracies appears to be a cat and dog chase and emerge as ugly marks on the history of Pakistan. Unfortunately, even the democratic governments were unable to deliver the promised peace and prosperity to the subjects. For a conscientious Pakistani, this scenario is quite embarrassing. Borrowing Dominique Moisi's terminology from *Geopolitics of Emotion*, this ambiguous political situation is promoting a culture of humiliation. He defines humiliation as "an emotion that stems above all from the feeling that you are no longer in control of your life either collectively, as a people, a nation, or a religious community or individually, as a single person" (56).

The New World Order, Pakistan and the Culture of Fear

The beginning of 21st century witnessed a change in the world order. The bipolar world which was turned into the unipolar world during the last quarter of the 20th century allowed America, as an only super power, to control the fate of the rest of the world.[9] The division of the East and the West and the Orient and the Occident changed its

appellation into the division of the Islamic and the non- Islamic or 'Arab Lands, Turkey, Middle East and South Asia'[10] versus the rest of the Western world. The tragic incident of 9/11 (September 11, 2001 attacks on World Trade Centre, New York, USA) brought more problems for Pakistan and it had to pay a price for being a neighbor of Afghanistan as well as for being an ally to America now and in the past, particularly during the cold war of the 1980s. This alliance costs Pakistan a severe communal unrest as well as an international distrust and disgrace.

With all American promises and efforts to stabilize the government institutions and to improve a social structure in Pakistan, the drone attacks which claim the lives of civilians and children, have increased the anxiety of the common man about his survival and the future of his children. Today, people of Pakistan fear about their mere existence. Is Pakistan the next target of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces? Will Pakistan become an American Colony? Will India take over? Will Pakistan simply break into smaller independent units? Without electricity, education or health facilities, corruption in every institution, injustice, lawlessness and inflation, the nation is insecure about its future. It is cultivating the 'culture of fear'. Together, the culture of humiliation and the culture of fear are prompting cynicism, mockery and satire, which have become the popular culture in Pakistan.

Culture of Humiliation   +   Culture of Fear   =   Culture of Cynicism

(a product of political history) (a product of new world order)
(prevailing popular culture)

Political Cynicism as the Popular Culture of Pakistan and its Social Discourses

Political and social cynicism results from excessively high expectations concerning society, institutions and authorities. It has been defined as "mistrust generalized from particular leaders or political groups to the political process as a whole – a process perceived to corrupt the persons who participate in it and that draws corrupt persons as participants". Unfulfilled expectations lead to disappointment,

which releases feelings of disillusionment and betrayal. As expected, people choose to doubt, disbelieve or discredit, even when there is no logical reason to do so. It is to be noted that oppression also leads to cynicism and this irony and cynicism are understood to be defense mechanisms of a "deeply insecure Pakistani nation" as it is called by the West.[11]

It is this political cynicism that we witness in the success and high ratings of the TV shows like *Hasb-e hal*, *Khabarnak*, *Hum sub umeed se hai* or *BNN*. Similar cynic tone is apparent in the writings of Ayyaz Amir, Ali Moin, Anwar Maqsood, Mushtaq Ahmed Yousafi and many others who have left their established style of writing to opt for satirical and sarcastic dual statements on and about the politics and its practitioners that would bring laugh and tears at the same time. These shows are considered the only entertainment of the audience who are tired of viewing the serious and horrendous news of suicide bombers, drone attacks, ransom kidnappings, theft, murders, poverty, moral and financial corruption and accidents. Cynicism has been known, in its historical development, to be a form of denial with the purpose to minimize the importance of the object. Sarcasm, in Pakistani society, is not a defense but a form of aggressive discharge. Interestingly, the tolerance towards the bold criticism and satire displayed in contemporary artistic and general expression is due to the 'refined' democracy, which is also new to Pakistan. As before this day, there is a history of showing intolerance towards such criticism from the inhabitants of the corridors of power. Banning newspapers, burning paintings or merely putting the artists and poets behind bars has been their ritual.

Among all the insecurities and atrocities of the current times which are discussed above, the artists and painters of Pakistan are playing their historic role of speaking about the nastiness of the era the country is passing through. Pakistani art is no more just 'a thing of beauty' inculcating joy and pleasure in its audience. It has become intense and thought provoking, and cynic and skeptic. It will not be an exaggeration to say that today's artist is doing a great job of representing the general approach of Pakistani community "while keeping the aesthetic concern as a priority"[12].

Currently, Pakistani art is "projecting the politics of a localized ideological conflict onto a screen of international proportions" (Whiles 2). These ideological conflicts arose as a result of many attempts that were made by the progressive, secular intellectuals and the conservative, Islamic scholars in order to define and design a cultural policy to best suit the image of an Islamic state of Pakistan since its birth in 1947.[13] One of these policies was crafted by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Apparently, his was a liberal approach but even he did not fully endorse the progressive ideas of Faiz Ahmed Faiz. Faiz is known in the avant-garde socio-political history of Pakistan as an intellectual champion of the progressives. Faiz was imprisoned several times for preaching his political beliefs as a Marxist which was not bearable to the government. It was the time when art was considered a tool "like a Trojan horse in the hands of the progressives to infiltrate Pakistan's Islamic complexion"[14] and thus was considered harmful for an Islamic state by the fundamentalist scholars of Islam such as Abu Ala Muduadi. Bhutto, as a matter of fact fused Faiz's 'pluralism-friendly and secularist thesis with those of the Islamic scholars'[15]. After Bhutto, General Zia ul Haq's Martial Law banned any kind of freedom of speech and the art and literature was under great scrutiny.

In early 1990s, when Zia's military rule was over, the socio-cultural milieu of Pakistan could feel its aftershocks with new threats in the form of the conservative concepts of Islamisation and Pakistaniat[16] being declared the driving force behind the cultural policies as introduced by the conservatives. What the result of this so called Islamic and Pakistani ideology was is not relevant here. What is significant is the way the artist community reacted and responded to it[17].

As a result of the resentment towards government policies of Pakistaniat and Islamization with its undue rendering of art being against the Islamic spirits, the painters started camouflaging the content by using symbolism, implicit iconography, and oblique text with dual meaning. While the suspension of the right of free speech, during Marshal law doubled the responsibility of the artist community who could conceal the criticism from the eyes of the ones in authority and would divulge into the concerns of the progressive intellectuals in their artwork[18].

Historically, mockery is not new to art. The Greeks were fully aware of its use in art and literature when the classical virtues were being

defined. Though they considered it as a mark of distinction between archaic and classical, yet the vivacity and exuberance of archaic was a pre-requisite for the seriousness and perfection of the classical. Later, when taken up by the bourgeoisie this lightheartedness in art became a synonym for urban freedom especially in the works of Chauser, Boccaccio, Rebelais and Don Quixote. Similarly, not new is the pessimism and cynicism in art that inspired the Dada movement. Mainly the atrocities of World War 1 were responsible for the pessimism, disgust and the humiliation of the humanity brought by the war that surfaced in art. Although horror and disgust about the war initially prompted Dada, an undercurrent of humor and whimsy - sometimes sardonic or irrelevant - runs through much of art. The situation as well as the intention and message of Pakistani artists is similar to Dadaists. Be it Imran Qureshi's series of miniature painting *Moderate Enlightenment*[19] (Figure 1), the Karkhana project (Figure 2), the acerbic critique of Saira Wasim in the *New World Order* (Figure 3), Ali Raza's *Throne* and *Krishna* in trousers (Figures 4) or Manet's lady in *Dejeuner sur l'Herbe* clad in *burqa* (veil) by Wasim Ahmed, *Get Out of My Dreams* by Faiza Butt (Figure 5) or Huma Mulji's sculpture, there is a sense of absurdity and irony in all of these artworks. Similar psyche is at work when Hamra Abbas recalls the Mughal period by merely re-enacting the battle scenes from *Akbarnama* (Figure 6). It appears as if she is not only being sarcastic about her present but she also wants to re-live her past. Nusra Latif Qureshi's art practices deal critically with the politics of representation and fragmentation of dominant historical narratives (Figure 7). Borrowed images are re-appropriated and transformed, obscuring or refusing their original meaning. Ali Azmat's paintings seem to question the sanctity of Quran and Pakistan Figure 8). The ideas of romanticism and patriotism seem to be injured when he paints bandaged and darned national flags. It is this cynic approach which compels Saira Wasim to paint children playing with missiles while she pays homage to the national celebrities in *Tomorrow* (Figure 9). Or for that matter, when Bani Abidi visualizes *The Ghost of Mohammad Bin Qasim* roaming around the streets of Karachi where he laid the foundation of an Islamic culture centuries ago (Figure 10).

Figure 1 (L)

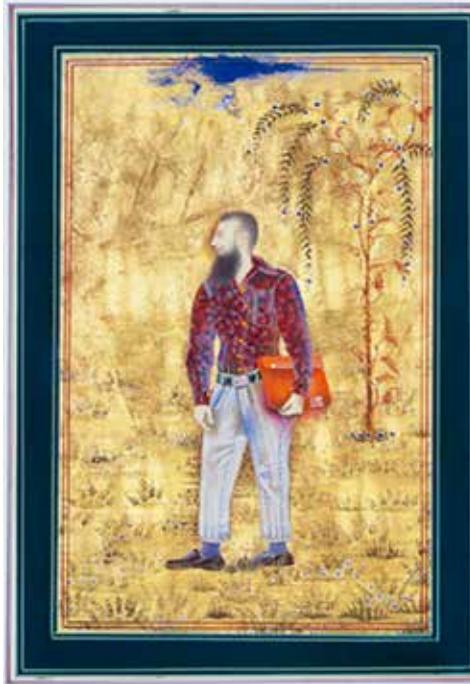Moderate
Enlightenment,
Imran Qureshi, 2005,
Gouache on Wasli

Figure 2 (R)

Karkhana Project,
2002-2005

Figure 3 (L)

New World Order,
Saira Wasim, 2006,
Gouache on Wasli

Figure 4 (R)

Throne, Ali Raza,
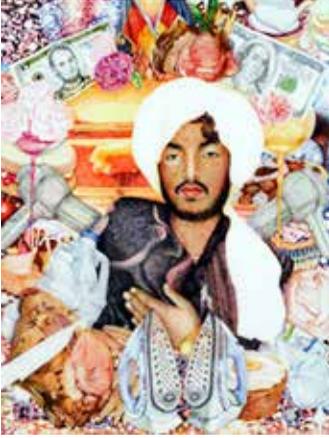2006, Ash and paint
on paper

Image courtesy,
www.aptglobal.org
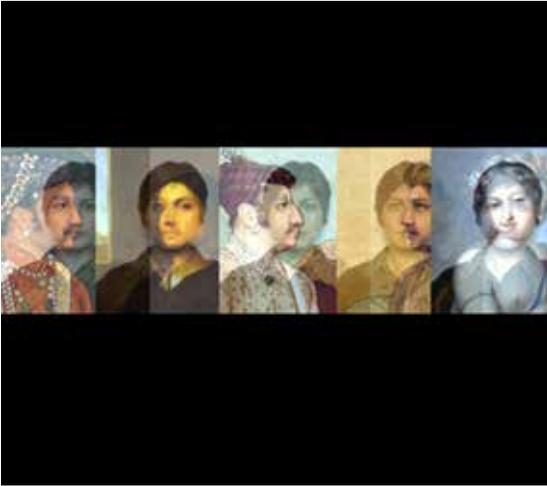
All of these above mentioned artworks exhibit the irrational and non-sensical impulses stirred by the prevailing political cynicism. These artistic expressions do not just promote parody and mockery rather these works are spontaneous and intuitive as well and have the quality of reproaching the ugly and painful reality present in Pakistani society. Such work exhibits reality with a strong desire for freedom from it. It is this quality of contemporary Pakistani art that makes it genuine. Here, comedy speaks about the tragedy - the tragedy of losing identity, individuality, glorious past, peace and harmony, communal restlessness as well as the fear of an atomic war.

Conclusion

The pessimistic and cynic approach so evident in artistic expressions of Pakistan is purely reflective of the society. It is a product of

1. Prevailing humiliation and fear in the society

2. The reaction of the artists and writers to this humiliation and fear

The political history of Pakistan reflects a past with grandeur and power that eventually degenerates into the graveness of the division of India. This graveness was further intensified due to the detachment of the Eastern wing (now Bangladesh) and ever-increasing political anarchy. To add to this degradation, there is this lurking fear of terrorism imposed by the international politics. This ambiguity and obscurity is imitated in the cynic and pessimistic behavior of the nation. Usually, a cynic is not merely one who learns lessons from the past; he is the one who is prematurely disappointed with future. This disappointment brings sarcasm and satire in artistic discourses. Contemporary art of Pakistan may be considered as an unofficial state archive of the prevailing cynicism in the country as it is commenting and documenting the political affairs and its reaction among the masses. It is also noted that contemporary art of Pakistan shares similarities between the disillusionment of western culture following World War I as it illustrates the disillusionment of the Pakistani people via cultural cynicism. A deeper analysis here, reveals that the individual style of the Pakistani painters as well as the general trend of the society, which sets the demands, overlaps doubling the dose of satire, mockery and cynicism. It is where humor has turned into polemic parody. On one

hand it characterizes the contemporary art and literature and on the other it lays the foundations of popular culture of cynicism.

Endnotes

1. Waqas, Naeem. "Meaningful Art: Reflection on Pakistan's Socio-political Predicaments" Tribune: June 3, 2013

2. The term "Popular Culture" is used with reference to cultural studies where it is largely concerned about the everyday terrain of people without being sure who the people are, that is, without deciding ahead of time and once and for all who is being referred to by the term 'people'. *Popular Culture: An Introduction*. NewYork: New York University Press, 1999, 13. The phrase, "the everyday terrain of people" is taken from *Cultural Studies* (Ed.) Lawrence Grossberg et al.NewYork: Routledge, 1992,11

3   As visual art has a universal appeal and does not confront any language barrier while literature, newspaper and T.V do.

4   Here and elsewhere I use the term 'popular history' that refers to the state sponsored ideologized history which might be considered synonymous to imagined, tampered or less factual but was accepted without any research and apprehension by the 'everyday terrain of people' - former Pakistani generation. Fortunately, the general public has started questioning this type of history.

5   Forces that Pakistan must declare itself for or against the 'universal tranquility' especially with reference to 'War against Terror'.

6   The biased Radcliffe Award for the establishment of borders and the unjust division of assets between India and Pakistan, at the time of the birth of two countries, left the nascent state of Pakistan in bewilderment.

7   The main cause of the demand of the division of India, which also became the main slogan during the independence movement of Pakistan.

8   Extract from 1973 Constitution of Pakistan.

9   It is the general perception of the people of Pakistan, especially since America waged war in Afghanistan. "Just last year the leading national flavor was anti-Americanism... and the heroic assertion of national sovereignty". See Ayaz, Amir. "Islamabad Diary: A Pipeline to Some Sovereignty" The News. Friday, March 15, 2013. Accessible at <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-165356-A-pipeline-to-some-sovereignty>

10   The term is borrowed from the new name given to the Islamic Art Gallery in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

11   Mark Mazetti in "Pakistan's Public Enemy". The New York Times Magazine. April, 14, 2013 while about the biggest reason so many Paksitanis hate the United States.

12   As suggested by A. R. Nagori on his style of painting in an interview quoted by Daudpota in his book.

13   The tussle between these groups and gangs, with varied agendas, are already reflected in the political history of Pakistan.

14   Nadeem, Paracha. "Smoker's Corner" Dawn.

15   (Paracha)

16   The term used for the ideology of Pakistan that focuses on Islam being the only reason for the demand of a separate homeland for the Muslims and the major cause of the partition of India.

17   May it be an attack on Collin David's female nudes or Iqbal Hussain's painted prostitutes from the 'red light area', the artists were ready to play their historic role of carping and disparaging the policies that affected the basic structure of the society. Salima Hashmi (Faiz's daughter), Abbassi Abidi, Lala Rukh, Nazish Ataullah, Talat Ahmed, Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Anwar Saeed and others signed the famous women artists' manifesto, which played a role in creating socio-political awareness in the artistic activities (quoted by Hashmi, 36).

18.   Their close connections with the leftists, for example, Faiz and the medium of expression, that is, painting made them political activists. A. R. Nagori and his abrasive imagery of military boots crushing human heads and Salima Hashmi's stained and bleeding abstract compositions are the greatest example of the inciting art of the late 1980s. Such a trend paved way for taking up more intense issues such as identity, social stratification, gender and patriarchy, tolerance in and for religions, economy and globalization as popular subjects of the paintings. At the dawn of the 21st century, globalization reduced the intellectual barriers and international politics and happenings became more inspirational than the national issues. Pakistani artists and painters, now well aware of the worth of their endowment in the art world, are actively painting focusing on sensitive socio-political and global issues as their subject matter.

19.   The title *Moderate Enlightenment* is also a term former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf coined in 2003 at a summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to describe the path the Islamic world must take to finally escape the dead-end of fundamentalism and anti-Western sentiment. In its complexity, however, Qureshi's series puts both to the test: the rigidity of religious fundamentalism and the rigidity of western "enlightened" clichés of Islamic culture.

Archeology of Nostalgia: Recent Social History of Pakistani People through Photographs

Umair Ghani

A photograph, the moment it is taken, becomes archival. It becomes a proof of something which once existed in time. It gives permanence to remembrance of people and things. Photographers are visual anthropologists, biographers and historians of an era. With image bricks they construct an archeology of nostalgia which also keeps a chronological record of happenings of that period. Andre Bazin, a French film theorist, said that photography saves time from its proper corruption. To my understanding, nothing can be more spiteful than to allow an epoch to pass without credible visual references. Any deliberate apathy towards visual recording of a period makes existing chronological and referential data gravely treacherous and untrustworthy.

Question of reliability of modern day research, since the beginning of 20th century, took several exciting twists with novel insights and intriguing exploration of diverse cultures through the lens of a camera. This discovery of photographic evidence also unleashed a new perspective on modern history. As photographs became a substitute for seeing the real thing; availability of images (as secondary verification to primary documents) related to themes of anthropology, history and scientific fields strengthened the specificity of research. The 20th century academics extensively extended their reliance on photographic proof and consequently what we now call 'a culture of visual memory' flourished in full bloom.

History is not just about time, it is about people living in time. Photography encompasses both. Photographs are myriad reflections of everyday realities which continuously emerge and expire like bubbles between a million momentary splits on the time scale. Using a camera for documenting fleeting events and the people associated with them is a subtle task. Inclusion of images merely for archival necessity brings collective past into the present and maps temporal gaps with convincing visual detail. Photography seizes the present and glorifies it as the past. This tricky nature of a photograph contributes to liberate present time

from its captivity and transcends its relevance to events of the past and the future. Camera documents crucifixion of the present and its resurrection in a photograph, thus, establishes its eternalness as a reference image.

Visual history of a nation is not just a happy coincidence of assorted photographs but a solid reflection of its social behavior recorded in the form of images. The evolutionary history tells us about human motivations and collective communal conduct. Witnessing the recent past of Pakistani nation through the viewfinder of a camera reveals scores of cloaked details which hugely contribute in forming Pakistan's larger image as a country. The first images which we have of this country since are a record of blood-spattered chaos recorded by Margaret Bourke-White (Life Magazine photographer, who was commissioned to photograph the Independence of India and Pakistan from British rule in 1947). The graphic detail of violence in those images is shocking. However, a great deal of past seven decades (noticeably marred by the nation's eternal dilemmas ranging from conflicts between religion and culture to meek attempts for toppling English language's grasp as an official language and establishing Urdu as *lingua franca*) is also equally distressing on a different level. Looking at a rapidly swelling population with its diverse cultural motifs and roots flowing back to over five thousand years, it is an astonishing observation that how swiftly somewhere in the flow of history the descendants of Indus Valley Civilization took up weapons (as an excuse to extinguish the 'Other') whereas their ancestors left no proof of making armaments throughout several hundred years even during the prime of world's oldest civilization. A series of images labeled "Guns N Roses" shows Pakistani youth's infatuation with toy guns (Figure 1). Even today, more shocking is the fact that custodians of an extraordinary richness of folk wisdom in literature (both in Urdu and regional languages) have become confined to assorted groups with an appalling degree of intellectual drought. Recent communal behavior reflects patterns set by seven decades of conditioned social growth and arrested development. Years of denial, grave mistakes and unforgivable alibis rendered nothing but a motley crew with a dazed vision of independence, some glimpses of which can be seen in the accompanying images (Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Figure 1 (L)

"Guns N Roses – Armed violence on the rise". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 2 (R)
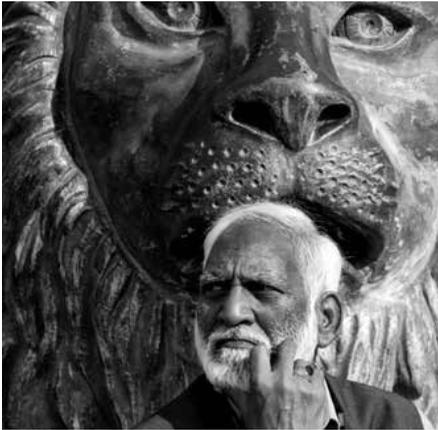
"Living a broken dream". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 3 (L)

"Untitled". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 4 (R)

"Celebrating foreign rule". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 5 (L)

"Between saints and sinners". Photograph by Umair Ghanii

Figure 6 (R)
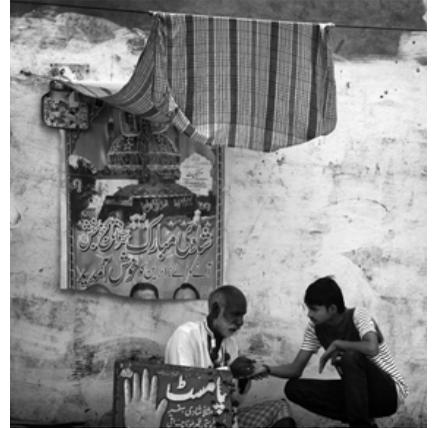
"A male dominant society". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 7 (L)

"Voice of the masses". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Figure 8 (R)

"Seeking good fortunes on footpaths". Photograph by Umair Ghani

Photographs shown with this commentary are not a direct representation of injustices or hopelessness experienced by present day Pakistani society but these are a credible evidence of 21st century slavery sheathed in grave bankruptcy of thought and ideology. Massive perplexing conducts point to the fact that somehow those at the helm of affairs need to maintain the status quo. Such apathetic trends shown in these photographs are allowed to thrive on purpose. Social interaction within various ethnic groups remained suspended sometimes as an excuse for "principle of necessity" and sometimes merely as a prerequisite to run domestic affairs without being answerable to public. These images disclose that multitudes of people have become enslaved to various agendas. Dazed by many opium-coated ideologies (borrowed and improvised for urgent need) and by subsequent bogus pledges and fake promises of prosperity, the people of Pakistan eventually get convinced that whatever they possess is not for themselves but for the rightful loot and plunder of the ruling mafias. They only add up as digits in a dubious electoral count, a bargain in politics of poverty or a slogan for a glorious destiny which will never be their own. The images supporting this article are indicators of widespread social confusion which is spurred by intentionally unchecked factors highlighting the current social conduct of Pakistani people.

The camera becomes political when photographers begin to operate as witnesses. Photographic image has the power to stir the social conscience and mobilize masses. It stares back with intent. It ignites action, demands attention and raises questions. Most of the photographers who start taking pictures casually in the beginning, in due course begin to investigate the actual nature of those photographs. People who shoot landscape and culture eventually shift focus to serious self initiated probes like 'what is happening to these cultures and societies now and how people inhabiting those places are being treated?' In this context, every photographer at some point becomes an activist. The camera assists this function in an extraordinary fashion and captures, arrests,

seizes, freezes and reveals the reality of its time. It unsettles monarchy and generates discontent in the echelons of power. It is humanity's greatest challenge to unjust supremacy and totalitarian control.

Using a camera for documenting sensitive social aspects demands immense experience, perception, compassionate eye and above all the unfailing ability to render selective focus on elements which prosper beneath the enriching magnetism of a society or culture. To ensure a promising degree of truthfulness of documentation, a photographer has to be an insider from that culture at best or needs to find a native as an escort. Failure to establish intimate acquaintance with the "subject" and not to be able to see "objective truth" from a close range may result in unpardonable distortion of reality. A common trap for a photographer's intrusive eye is that all cultures often appear vibrant, dazzling and enormously spell binding on the surface and their art and architecture may seem enchanting, captivating and enthralling. Exposure to this exotic experience of reaching out to unfamiliar strata in a society through the viewfinder of a camera often shadows appropriate knowledge and understanding which can end up in an utterly disappointing body of work. Despite all the fascinating shimmer on the surface; cultures tend to guard their secrets under a thin veneer of glitzy cultural facade. An American photographer Diane Arbus said, "A photograph is a secret about a secret". The covert nature of a photograph explains the dilemma of documenting diversity of countless different communities existing within the greater span of multicultural landscape in a country like Pakistan.

A further enormous obstacle in documenting social history in form of images in Pakistan is the strict privacy of minorities and marginalized communities. Social norms also pose a challenge as in many areas of the country the use of camera and photography is still considered strictly anti-Islamic. In that case, even for an insider with a camera may get to see only partial reality. Most of the time, despite their best efforts, photographers just manage to see the half truth or fuzzy facts. Like any underrated culture, a photograph of it may also hide as much as it reveals. Ethnic groups, minorities and marginalized people mask their uniqueness for the sake of survival. They tend to believe that they can thrive safely only when exist away from mainstream urban clusters to avoid cultural erosion which stems from unwanted interaction with the 'Other' culture. For example, pointing a camera to a group of people in Indus Kohistan was as unwelcoming as it was in several areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab under the pretext of photography being credited as *Haraam* (forbidden in Islam) and sometimes merely because they do not want to be seen by anyone who is culturally or racially different from them. On the contrary, snapping a picture without paying a monetary compensation in Kalash valleys is considered an act of disapproval but allowed with much relish when paid in advance. These varying extremes of visual documentation somehow affect the nature of photographs and claim of reality shown in them.

Quite often, out of inevitability of survival or unchecked interaction with dominant cultural groups, isolated ethnic populace discreetly merge into conventional thread of larger neighboring communities. This unanticipated erosion distorts the factual understanding of ethnic diversity and ironically, shaded by this blurring visor of muddy reality, the photographers also get deceived.

A photograph makes complex visual abstractions of a society comprehensible to us in the form of two dimensional documents. The eyes only see what the mind registers. In the absence of reliable photographic images, the journey into the heart of people and their reality fails to capture countless noteworthy details. "A picture speaks a thousand words", they say but due to its persuasive character, any picture is hardly a perfect premier on historical verification without a credible supplementary written or verbal account from its author. I believe that every journalistic or documentary photograph remains an inadequate proof of a situation without a carefully crafted accompanying statement which elaborates the camouflaged visual narrative in that picture. Most of the time, it is not the picture that makes the story but in fact it is the story that makes a picture. To accomplish authentic relevance of any pictorial chronicle to the people connected to it, a photographer must delve deeper into the study of a subject he/she intends to document. The images presented here solve a few riddles but give rise to more enigmas, the biggest of which is the eternal question, "when will the Pakistani nation begin its true journey out of the heart of its darkness?"

The nature of a photographic image can be argued. Photographs can be biased. They may be elusive as a mirage like life itself. However, with all the illusions, imperfections, chaos and amusement, they make us feel comfortable with ourselves as this is the only eye witness account we have. They arrest the flux of time and redeem the photographer. Every picture is a virtue for it performs some sort of redemptive function.

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The Historical Background of the Ansaris:
A Case Study of the City of Kasur

Asif Nazir

Those who helped and befriended Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) after his migration to Madina were called 'Ansar'. It is on the same grounds that Muslims call Christians 'Nasara' which is derived from the same root, as they assisted and befriended Christ in his mission (Ali, 1901: 9).

The Ansari surname throughout South Asia is used to show the ancestral link with the people who helped the Prophet in his mission. They travelled from the Arabian Peninsula to Iran, Central Asia, Bangladesh and Afghanistan through various waves of migration. When Muhammad Bin Qasim was sent to Sindh by governor Hajaj Bin Yousuf to rescue some imprisoned women and children from Raja Dahir – ruler of Sindh, some members of his army were descendants of Hazrat Abu Ayub Ansari – one of the Prophet's companions. Those Ansaris stayed in Sindh and Punjab after Qasim's departure (Ibid). Being a capacious land, the Sindhi people absorbed the Ansaris in their culture and made them feel at home. Jatts and Rajputs of Sindh clans especially helped them out in every aspect of life. With the passage of time, the Ansaris settled in Sindh, received an honour in the society due to their ancestral link with Abu Ayub Ansari. Later, the majority of the Ansaris migrated to Hafizabad (Sindh), Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Kasur and Multan in Pakistani Punjab (Hanif Zafar Ansari, Interview with Researcher: 02 March 2014).

It also appears that over a period of time, many of the new Muslim converts in India and Pakistan also identified themselves as Ansari to show reverence to their Islamic faith. Often, but not necessarily, Ansari is used to identify a well-known North Indian caste, which is also known as Momin or Muslim Julaha (Elliot, 1870:9).

Kasur is 34 miles away south east of Lahore having a population of 3 million consisting of various *Baradris*.[1] However, the Ansaris are more in number as compared to other *baradris* in the city of Kasur. Mostly,

Ansaris in Kasur are thread or cloth merchants. The Ansaris of Kasur weaved the cloth on handlooms (*khadi*) as the Momin Ansaris did in India. In the urban areas of Kasur city the Ansaris are considered the most important artisan community. Especially in Faisalabad and Kasur, the Ansari *baradri* is greater in numbers than in urban areas (Haji Sidique Ansari, Interview with Researcher: 09 March 2014).

In the history of the subcontinent, Ansaris have played a significant role in the political struggle for freedom through the platform of the Momin Conference.[2] The Momin Conference represented the voice of the oppressed and the downtrodden classes amongst the castes of Muslims of the subcontinent. It was a political party of the weavers (Julahas) and craftsmen considered as the lower class of Muslim society. The Momin Ansaris of the subcontinent were against the East India Company (EIC). The reason behind their hostility towards the British was their profession of weaving. EIC wanted to destroy Indian garments to enhance the trade of their own garments from Manchester and Liverpool. The Ansaris were the backbone of the garment industry of the Indian subcontinent. The caste line discrimination of the Muslim society towards these oppressed and downtrodden people initiated them to unite and fight for their rights. The Momin movement actively supported the Congress party for the freedom struggle. Its founders severely opposed the Two Nation Theory and the doctrine of the All-India Muslim League (Ansari, 2000:12).

Historically, Julahas were considered low caste (*Kammi*), incompetent, cowardly, stingy and lazy in the society of the subcontinent. They were blamed to be the most active among the rebels during the War of Independence[3] of 1857 (Khan, 1858: 39). After the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, low castes such as Qasai, Nai, Teli, Lohar, Bisati and Julaha merged themselves in other castes to upgrade their social status. After the partition, on both sides of the border, people from these low castes became Maulvi, Madaris, Qari and Sufi and lost their original identity.

Ibbeston being a foreigner asserts his perception that the Julahas (who also claim themselves to be Ansaris) living in the subcontinent have various sub-divisions. They have a number of identities according to their professions and ancestors. The majority of them are from land owning tribes and are scattered throughout India. Bhatti, Khokhar,

Janjua, Awan and Sindhu are the main sub-divisions of the Julahas. Bhattis are mostly divided. To the west of Lahore the Khokhars are in the majority. Janjua and Awan are settled in the Rawalpindi division. In Amritsar and Lahore, Sindhus are numerous. Bhagat Kabir who belonged to Banares was also a Julaha and is considered as a religious iconic figure among the Hindus especially in the lower castes of Hindus.

Muslim Julahas are sons of the soil and are natives of the Indian subcontinent. Before partition, the bulk of Julahas were residing in various districts of the Punjab, having the profession of weaving. After partition, a majority of them crossed the border and settled in Pakistani Punjab. They did not have much problem in settling in Pakistan as the culture across the borders was similar. They settled in the industrial cities of Faisalabad and Kasur. Kasur has been famous for its industry of carpet, *lungi*, leather, *khais* and other garments. Although rivalry is noted amongst people of the same profession for the sake of profit but the migrant and local Julahas of Kasur soon merged with each other due to their common profession showcasing their peaceful nature and living style (Sadique Ansari, Interview with Researcher: 12 March 2014).

In the rural areas of Pakistani Punjab, Julahas are considered as *Kammis*[4]. They speak Punjabi both in India and Pakistan. In India, they belong to the Shudra caste, the lowest class in the Hindu caste system. Hindus consider them as untouchables and do not share anything with them. The caste system is tremendously entrenched in Punjabi culture and even religion could not eliminate the influence of caste from society. Julaha, like the elite castes do not exchange anything with lower castes, like the Chamar, Churha, Mirasi, Machi and such others (Ibbeston, 205). The information about the humiliated status of Julahas in Pakistani society has been misperceived by Ibbeston and the sources do not approve his opinion. Julahas are respected according to their importance in the society and their life, liberty, honor and property were valued as of the others.

In the early years of Pakistan, the Julahas of Kasur were handloom weavers just as their ancestors were. Later, the government of Pakistan introduced powerlooms to enhance the textile industry during Ayub Khan's era (1958-1968). When various communities of Kasur were provided the option of powerlooms to prepare canvas and cloth, Julahas were given preference because of their art of weaving. However, when

they filled the category of caste in the prescribed form, few educated Julahas preferred to write Ansari instead of Julaha. When other castes saw that the Julahas are being given subsidy on powerlooms, they were also tempted to benefit from this government offer and so joined the profession of weaving. Even the Sheikhs and Jatts of Kasur joined this profession naming themselves as Ansari. Later, they were absorbed in the Julaha *baradri* in the name of Ansari (Sadique Ansari, Interview with Researcher: 12 March 2014). For the Julahas of Kasur, it was a golden opportunity to work hard and with government support earned enough money to set up their own powerloom factories employing hundreds of workers preparing canvas and cloth. They became financially strong and famous throughout Punjab as Ansaris who are linked with the profession of cloth and canvas. The handloom weavers (*Khadi*) faced many problems because of this industrial change of powerlooms but they started making *darries* (floor rugs) and bedspreads. It has been explored that at the moment all people of Kasur titled Ansari are a mix of Julaha, Ansari, Jatts and other castes.

The Ansari *baradri* has a decisive position in electoral politics; therefore, its political importance debars the non-Ansari castes to depart from the mainstream of society. Sometimes, rival groups of the Ansari *baradri* repudiate the claim of the rivals to be Ansari. Sharif Sardar Sohdal Advocate claims to be an Ansari but the major families of Kasur do not accept them as an Ansari, instead they lay stress on the point that the Sohdal family is actually a Jatt clan. Sardar Sharif Sohdal's mother always claims to be a daughter of Sandhu Jatt. Moreover, the Sohdal family has been involved in fighting and other warlike activities, these martial traits confirm the opinion that Sohdal caste is not Ansari but a Jatt clan. (Mother of Sharif Sohdal, Interview with Researcher: 25 March 2014).

The literacy rate of the Julahas of Kasur is very low and their children never completed their education. They used to prefer helping their father in *Khadi* or powerlooms. The majority of Julahas in Kasur are divided into different sects of religion. The financially strong class of Julahas in Kasur are Sunni or Brelvi, some are Ahl-e- Hadis and some are Deobandi (Haji Safdar, Interview with Researcher: 02 April 2014).

The cultural phenomenon of the Punjab that no caste marries into other castes holds equal grounds on the Julahas of Kasur who do not marry

out of their community. They are very endogamous. The majority of them believe in arranged marriages. Every kind of traditional custom is fulfilled in their marriages. The Julahas of Kasur live in joint families. Unity among the community is based on their profession of powerlooms. The whole *baradri* is connected with each other despite trivial complaints against each other. Women are normally not well educated but they help their husbands in their work along with house holding. The Julaha still believe in the *panchayat* system (community council) at village and regional levels to settle community issues (Ibid). The Ansaris consisting of Jatt and Sheikh Clans made a tremendous community of Kasur and on the basis of this recognition they joined politics and played an effective role in the local, provincial and national political arena.

Julahas are taken as a downtrodden class of Punjabi society. The weaving profession added more qualities as the delicacy of the work made them sensitive and careful by nature because any harsh and abrupt action could damage the threads. Therefore, by nature weavers proved to be sensible and strong people in the ethos of the profession. They seem always busy with their profession having activities based on peace. This sensibility and sensitivity kept them away from quarrels and other criminal activities. They are self-made and industrious people. They never begged and always worked hard to meet their needs. They are strongly attached to religion and have been religiously motivated people like Hafiz Kafayat Hussain, a famous Shia scholar from Lucknow.

Conclusion

It has been explored through data collection that the people of Kasur claiming themselves to be Ansari are a mixture of Julaha, Ansari, Jatts and other castes. Various other *baradris* of Kasur have taken shelter under the word Ansari to uplift their social and political status. Being an Ansari has been a prominent factor in the electoral politics of Kasur since decades. Therefore, even candidates from non-Ansari *baradris* claim to be Ansari to come to mainstream politics. Both in India and Pakistan, the weaving community refuse to be called Julahas. They prefer to be registered as Muslim Julahas, Ansaris or Momin Ansaris. Julahas belong to the non-martial class of Punjabi society and they avoid criminal and warlike activities but with the passage of time, the

Julaha community is now seen in all professions and all fields of life including the police and army. The reason behind their joining the police force and army is to upgrade their social status and to consider themselves among one of the warlike communities. Moreover, the British discouraged the recruitment of the menial castes in the police and army but in the constitution of Pakistan it is no more a barricade.

Endnotes

1   The prominent *Baradris* of Kasur are Sheikh, Ansari, Kasuri (Kamiyar), Gujjar, Pathan, Khokhar, Kambo and Arain.

2   Momin Conference was founded in 1925 by Abdul Qayyum Ansari from Delhi.

3   A struggle for freedom by the natives of the subcontinent against the British.

4   *Kammi* is derived from 'kam' meaning work. *Kammi* means a person who works or is involved in manual work but in the Punjabi social setup it is used for all the manual castes including weavers (Julaha), *Mochi* (shoe mender), *Tarkhan* (carpenter), *Lohar* (blacksmith), *Kamiyar*, *Taili* and others.

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- Yaqoob Nadeem Sethi, MPA 2008 and 2013 from PP-178 Kasur.
- Haji Sidique Ansari, Finance Secretary Jamiat-ul-Ansar Kasur.
- Sheikh Wasim Akhtar, MNA from NA-139 Kasur, twice over.
- Hanif Zafar advocate, General Secretary Jamiat-ul-Ansar Kasur.
- Maqsud Sabir Ansari, District Naib-Nazim Kasur in 2005.
- Muzafar Shah Kazmi, MPA in 2002 from PP-177.
- Maqbool Sabir Ansari contested in the general election 2008 as MPA.
- Abdul-Aziz Ansari, Ex-Chairman Municipal Committee Kasur.
- Rafique Bhola Ansari, Nazim Union Council-6 City Kasur.
- Robina Ansari, Nazim Union Council-1 City Kasur.
- Sharif Sohdal Advocate, Sohdal's mother.
- Ghulam Ahmad Ansari, who contested in the elections of Tehsil Nazim and MPA in 2001 and 2002.

Basant and Pehalwani: Dying Cultural Traditions of Punjab (A Case Study of Lahore)

Mohammad Ahsan Shakoor

Introduction

Each nation of the world has its own set of customs and traditions that are the results of its specific milieus, beliefs and religious inclinations. These in turn mould and effect, in a particular way, the living style, cultural pattern and psychological demeanours of a society. Moreover, without ceremonies and traditional practices to unite us together as a single community, we tend to drift away from each other and face the world alone. The modern life-style crushes traditions, while traditions are the backbone of a culture. A culture that loses its traditions disappears. Punjabi culture is famous throughout the world; however, it is fading away as its upholders are changing their traditions.

The term 'topophilia', which plainly means 'love for place', is tremendously rich in semantic meaning and is widely used in contemporary philosophy, psychology, sociology and cultural studies. The term topophilia was familiarized by Yi-Fu Tuan, an American scholar of Chinese origin, who proposed a new approach in studying the relationship between man and the environment in his book. According to Yi-Fu Tuan, topophilia may be defined widely to include all emotional connections between physical environment and human beings, the philosophical and psychological notion of identity and the mental and emotional sense of belonging of an individual to a certain place, location and space (Suvorova 2011). Moreover, a relation between a human and a place persists only because of prevailing traditions; if these traditions become extinct, love for place and emotional attachment cannot transmit.

In the same way, there are many traditions in the Punjab which are fading away due to numerous causes: religious, political and economic. Therefore, 'love for place' in the Punjab is disappearing due to its dying cultural traditions. This research deals with two most important traditions of Punjab especially Lahore: *Basant* and *Pehalwani*. *Basant* is

an old age tradition of the Punjab. Originally, a festival celebrated in the region to herald spring and expressing joy over the plentiful wheat crops, in its core, it is a kite flying festivity when the yellow colors of the mustard fields dominate the whole life of the Punjab. It has disappeared from the Punjab and emotional attachment with Lahore has been wiped out. Moreover, for centuries, Punjabi people have fanatical interest in sports and the most important traditional sport of the Punjab is *Pehalwani* (wrestling). It is considered that the health of the *pehalwans* (wrestlers) reflected on the health of society as a whole. Today, however, the popularity of this tradition is in sharp decline and the topophila of Lahore is disappearing because of extinction of these cultural traditions. A large number of people were emotionally attached to Lahore due to its vibrant and traditional culture. Therefore, it is imperative to have a debate on *Pehalwani* and *Basant* as dying cultural traditions in detail, to determine the value of these traditions in relation to love with space.

Pehalwani

Pehlwani is the most renowned and traditional form of wrestling in the subcontinent. *Akhara* (earthen pit) is a place for exercise, practise, training and lodging for *pehalwans*. Indians paid much focus on the bodily strength in the early 20th century. A strong and powerful body became the ideal of young Indians due to their relation with this beautiful tradition of *Pehalwani. Pehalwans* did hard exercises and took great care of their physical health. In the early 20th century, many renowned *pehalwans* were born in the subcontinent. All of them have proved themselves as the best *pehalwans* such as Gama Pehalwan, Imam Bakhsh Pehalwan, Kikar Singh, Ramzi Pehalwan, Boota Pehalwan, Gonga Pehalwan, Khalipha Pehalwan, Rahim Bukhash Sultani, Kaliya Pehalwan and Bholo Pehalwan (Alter 2010).

The main reason for the ardent interest of people was the charisma or personality of wrestlers that was the amalgamation of power, expertise and hold on art and control on their passions. Many people inclined towards them and had started *Pehalwani* as a profession because of the character of renowned *Pehalwans* of the land. Another reason of appeal was the kings and princes of different states who sponsored *Pehalwans*. They had awarded them land, money and a mace (*gurz*), made of gold and silver connected with precious jewels like rubies. The rulers

of states patroned *Pehalwani* not only for their entertainment but they backed this precious cultural tradition for the reason that it highlighted their authority and as it nurtured a symbol of concord among the populace. *Pehalwans* did their exercise and training under the direction of celebrated *Pehalwans* hired by the rulers in Kohlapur State, Patiala State, Junaghadh State, Baroda Vadodara State, Hyderabad State and many more among approximately 560 states of the subcontinent. However, the finest *pehalwans* belonged to the Punjab, while topmost areas for *Pehalwani*, within Punjab, were Lahore, Gujranwala and Amritsar (Alter 2010).

Muslim *pehalwans* made a great contribution in uplifting this art in the world of *Fun-i-Pehalwani* (art of wrestling) both at home and abroad. In the 18th and 19th century, most of the wrestlers belonged to the state which sponsored them. After the partition, rulers of the states were given the option to choose either India or Pakistan. In the process of allegiance, most of the states lost their independent status and economic deprivation was the order of the day, so they stopped sponsoring the *pehalwans*. Earlier, the undefeated champion was awarded with the title "Rustum-i-Hind" and after independence "Rustum-i-Pakistan" (Chaudhary 2010).

Lahore - A Centre of *Pehalwani* in Punjab

Lahore, being a historic city, has produced many eminent *pehalwans* and has many *akharas* until date. Three famous *Daff* (assemblies) of *pehalwans* are still working in Lahore and their members are entitled as *Daff-dar* (L. D. Pehalwan 2015). After the Partition of the Punjab in 1947, the sport of *Pehalwani* remained popular in Lahore. The appetite for *Pehalwani* was evident from the over-crowded stadiums in almost every city of the Punjab, particularly Lahore. In essence, topophilia of Lahore was connected with *Pehalwani*, which created a sense of 'Lahore Lahore Ay' (Lahore is Lahore).

Bholu Brothers of Lahore were very popular in the Punjab and all over the world in general and were renowned *pehalwans* because of their outstanding skills. People were grateful to them because they were their Sports Heros. The Bholu Brothers belonged to a *pehalwan* family of Kashmiri origin which had distinguished titleholders like Bholu Pehalwan, Goga Pehalwan, Akki Pehalwan and Aslam Pehalwan. All

titleholders in *Pehalwani* were the sons of Imam Bukhsh Pehalwan (*Rustam-e-Hind*) and nephews of the Great Gama. The *Akhara* of Bholu was titled *Dar-ul-Sayhat* and was situated in Karachi. Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan gave the place to Bholu Pehalwan to use for *Pehalwani*. The Government of Pakistan, until Ayub Khan, frequently sponsored the family of Bholu Pehalwan in acknowledgement of his struggle and commitment to this cultural tradition (Aslam 2015).

From 1947 to 1970, almost the first two decades of Pakistani nationhood, the love for *Pehalwani* was on its peak and Lahore was the major centre of renowned p*ehalwans*. *Pehalwans* presented and demonstrated their abilities at the traditional festivals or exhibitions called *Melas* in Punjab. The *pehalwans* regularly performed their skills at public congregations and concerts. Those were the precious days when Lahore was ruled by the *pehalwani* lifestyle. People used to assemble just to watch the legendary *pehalwans* training. Saturday was the key day for the Lahoris because there was always a fixed show of *Pehalwani* (A. C. Butt 2015). People had a grand demonstration in which drums could be heard in the streets of *Pehalwani* concerned cities of Punjab, especially Lahore. The contending *pehalwans* dressed in loose-fitted clothes. A *pehalwan* was greatly ornamented, wearing a colossal turban on his head and carrying a shimmering mace in his hands would lead the *Dangal* (procession) while seated on the front chair of a horse driven farm cart. A skilled high-ranking *pehalwan* would ring a large bell and announce the names of wrestlers. The main fighting gatherings commenced on Sundays in Lahore (Lahori 1994). The details of a *pehalwan's* name along with their *Khalifa* (teachers) and the *daff* (group) to which each *pehalwan* belonged was also announced whenever there was a domestic or local *Dangal*. All the announcements were followed by loud drum beating.

Still there are many places in Lahore in which posters of renowned Pehalwans are hung in memory of this healthy dying cultural tradition of Punjab (Figure 1). This was the period when most of the indigenous business executives and traders were connected with one or another *daff* in Lahore, even throughout Punjab. At that time, the main location for *Dangals* was Minto Park, Lahore and famous fights, after partition, were hosted by *Akhara* Minto Park (Lahori 1994).

As a result, Pakistan collected 18 wrestling gold medals, 5 in Asian Games and 1 Gold in the 1960 Olympic Games. In 1986, Pakistan won 10 gold medals in the Commonwealth Games. Despite that, *akharas* that were once crowded with thousands of spectators are now muted.

Since the ancient period, *Pehalwani* encouraged a large number of following in Punjabi culture as a national sport. At present, the admiration of this cultural tradition is in sharp decline owing to varying tastes, modern way of life and values adopted from the West. Traditional *akharas* of *Pehalwani* are dying with their perfect ethos of discipline, interactions and patience.
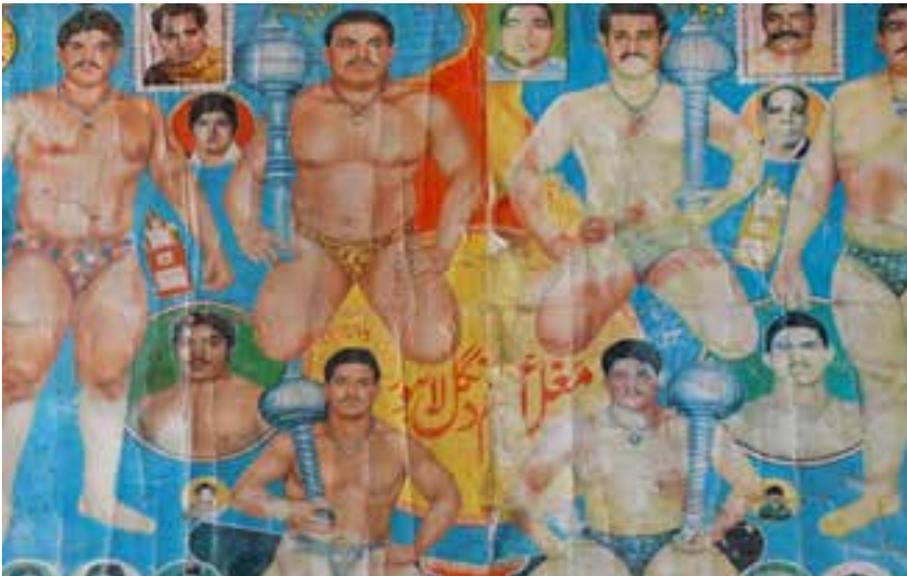
Figure 1

Poster in a tea stall. Photograph by Author

Demise of *Pehalwani*

The decline of *Pehalwani*, being a cultural sport of Punjab, has begun. After the partition, the ruling class, except for a few, in the new born sovereign state of Pakistan, unnoticed its glorious past in the field of *Pehalwani*. There were more than 300 *akharas* at Lahore in 1947, hardly 30 are still functioning properly.

Moreover, the number of *pehalwans* has reduced from about 6000 to 150-20 (A. M. Pehalwan 2015). It was challenging for traditional *akharas* to stay alive on inadequate state revenue or on voluntary aids. Financial survival of new comers was challenging because of the lack of funds (Hameed 1992).

The main factors for the decline of this game were government negligence and poverty that consign the glorious feats of wrestlers to fast-fading memory. Only a handful carry the torch for the next generation and few command the thousands of spectators of days gone by.

For years, the Great Gama family (Bholo Brothers) and their *akhara* cultured the talent of Punjab. Now, it has turned into a graveyard full of graves of renowned *pehalwans*, The Bholu Brothers are buried next to their centuries-old *akhara*. Sweepers clean the graves but the compound of the *akhara*, abandoned exercise room and small garden is full of scrap and trash now, which is an indication of the decay of the cultural sport of Punjab.

Rendering to Abid Aslam, nephew of Bholu Pehalwan and son of Aslam Pehalwan, Jhara Pehalwan was the last renowned *pehalwan* of the Bholu family who won awards; furthermore, he cried out and uttered, "I cannot express about *Pehalwani*, it really hurts me. We have lost the entire splendour and it is agonizing to recall the golden days. Presently, there is no admiration for *pehalwans* and no more bread in the game, then why one should wrestle? It is difficult to be ranked number one in the world, despite your achievement nobody respects you even the management and the ruling class do not take care of you and your family remains hand to mouth, hence it is worthy to look after some business and earn money" (Aslam 2015). Due to disappointments in the field of *Pehalwani*, Abid Aslam, son of mighty Rustams, has picked up a business profession to earn his livelihood instead of his hereditary profession *Pehalwani*. He has a money exchange office and earns more than he ever could from wrestling.

In addition, the disciplinary routine of drill and life of the *pehalwans* is well defined by stern moral and ethical rules along with dominance over the self and sensuality. A *pehalwan* must be pious and should not ejaculate because semen is viewed as the main source of strength. Furthermore, a *pehalwan* must escape from drugs such as tobacco, alcohol and spicy foods. Wholly, these things are supposed to enrage the passion of a person and most of the people loose self-control. Excess of drugs and spicy food also affected the cultural sport of Punjab. For instance, the last famous *pehalwan* Zubair Aslam named Jhara Pehalwan, son of Aslam Pehalwan (Rustam-i-Punjab) who belonged to the well-known Great Gama family of legendary *pehalwans*, joined the Bholu Brothers later when they had almost pensioned off from professional

Pehalwani. He was a great replacement for them but he did not labor well. Definitely, he was the finest in Pakistan and was taught by the top *Khalifas* (trainers) of *Pehalwani*, as well as Arshad Bijli. His foremost objective of life was to overthrow Inoki, great wrestler of Japan, who had beaten his uncle Aki Pehalwan. After this triumph, he was the greatest *pehalwan* of Pakistan but his companionship ruined him. Due to surplus of money, he became addicted to drugs. In a fashion, Jhara Pehalwan died on 11 September 1991, at the age of 29 due to heart attack and the last chapter of Pehalwani tradition was sealed (Chaudhary 2010).

Distinguished *pehalwans* of Lahore consider Pehalwani as a fading tradition of Punjab and their views are important to understand the causes of this dying tradition of Punjab. According to Amir Butt "I have a small number of trainees who exercise with me but youngsters do not want to become Pehalwans. Youth used to say 'why should one en route to Pehalwani? It has no future, no money'. Further, they cannot meet the expense of daily special diet to increase power and uphold their weight. Many people have not the funds for Pehalwani in a country where there is huge joblessness. It has become very expensive to become a Pehalwan of fine quality because it costs at least 2500 rupees a day only for food and nobody from the middle class cannot afford it" (A. Butt 2015).

Khalifa Babar Pehalwan says, "In the non-existence of proper amenities, Lahore has not hosted any main *Dangal* in the last five years and he has intensely discouraged his son and nephews from coming towards inside the *akhara* because he thinks there is no future in it" (Ka 2015). All these issues have isolated the traditional sport in Lahore. Additionally, the dying mode of *Pehalwani* is most probably damaging the topophilia of Lahore.

Basant

Apart from *Pehalwani*, the people of Punjab warmly greeted *Basant*, mother of all festivals, beforehand a few years ago. A week before the festival, the biggest stock of kites reached in the market with the newest quality of local and imported *pinnahs* (bobbin) and *dor* (twine). "Bo-Kata" a typical shout of victory while flying kites, boomed in the atmosphere when young people came on their rooftops in the *Basant* festival. It is claimed that there was no other place in the world where

kite flying as a sport had attained such commanding heights as in the city of Lahore in the recent past. Most importantly, it was a key festival in nurturing the topophilia of Lahore among its people.

It is not known exactly when and how Lahore owned this festival of kite flying but the activity has increased during the last decade of the 19th century in the city, making Lahore a principal center of the kite-festival. The very mention of kites in Lahore awakens one's memories of childhood (Siddiqui 2005).

Basant - A Controversy among Historians

Lahore, according to legendary history, is the place of origin of the Basant Festival in the Punjab since ages. We do not know whether it was being officially celebrated during the Mughal period or not.

There are a few other, mostly doleful and factually weak evidences, associated with *Basant*, as a Hindu celebration that is against Islam. Undoubtedly, a very large number of essays, newspapers and books have been written that propagate the deliberately false beliefs declaring the celebration of *Basant* as an act of blasphemy and link it with *Kufr* (apostasy).

At the start of the 20th century, three Bengali writers, in their contradictory accounts, put forward the thesis that the *Basant* festival celebrated the sacrifice of Haqiqat Rai. He was the boy who chose to die instead of converting to Islam, when given the choice (Chaudhry 2001). However, they did not mention the fact that the festival had been celebrated for more than two hundred years before Haqiqat Rai and numerous references are present in history, poetry, literature and paintings (Hameed 1992).

Figure 4

Literature on *Basant* from 2004-2010

The celebration of *Basant* in Lahore existed before the death of the Hindu boy. The fact that he was put to death on the day of the festival, however, did not establish a link between his demise and the festival but in 2004, Nawai Waqt newspaper projected the theory that *Basant* was in fact a celebration of violation committed by Haqiqat Rai (Chaudhry 2001). This concept quickly gained support with the religious prophets and comfortable chair historians of Pakistan. More than a dozen books were published between 2004 and 2010 criticizing *Basant* as a festival celebrated against Islam. None of the books cited any sources, which associate *Basant* with the tradition of Sufis. These shaky evidences with no timelines challenged historical accuracy.

Apart from these evidences, it is a fact that *Basant* was celebrated throughout the Punjab with the arrival of the spring season. It is now more of a festivity for the public. Sometimes it is also termed as a Hindu festival, a wasteful spending and against human rights laws but its celebrations in Lahore were worth seeing. The city of Lahore, as a custodian of this cultural tradition of Punjab, celebrated the occasion most jubilantly, regardless of the negative analysis and going into its history and association with any caste or creed. Concisely, along with *Pehalwani*, *Basant* is the main constituent of the topophilia of Lahore..

Basant and Old Lahore - Basis of Topophilia

Basant is eminent all over Lahore but the real festival is associated with the Walled City, also known as *Porana* Lahore (Old Lahore) (Mehdi 2015). It is here that *Basant* is celebrated with craze and passion. The old city's *Basant* had historically allowed a fair and equal involvement of the rich and the poor, the old and the young. During conflicts, it was *Basant* which brought people together because of its secular nature (Rehman 2015). Therefore, love replaced hatred in warm hearted Lahoris. Therefore, it can be rightly stated that it was the base of the topophilia of Lahore.

Basant has gradually grown into a celebration of massive proportions in the historic city of Lahore. The preparations for the day start weeks earlier and as the festival draws closer, colorful kites are available for sale, practically, in every street. The variety of shades and colors of all types of kites assail the eyes, small kites, medium kites and big kites. There are special markets in the Walled City where wholesale business

takes place and retailers from other cities and localities procure the bulk supplies, weeks before the actual celebrations start. The major commercial groups in the city celebrate the festival in a big manner by way of sponsoring parties to advertise and market their products. They not only publicize their brand names but also make all out efforts to have maximum exposure in the press and media. Popular give-aways by the companies on the occasion are kites with *dor*, t-shirts, yellow caps and colorful balloons. It is a diversion for the youngsters to enjoy and spend their time without indulging in undesirable social activities.

Ban on *Basant* - Damaged Topophilia of Lahore

Many discussions were held before the ban on *Basant* and a Senior Advocate M. D. Tahir of the High Court filed writ petitions (Mehdi 2015). He took the matter before the High Court of Lahore. M. D. Tahir took the following main arguments against kite flying in the court: carnival of *Basant* may graciously be banned being the custom and tradition of Hindus, that the respondents be kindly ordered to formulate the law and stop the kite flying which creates danger to the life and person of youngster besides electricity break down and injury to the public by firing with the firearms including the dangerous weapon, Kalashankov, 12 bore and other rifles (Siddiqui 2005).

In response to the petition, the Prohibition of Kite Flying Ordinance was promulgated in 2006. The Sharif brothers, raised in Lahore and its environs and known for their love for Lahori food and greed, displayed a curious hatred towards *Basant*, a festival in which food plays an important part. The ordinance was re-promulgated in 2007 and the Punjab Assembly passed the Punjab Prohibition of Kite Flying (Amendment) Act, which banned flying, manufacturing, selling and trading in kites and associated things (Shehzad 2015).

In 2009, the Governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, briefly lifted the ban on *Basant*. In an interview, Taseer said that *Basant* was an important part of the culture of Punjab and should be celebrated as a big cultural event. "Depriving us from celebrating *Basant* is tantamount to depriving us of our fundamental rights" (Salman Taseer).

He vowed to celebrate the festival himself and open the gates of the Governor House to the public who wished to join him in the festivities.

His interview upset many people and Taseer was warned that he would be arrested and the Governor House besieged if he went ahead with his plans of celebrating *Basant* (Chaudhry 2001).

The year 2009 was the last year in which the festival was celebrated in Lahore. The Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) led local government restored the ban in 2010. The prohibition on one of the last remaining ways for having fun for Lahoris has been in place since that time. In 2013, the Caretaker Chief Minister tried, unsuccessfully, to restore *Basant* celebrations.

Figure 5

A shop after ban on *Basant*. Photography by Author

In 2014, the government decided to move the festivities out of the Walled City to the forests of Changa Manga. The celebration was cancelled at the last minute (Shehzad 2015). Therefore, it is an intentional effort of the government to alienate Punjabis from their rich culture. The ban on *Basant* is a great loss in terms of economy and in the cultural aspect. Due to the ban, new generations are forgetting this historic tradition and indulging in other harmful activities. In short, love for Lahore has been damaged because there were thousands of people who loved Lahore only for its vibrant culture.

Furthermore, Lahore's economy was devastated after the ban on *Basant*. Around 500,000 families, directly related to the kite flying business, have lost their sources of livelihood. The ban is costing them Rs. 200 million annually and at the same time damaging other businesses that are indirectly related to the festival. The people related to the industry, including kite makers, twine (*dor*) makers, wholesalers and retailers, had lost their means of earning a living.

Muhammad Siddique, who used to sell kites two years ago in the Walled City, said that he was now working as a laborer. "I never thought that my business could be ruined like this and I would become a laborer", he said, adding, "We need to accept that we collectively failed to stop the chemical-coated twine that killed so many people" (Bisharat 2015). Moreover, key issues and concerns raised by the police

and local government seem to be reasonable and manageable. For instance: firstly, the dangerous twine is a major threat to the lives of the people. Certain vendors prepare dangerously sharp twine to fly kites, using both metal and glass clippings. This can cause serious injuries, especially to motorcycle and bicycle riders. Secondly, aerial firing carried out during the celebrations, mostly using unlicensed arms, results in casualties. Thirdly, the demand for electricity, during the night of *Basant*, cannot be met with and overloads the system, causing an energy crisis. Lastly, children are prone to accidents while flying kites on rooftops and running to grab falling kites on streets.

The concerns, while valid, are easily addressed with very little effort and proper governance. Kite flying associations and enthusiasts have long advocated simple measures that will eliminate purported dangers and make the sport of kite flying safe and probably safer than, say, playing cricket. The measures are easy to apply, for instance, an enforced ban on dangerous twine, suspension on bike riding for a twenty-four hour period (as on other occasions), designation of safe areas for kite flying, ban on aerial firing, public awareness campaigns and mobile generators for load balancing.

Conclusion

Apart from a great number of traditional festivals, fairs, games and other cultural traditions, *Pehalwani* and *Basant* are the two most important cultural traditions that have popularized the image of Pakistan throughout the world. Lahore has remained the hub of these cultural traditions and amused many people within the country and outside the country. Many people used to come to Lahore from far-flung areas just to celebrate *Basant* and to watch the *Dangals* of various *Pehalwans*. Presently, these two traditions of the cultural heritage of Punjab are in its dwindling phase due to several tangible and intangible reasons and in turn, the topophilia of Lahore is being damaged day by day.

Dynamics like modernisation has affected the cultural stream. Here I am reminded of what a rural woman once said: "*Rab kare oho wela away, jad jatti mem sab bun jaway*" (I pray the Lord that time comes when the peasants would become westernized) (Suvorova 2011). That woman is no more but her wish expressed accidentally has been largely fulfilled. The modern Punjabi has become westernized at the expense of his

language, arts, culture, traditional values and customs. The flood of westernization has swept away almost all traces of traditional art and culture. The imitation of the west has led to the craze for urbanization, which resulted in alienation of old intra-communal and intra-lingual ties.

In short, the negligence of the government also played an important role in diminishing these two traditions. No doubt, governments are working for industrialization and infrastructure but their budgets have nothing to do with the departments of culture and sports. The budget of these departments is so low that nothing can be done for the promotion of culture. Besides this, in the case of *Basant*, it is a deliberated effort of the government under the banner of Islam and human rights. Worriedly, the festival that had been celebrated without harm for seven centuries in Lahore and more than eight centuries elsewhere, became dangerous all of a sudden towards the end of the 20th century.

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Truck Art and Poetry: A Story in Motion

Aisha Asim Imdad

Introduction

The truck art of Pakistan has received world fame over the last many years. The moving art vehicles with their colorful and flamboyant imagery and poetry fascinate people from all over the world. The decorative motifs and images of birds, mythical creatures and the landscape of snowy mountains with a small cottage in it are some of the few aspects of truck art with which we are now familiar. Each truck carries several kinds of art elements used on its various parts to decorate it and for each element of art a different craftsperson is involved. Hence, a truck has to be decorated by a group of artisans with their own set of skills.

A truck must have all these decorative details at different parts of the truck. On the back of the truck it must have one large image of either a landscape, a known political or film star or a Sufi saint or a mythical or poetic image of a certain kind of philosophy or idea popular among truck drivers, owners or even society. The sides usually have smaller bands of various popular decorative patterns painted in certain rhythmic style with other information written about the truck company. The front of the truck has a lot of jewel like metallic elements and is decorated with scarves with gold edging to make it bridal in its entirety. Also, if there is any religious text or image, it is always on the top front of the truck referred to as *Taj* or crown (Khan and Vandal, p. 9. 2013) .[1]

The Historical Context of Truck Art and Poetry

The known history of truck art is quite recent but the images tell a different story all together. It is believed that truck art started in the 1900s to replace the art on older horse drawn carriages. The tradition was to decorate these carriages as elaborately as the status of the person. It is assumed that Khyber Pakhtunkhawa (KPK) is the birthplace of this elaborate art form. The *ustads* (an expert) and artisans who were the fresco painters of palaces and *havelis* (mansions) of the time started this trend by decorating the trucks (Khan and Vandal, p. 9. 2013).[2]

The truck designs reflect similarities to various art styles evolving out of the colonial period of India and creating an amalgamation of various ideas and styles of that time. These similarities give us a new way to look and study the patterns of truck art and understand how they may have evolved to be the way they are today. We can see the reflections and glimpses of various art styles in truck art in the form of post-Mughal fresco art, the Company art, ideologies of Swadeshi and Shantiniketan movements in association with Bengal School of Arts, style of Kalighat paintings of the bazaars of Calcutta and last but not the least the distinct resemblance in decorative patterns of folk paintings of various villages with the trucks decorative imagery.

Figure 1a

Patochitra: A Bengali Folk Art. Source: Flickr.com. Retrieved from:

http://farm3.static.flickr.m/2490/4149230921_5d2050b4b4.jpg. Last visited: 30th October 2015.

Figure 1b

Truck art inspired from folk art. Source: THAAP Archives

The 1900's were the time of overall change in the Indian sub-continent. Modern art was taking over the world by storm. It was also the time of the industrial age and its impact was also felt on the arts. The Bengal School of Arts and its ideology associated with movements like Swadeshi and Shantiniketan movements gave its parallels to art of this region. The idea to focus on the poor and downtrodden of the region rather then the rich was a popular subject of the time. The art, which came out at that time, was looking at rural India, its folk art and its rural landscape and create an inspiration for future artistic styles with homegrown modernism (Figures 1a and 1b). Sinha writes:

> "In the 1920s, the emergence of Shantiniketan as an idealized, rural Indian Bauhaus validated a number of select strategies. Rabindranath Tagore's art school foregrounded the idea of the rural over the urban, of art as vocation

as opposed to profession; a depersonalized, 'pure' art as opposed to an image of sensuous gratification; of the artist as witness rather than protagonist. Moreover, the artist's investigations into the human condition, spirituality and the idealized poor, sought to create a new language, one that was inscribed within the specific pictorial notion of a land and its people" (Sinha, p. 3. 2003).[3]

The art that evolved out of the Shantiniketan movement made way for future art trends in popular art as well. Indian folk art was used as an inspiration to create art that was uniquely Indian and represented the spiritual ideas and values of its people. Art trends set at that time may clearly be seen in the popular truck art produced in Pakistan even after Partition in a form of its own homegrown representation of its people and culture (Figures 2a and 2b)

Figure 2a

Four Mandalas of the Vajravali; Tibet; Sakya School; ca. 1456; Pigments. Source: Rubin Museum. Retrieved from: http://rubinmuseum.org/images/content/Andrea_Mandala.jpg. Last Visited: 30th October 2015

The Kalighat painting, which was in practise at that time, was also based in its style on folk art and its urban transformation in the modern arts of India. The age of mechanical reproduction in the form of litho-prints and wood cuts, brought a change in the way people made art. Integrating folk art in popular genres and mingling it with modern trends of the times balanced the change in the new emerging art (Jain, p. 9. 2003)[4]. As Jain writes:

Figure 2b

Truck art inspired from folk art. Source: THAAP Archives

"The story of Kalighat painting is the story of transformation of a folk art form into a popular genre …. It absorbed the new manners and customs of the British settlers, the revivalistic exercises of Mughal court culture and the new avataar of Sanskrit drama on the proscenium stage. Kalighat painting which arose out of these composite cultural circumstances grew to be at once urban, uninhibited, innovative and liberal" (Ibid).[5]

The use of folk art was as much a resistance as it was a statement of the people in changing times. The Kalighat paintings were creating waves by making comments on society and its morals, making social critique, bringing in folk art to make an Indian statement about its environs and its changing times. Kalighat brought in its fold different kinds of local genre of arts, popular ideas and political issues, for example; Indian myth, folk tales, national heroes, religious heroes, Indian folk paintings and such others. It is also important to note that Kalighat paintings were very popular among the common people and were bought as souvenirs and gifts from the bazaars of Calcutta by the travellers. As Jain writes:

> "It is agreed by most scholars that Kalighat *Pats* (paintings) were among the most favorite mementos carried home by the pilgrims, visitors, traders and tourists who came to Calcutta from within and outside Bengal in the 19th and early 20th centuries" (Jain, p. 47. 1999).[6]

This gives us an idea that this popular art form travelled wide and far throughout India and must have inspired other artists from other parts of India to incorporate the style into their own art as it has an inherent Indian-ness in its imagery that must have appealed to all Indians. We can see the same thing happening in truck art as it also uses all aspects of folk arts and its integration with modern day concerns of our lives on the surface of the truck to express the views of the truck owner or the driver about life. The style of art produced in truck art is very similar to the Kalighat painting style as it is creating a cultural flow or diffusion of sorts among these art forms (Figures 3a, 3b).

Figure 3b (R)

Truck art inspired from Kalighat painting style. Source: THAAP Archives

Figure 3a (L) Kalighat painting style. Source: Mapin Publications.

Figure 3b (R) Truck art inspired from Kalighat painting style. Source: THAAP Archives

The fresco painting style and patterns have also had an impact on truck art. As the first truck artists were considered to be fresco painters, they brought in many decorative elements of fresco painting in truck art. We see many similar floral patterns on trucks, which were used in the fresco paintings (Figures 4a, 4b). Earlier trucks were mostly decorated with hand paintings with few other elements in it, which were carved wooden doors, metallic jewelry for the truck interior and exterior in the form of bells and chains.

Finally, we see a strong influence of rural folk art painting on truck art. There is an uncanny familiarity between the patterns and style. The birds such as a peacock and fish are painted in various stylistic modes as a decorative pattern. Many floral patterns are almost the same in appearance and style. This cultural fusion of various art forms is conspicuously visible through the art produced on trucks (Figures 5).

Figure 4a

Fresco Painting from Mohalla Sethian Peshawer. Source: THAAP Archives

Figure 4b

Inspiration from fresco art on truck art. Source: THAAP Archives

Figure 5

Madhubani Folk Painting. Source: Indian Artisan Online. Retrieved from: http://www. indianartisansonline. com/asset/ cmsimage/ product/03_460_432. jpg. Last Visited: 26th October 2015

The Artists

Many people work upon one truck as every inch of it has to be decorated and crafted in various ways. Hence, each kind of decorative element has its own *ustads*. The person responsible for visualizing the whole project of the entire truck is the main *ustad* who works with other artisans and *ustads* under his supervision to produce the final art on the surface of one entire truck. He conceives the entire truck art according to the ideas of the owner of the truck and its driver.

A truck *ustad*, Alif Gul Sarhadi says:

> "The masters of this art know that making the trucker happy is of paramount importance. I usually spend a whole day with the driver before developing a plan for decorating the truck. One needs to know the origin of the driver, his religious persuasion, his interests in life, things he enjoys, the colors he likes and any other information telling of his character. A truck needs to reflect not just the wishes but also the personality of its owner. That is what I try to do and that is what I teach my students" (Adnan. 2014)[7]

Truck designing is an expensive business and can take up to Rs. 5 lakh to decorate one truck. As one of the *ustads* explained, "Call it what you will, decorating trucks is big business, haulage firms and lorry owners shell out $5,000, even $10,000 a time to have their vehicles adorned" (AFP, 2013).[8] Hence, an entire bazaar or a *gali* as it is called in the local language is setup, with its *ustads* and artisans catering to various aspects of truck decoration in various cities where truck art is being produced. As time has passed since the independence of Pakistan, truck art has evolved and developed itself into many kinds of art forms. The artists have developed their own niche in the evolving truck art industry. There are artists who paint the truck and then there are artists who make various decorative elements used in decorating the truck. They all work in their own workshops and create various kinds of art for the truck.

As previously mentioned, earlier trucks were mostly hand painted and had very few decorative elements. Now, the trucks have various components such as painting, metallic elements, plastic elements, bulbs,

Figure 6

Artistic expression of popular mindset of society. Source: THAAP Archives

stickers and such others. For each of these decorative art elements, a separate *ustad* is working with his team of artisans. These *ustads* and artisans have evolved the truck art since 1947 and used popular ideas of the common man of Pakistan and translated them into their own vocabulary of art
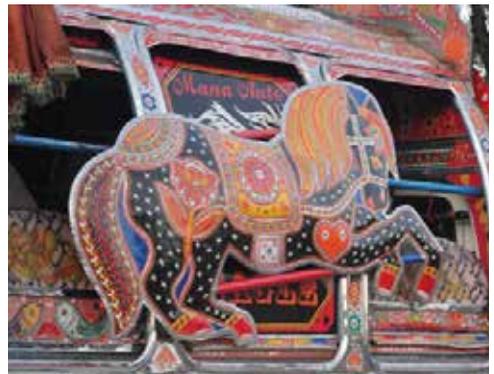
and poetry. The artistic expression of the popular mindset of society is the backbone of truck art in Pakistan (Figure 6).

Truck Drivers and Owners

The entire truck is like a decorative bride for the driver as he spends his days and nights with the truck (Figure 7). As Elias writes, "Trucks are seen not just as female, sexual or romantic objects but as partners or wives" (Elias, p. 126. 2011).[9] Therefore, he decorates it as his home or a bride. Some truckers hang scarves of bright colors on the side mirrors of the truck; they even attach female hair wigs on the side mirrors to make the truck look more feminine. All trucks wear decorative jewelry as proposed by the driver and owner of the truck. The jewelry is in the form of bells and chains that hang from various parts of the truck and jingle as the truck is driven on the road just like a woman walking with an anklet with bells in it.

Figure 7

Truck decorated as a bride. Source: THAAP Archives

Truck Art and Poetic Expression of Common People

The decorative patterns and designs of the trucks are usually according to the area they have been prepared and depict the styles of their regions. The trucks of Rawalpindi have a lot of heavy metallic art on them beside hand painted imagery. The trucks of KPK are different from others as they have heavily carved wooden doors (Figure 8). They look unique and different as the doors with their Swati wooden carvings make them exceptional and one of their kind. The trucks which come from Karachi have one feature unique to them -- they have a very distinctive seascape on their back and many flashing bulbs, glass and mirrors (Figure 9). These trucks travel from Karachi to Khyber and display their unique features and expressions to fellow travellers. The trucks from Quetta usually are very large with heavy and ornate decoration (Adnan, 2014).[10]

The poetry on the trucks is also inspired by cultural and popular ideas. Each truck has witty and amusing lines written usually on its back, which a person can read and enjoy while driving behind the truck. The owner or the driver according to their taste usually chooses the poetry. The poetry or the one-liners are part of the entire decoration of the truck art and design. There are artists who sit and design these one-liners or the popular poetry, which is expressing usually a very literal emotion, idea or view to its readers about the truck driver (Figure 10). Adnan explains:

> "Trucks are considered to be female, beautiful and even sensual. It follows naturally that poetry is used to describe the virtues of these treasured vehicles. Obviously, this 'poetry' is rarely, if ever, of a high literary quality but its immediacy and sentimentality makes it an enduring part of Pakistani popular culture, cutting across social strata" (Adnan, 2014).[11]

Conclusion

Truck art has remained uniquely Pakistani even though it is a pre-Partition craft. It is so because it has become the popular expression of the common man of this country. It has taken the shape of art that reflects all that is happening and yet cannot be said openly but can be expressed through art. Pakistani society is based on traditional cultural values where one never openly states one's opinion but talks in riddles or symbolism to express one self. Hence,

common people of various parts of Pakistan communicate with each other and also discover what is common and what is different among them through this popular genre of art. It is a walking satire on every aspect of our cultural lifestyle just as Kalighat paintings were in the bazaars of Calcutta. It has kept the traditions set by the Shantiniketan movement to uphold the local folk arts and culture intact through its vibrant and lively art. Hence, we see clearly that truck art is a fusion of many different art forms.

Perhaps the most important thing about truck art is that it is still maintains its historical links to popular arts of our land and has played an important part in making those ideas and styles part of our present day art vocabulary. Truck art has also to this day preserved the system of *ustad* and *shagird* (apprentice) from our historical/traditional way of working in arts. The craftsmen or artisans as they are called today were considered the backbone of the art of the masses in colonial times. As Mathur writes: "The leading critic and art reformer E. B. Havell similarly viewed the craftsman as India's most valuable asset, "as essential to the progress of humanity as the development of the mechanical science", and saw the products of his labor, which he called the "art of the masses", as the foundation of good living and a civilized life" (Mathur, p. 46. 2011).[12] This way of working is most probably the reason truck art has survived to this day and has been able to be preserved in the same way as earlier art forms, ideas and philosophies have, as many different *ustads* and s*hagird* are putting their heart and soul in its creation and ultimately creating an epic art form that touches the heart of every Pakistani because of its multi-faceted history that is surviving in its colorful and vibrant art. As Mathur writes:

> "For them, the craftsman was central to the problem of the creative and intellectual status of the country; his degraded condition reflected not only Britain's political power and material prosperity but also the inability of India to attain its moral vision and spiritual destiny" (Mathur, p. 46. 2011).[13]

Theses *ustads* have been saving the spiritual vision of our eternal arts and are the expression of our culture in this part of the world. They represent the true sentiment of the masses that have been preserved in the visual cultural history of our land through art that is in constant motion.

Endnotes

1   Khan, Samra M. and Vandal, Sajida. 2013. p. 9. Truck Art. *Handmade: Intro ducing the Intricacies of Craft Skills*. UNESCO, Islamabad.

2   Ibid.

3   Sinha, Gayatri. 2003. p. 3. *Indian Art: An Overview*. Rupa and Company, New Delhi.

4   Jain, Jyotindra. 2003. p. 9. Kalighat Painting: Other Perspectives. *Indian Art: An Overview*. Rupa and Company, New Delhi

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6   Jain, Jyotindra. 1999. Kalighat Paintings. *Images from a Changing World*. Mapin Publishing Private Limited, Ahmedabad.

7   Adnan, Ally. 2014. The Art of Loving. The Friday Times. 12 September 2014. Available at <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/the-art-of-loving/ > Ac cessed on 16th October 2015.

8   AFP. 2013. Pakistan's Truck Art Masters Fret over NATO Withdrawal. Dawn. December 31st 2013. Available at <http://www.dawn.com/ news/1077507/pakistans-truck-art-masters-fret-over-nato-withdrawal> Ac cessed on 25th October 2015.

9   Elias, Jamal J. 2011. *On Wings Of Diesel. Trucks, Identity and Culture in Paki stan*. Oneworld Publications, Oxford, England.

10   Adnan, Ally. 2014. The Art of Loving. The Friday Times. 12 September 2014. Available at <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/the-art-of-loving/>   Ac cessed   on 16th October 2015.

11   Ibid.

12   Mathur, Saloni. 2011. India by Design. *Colonial History and Cultural Display.* Orient Blackswan. New Delhi.

13   Ibid.

Peacock Motif in Phulkari: A Comprehensive Analysis

Rajinder Kaur and Prof. Ila Gupta, PhD

Introduction

The Indian sub-continent has a rich cultural diversity with various arts. These arts of ancient times are particularly related to traditions and rituals. The folk arts are known worldwide for their beauty and ethnicity. The peacock motif has been used in various kinds of embroidery and is one among the most depicted birds in textile designing. Embroidery is also considered a unique art, which not only contains aesthetical appeal but also represents religious diversity in respect of ideas, traditions and the living style of human beings. In current times, textile designing plays a vital role in the production of fabric to give it beauty and life. In this thrust of beauty, folk arts have been revisited and then acknowledged worldwide to enhance the quality of the fabric. In intricate embroideries, *Phulkari* has been known for its vibrant colors and beautiful designs. *Phulkari* is a renowned art of the Punjab and was in earlier times embroidered to decorate the clothes of women in their spare time. However, in the recent past, it is used in textile designing and other handloom designs for ornamentation.

Phulkari was created with flower motifs, geometrical patterns and flora and fauna with detailed outlines in earlier times. These animated motifs were usually placed symbolically. In these motifs, the peacock has been frequently embroidered from ancient to contemporary times. It has auspicious values and cultural representation with remarkable beauty. The peacock was first mentioned in the Rig-Veda, a holy scripture of Indian mythology, and described as associated with Indian deities. Its first artistic evidence was found in the Indus Valley Civilization in a terracotta mold at the site of Mohenjo-Daro. Later on, it was frequently adopted till the present time. The peacock has its significance in Indian miniature paintings as well. In miniatures it is placed as a symbol of love, sensuousness and mourning in different moods. It is often placed with Hindu deities as their vehicle or placed beside them. It has unique approaches in almost all religions, including Islam. In embroidery,

its tangible form represents versatile magnificence but its symbolical efficiency has numerous characteristics. The peacock plays a major role in textile art including printing, embroidery, tie and dye and woven art from ancient times to the present. The peacock has been chosen as the main motif in the embroidery of numerous states. In *Phulkari* embroidery, the peacock has been used in abstract, semi-abstract, geometric and stylized forms with variations of colors.

The word 'peacock' is derived from a Sanskrit word *Mayura* which means killer. A peacock with full bloomed feathers is considered a symbol of exquisiteness and purity. A peacock is also considered a symbol of prosperity, magnificence and rebirth. A dancing peacock with full bloomed feathers has remarkable beauty and compels attention. It was chosen as the national bird of India in 1963 among thousands of birds. This adoption of the peacock by the government of India has been done on the bases of its delightful beauty, proportional physique and its valuable involvement in various religions. It is believed in India that a dancing peacock is a symbol of rain and when it dances in a pleasant mood, rain is probably in the offing (Nair 1974).

Methodology

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. In the primary data, various forms of peacock motif, used in the decoration of the *Phulkari* embroidery, have been analyzed through content and visual appearance. In the collection of the primary source, some of the images of the peacock motif have been evaluated through visits by the author. On these visits, museums, emporiums, exhibitions, fairs and malls in various parts of the Punjab have been explored. During this visit, The National Crafts Museum of Delhi, *Phulkari* Punjab Government Emporium as well as exhibitions and fairs related to *Phulkari* embroidery such as Trade Fairs, Handloom Expositions have also been observed in depth to frame a structural study. The images of *Phulkari* embroidery have been collected by the author through a market survey in the state of Punjab. In this regard, the photographs of some of the *Phulkari* material have been collected from some shops after discussion with the shopkeepers. In the secondary data, books, journals, articles, magazines, online visual collections and online articles and websites have been taken as a medium to explore the symbolic significance of the peacock motif in *Phulkari*. This paper has been based on a structured frame of the peacock motif from the

ancient times through mythological, ancient Indian paintings. Therefore, the visual representation of the peacock motif has been observed through forms, lines, placement and color application.

Relevance of the Peacock Motif in Indian Art

The peacock is associated with Indian aesthetic and fine arts, including dance, music, painting and applied arts (Nair 1974). There have been many references of the glamorous bird in Indian tradition from very early times defining the role of the peacock as a popular motif in Indian art (Lal 2006). In the rock cut cave of Bhimbetka, there are many hunting scenes which depict a peacock. A group of peacocks has also been found on a terracotta jar of an ancient civilization, painted in red, black and pink with leaves (Jackson 2006). According to a chronological record, the peacock and art have been interrelated from the time of the Indus Valley Civilization (2600 to 1800 B.C.). The peacock motif had been used on the pottery of cement, clay and terracotta mold in the Indus Valley. The peacock had been carved on the wall of temples during the Mauryan Dynasty 321- 184 B.C. It is also carved in the Bharhut and Sanchi Stupas (1st to 2nd century B.C.) in beautiful forms. In the Sunga Period (2nd century B.C.), it is again depicted in a fabulous form. This depiction had been followed respectively in the Kushana time period (2nd century to 3rd century A.D.) with pairs of beautiful dancing peacocks. The flying peacock with Kartika (a Hindu God) may be seen under the Gupta Dynasty (6th Century A.D.). The coins of the Gupta dynasty are also carved with a peacock. The peacock is drawn as a vehicle of the Hindu God Kartikeya in the cave temples of Ajanta, Elephanta and Badami (Nair 1974). It is drawn on the wall paintings of the Ajanta caves in Aurangabad. It is frequently adopted in miniature paintings and in the Rajasthani School it is a dominating bird among all. The dancing figure of a peacock has been displayed with *raga* and *ragini* which symbolize happiness. The peacock displayed in the Rajasthani School is a symbol of love in pair, and mourning and waiting in singular forms. It is also associated with the figure of Lord Krishna in a dancing posture and as enjoying the flute of Krishna. The first Mughal Emperor Babur has also described the beauty of a peacock feather, tail and colors in his autobiography, *Babur-nama*. Shahjahan, one of the world-renowned Mughal Emperors, who contributed a lot to Mughal architecture, has also been portrayed on a peacock throne in paintings. Mansur was a famous painter of Jahangir's

time who particularly portrayed peacocks in his paintings. The peacock has always remained a source of motivation and encouragement to Indian artists for creating art pieces throughout the ages and it has continued to be so even now (Nair 1974). In Indian art, the peacock has been displayed because of its beauty, charm and attractive colors and has been associated with beauty, glory, love, sorrow and mythology.

Mythological Significance

In Hindu mythology, it is a propitious bird which is associated with many Hindu deities. According to Hindu mythology, the peacock was created from one of the feathers of the Garuda (Mythical bird in Hindu mythology and the vehicle of Lord Vishnu) (Wiki 2015). In Hindu mythology, the peacock is known as a *vahana* (vehicle) of Shiva and Paravati's son Kartikeya (God of war). God Kartikeya has always been associated with the peacock; so it is also considered as a symbol of God Kartikeya. The vehicle (peacock) of Kartikeya is symbolized as a destroyer of destructive habits and the defeater of sensual things. Kartikeya is shown as mounting on a peacock which is clutching a serpent with its claws. This kind of association can be seen in a different way because the serpent is always used to depict sensual feelings of human beings and if the peacock is depicted as killing the serpent, it means that it is killing sensual desires. The peacock is also mentioned in the Rig-Veda as Indra's (God of rain) favorite bird. God Indra blessed the peacock and gave it beautiful colors, charmed plumage and colorful decorative eyes in the feather and tail as earlier it was not so charming. The reason behind this transformation of the peacock by Lord Indra is believed to be that the peacock has saved Indra's life from the devil king by sheltering him in its wings. Thus, the peacock was blessed for its noble persona. The peacock is also connected with the goddess Saraswati, the deity of music and knowledge, because when the goddess played the flute (*Vina*) for the first time, it was the peacock who danced to that music. The peacock is mentioned in the *Ramayana*, where goddess Sita (wife of Lord Rama) is enjoying the company of peacocks in Ayodhya but after her kidnapping by Ravana (King of Lanka), the birds stopped dancing because the artists wanted to depict the grief of separation (Lal 2006). There is a story in Hindu mythology that while Lord Krishna was playing his flute in the Govardhan hills, many peacocks started to dance in joy and excitement to the sweet melody of Krishna's flute. At the end, peacocks left their

feathers and the king peacock presented a feather to Lord Krishna with great humbleness and Lord Krishna accepted it and decorated his head with it. A peacock feather has special significance in association with Lord Krishna because he used it to wear on his head as decoration known as *Mayur pankh* in Hindi and *Sikhipincham* in Sanskrit and tied it on his flute. The peacock feather on Krishna's head is also considered as protection from the evil eye and destroys all negative influences like anger, greed and jealousy. The peacock is also associated with the Hindu deity Lakshmi, who represents kindness, patience, benevolence and sympathy. In ancient Greek and Roman mythology, the peacock is recognized as the patron bird of the goddess Hera (Juno), who created the peacock from Argus who placed his eyes on its feather which symbolized heaven and stars. In Buddhism, the Bodhisattva has been described as a symbol of sympathy and enlightenment. His enlightenment has been compared with the open tail of a peacock, so the peacock is also used as a symbol of awakening and enlightenment in Buddhism. According to Pai, the world known story of the Jatakas is associated with the peacock. Before the birth of Lord Buddha in Mahamayur, he was previously born in the form of a golden peacock (Pai 2009).

According to early Christian mythology, the peacock is a symbol of spiritual rebirth or renewal because naturally it changes its old quill with a new one every year. The peacock is also a symbol of immortality, heavenly and supernatural elements.

In Islam, the spreading tail of the peafowl was a symbol of light and its eyes are associated with the sight of the mind. In this context, thousands of stories have been related to the peacock because it has various characteristics, which vary from religion to religion.

Phulkari Embroidery of the Punjab

The Punjab has been known as 'Sapat Sindhu' and culturally rich for its folk tradition. The people of the Punjab are always engaged in activities like art, dance and craft in their free time. These activities are a reflection of their vivacious energy, dynamism and enthusiasm from the dawn of their civilization to the present time. The craft, extensively known as *Phulkari,* is a traditional form of embroidery done by the women of the Punjab for various uses. Various geometrical patterns from nature and daily activities with human forms structured the art of *Phulkari*. There are

many arguments related to the origin of *Phulkari* embroidery. According to some scholars, it came from Iran and others say that it has come to India after the migration of the Jat tribes in the Punjab and Haryana before partition. The art of *Phulkari* started from Haryana, Punjab and Delhi. The finest *Phulkari* form is developed and produced in new artistic patterns in Hazara (Pakistan) district. Flora Steel has also mentioned in the Journal of Indian Art in 1888 that the original *Phulkari* art forms originated through the small farmers of Rohtak, Hissar and Gurgaon (India). In *Phulkari* embroidery, the women of the Punjab used 'khaddar' as the base cloth which they made through the spinning and weaving of cotton. In *Phulkari* embroidery, the cloth is ornamented with flower motifs, birds and human figures with soft untwisted floss silk called 'pat' in Punjab (Gillow, Barnard 2008). The artisans of *Phulkari* embroidery formed the designs with imagination and creativity. These designs have been made with limited colors of thread due to lack of resources. The variety of cloths was also less and basically blue, white or red based fabric was used for embroidery. *Phulkari* on a blue based textile was called *nilak*, while *thirma* was another kind of *Phulkari* in which the fabric was left un-dyed. This un-dyed surface was then filled with bright colored thread like red (Grewal and Grewal 1988). Darning stitch was particularly used in *Phulkari* earlier but some other stitches were also used such as *Dandi* (stem), herringbone, satin, back, running, blanket, cross and chain.

The motifs of *Phulkari* have been chosen by women from their surroundings like the pleasant atmosphere and other belongings. It is the harmony of motifs only which gave identity to the art of *Phulkari*. *Phulkari* has also been known by various names, which are classified accordingly as per the variety of motif, colors and styles. Therefore, it is called *Kakri* (cucumber) *Bagh, Genda* (marigold) *Bagh, Chandrama* (moon) *Bagh, Pancharanga* (five colors) or *Satranga* (seven colors) (Naik 1996; Crill 1999). The names of *Phulkari* have been respectively divided as per the appearance and identity of motifs because they have been taken from natural elements and surroundings of the woman's belongings. In this way, a dominating object of embroidery motif becomes its identity. In these patterns, vegetables, animals, birds, leaves, rivers, sun and the moon are frequently used by women. There are numerous forms of *Phulkari* and *Bagh* in which a single motif of a bird such as peacock, parrot and pigeon has been embroidered on an entire base cloth and known by its name as *Mor* (peacock) *Bagh* and *Tota* (parrot) *Bagh* (Hitkari 1980). Some

motifs have been adopted in their original forms while some of them are highly stylized, which represents the artistic genius of these women. In one of the forms of *Bagh*, a standard number of fifty two mosaics have been followed to decorate the surface. This form is called *Bawan* (fifty two) *Bagh* (or *Bawan Phulkari*) (Naik 1992).

Forms of Peacock Motif in *Phulkari*

The peacock has been embroidered by women of Punjab as a motif of *Phulkari* with different perspectives. Different forms of peacocks as holding a lotus flower, in pair, killing snakes, dancing, showing feather and many more, are portrayed in the technique of embroidery. In *Phulkari* embroidery, peacock has been depicted in different types of linear forms as realistic, geometrical, stylized and abstract.

In Figure 1a, a peacock can be seen properly embroidered on a red surface with multi colored threads. This style is called *Chope Phulkari*, which is particularly used in marriage ceremonies because *Phulkari* in traditional times was used for social and religious purposes rather than commercial ones. In this image, geometric and detailed patterns have been used to decorate the surface and the peacock has been used to fill the corner of the space. The reason behind this space-division may be its easy-going flow because after doing such detailing, this kind of bird looks very nice and balances the whole design. The peacock in this design is depicted to protect this piece of *Phulkari* from the evil eye. The *Chope Phulkari* is very time consuming and a rare piece of *Phulkari*. Women embroidered and gifted this type of *Phulkari* to their granddaughter as a blessing at her wedding, which she wears on her wedding day to ward off the evil eye and as a blessing from her elders. Since the peacock is also associated with the Hindu goddess Lakshmi. It may be assumed that the *Phulkari* with a peacock motif is used as a symbol of good luck, nurturing, kindness, benevolence, tolerance, and compassion. Embroidered on the corners of a cloth, a pair of peacocks catches the eyes and harmonizes the form. A pair of peacocks – male and female - is a symbol of love, care and rebirth; sometimes it is depicted to represent grief of the couples. In Figure 1b, a pair of peacocks has been shown with low tails, which is considered a symbol of mourning. It represents the gloom, separation of the beloved and sadness in the environment. Jewelry has also been embroidered alongside the pair of peacocks symbolizing marital bliss which in this case has been ironically used to recall the lovelorn condition.

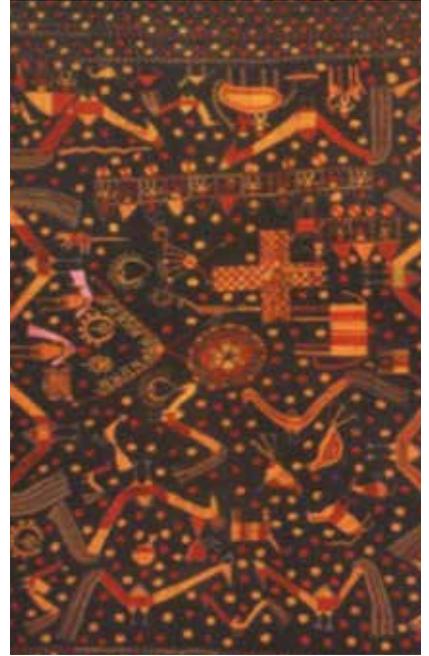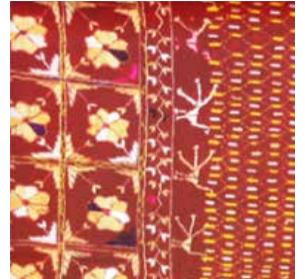Figure 1a and 1b

Peacock in traditional
Phulkari

Figure 2

Forms of the
peacock in traditional
Phulkari. Source:
Indira Gandhi
National Center for
Arts

Punjab is famous for growing wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables. To work in the fields is the traditional occupation for most of the Punjab. These food articles have also been embroidered by the women of the Punjab in *Phulkari* embroidery. In *Phulkari* embroidery, the entire cloth is embroidered with linear motifs of wheat. The *Phulkari* with the wheat pattern is called *Kanki Phulkari*. The peacock pattern has also been depicted along with the wheat pattern. These two motifs are embroidered in *Phulkari* with each other because the peacock eats snakes and protects the fields from insects. It may also be associated with wheat for its love for greenery as it is often found in the fields.

The women of the Punjab also refer to *Phulkari* in their conversations with each other as expressed in a *Doha* (lyrical verse-format):

Phulkari saadi reshami, utte chamkan mor,

Gallan tuhadiya mitthiya, andron dil ne hor.

Peacocks gleam on my silken-*Phulkari*,

Your tongue is so sweet but your heart so false. (Pal 1955)

The peacock on *Phulkari* embroidery has been showcased with various horizontal, vertical and curved lines. In geometrical forms, the peacock has been made in different shapes of tail, crest and legs. These geometric and linear forms have been preferred in the *Phulkari* embroidered in earlier times as the women had limited resources. Unlike the current times, they did not have a frame to stretch the surface and a proper needle to balance their work. They had to prepare their base cloth themselves through hard work and time consuming activities. This base cloth is particularly arranged with light patterns of lines and the design has not been traced on this cloth. The embroidery has been done directly without any drafting and the thread was counted to manage the required design on the surface. Therefore, the peacock has been often made in geometrical patterns rather than the curvy one. In recent times, the curvy forms of peacock have been made because the resources are easily available in the market.

In geometric forms, the peacock is portrayed in a leg-crossing posture which represents its dancing attitude in a pleasant mood with high spirits. The peacock has been showcased in a pair which is the symbol of love. Through a pair of peacocks, the women of the Punjab described their personal life and relationship with their spouses. The plumage has also been depicted with a different shape in lines.
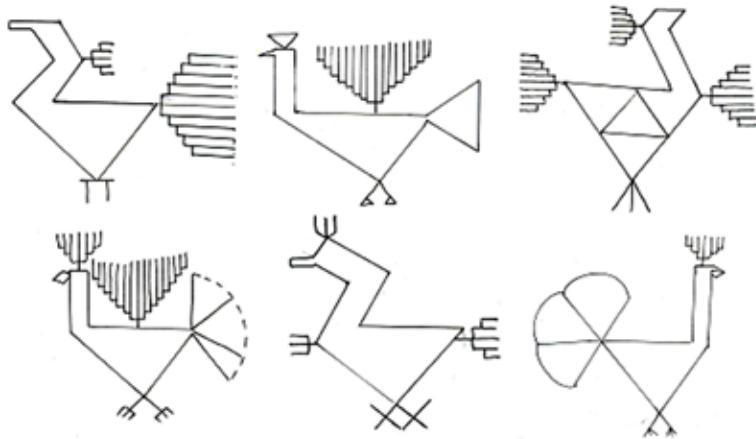
The geometric lines of the peacock motifs communicate a sense of organization, stability, conformity and reliability. The combination of horizontal, vertical and diagonal line has been a symbol of solidity, durability and immovability. These geometric patterns have also represented a feeling of hope and continuity in life as well as the spirit of renewal. Geometry has always stood for balance and certainty so the peacock in *Phulkari* is also taken as a symbol of balance and unity. The angels, which are made in the figure of peacocks, also represent continuity because they have been made in ascending order and close to a very short point.

The peacock with a lotus flower represents beauty, glory, royalty and spirituality because both have been known by their beauty and associated with Buddha. The posture of a peacock with the growing buds of a lotus flower represents growth and pride.
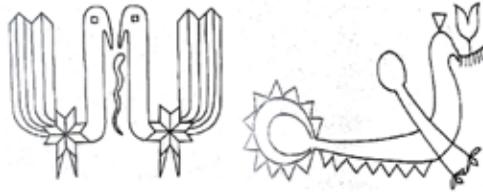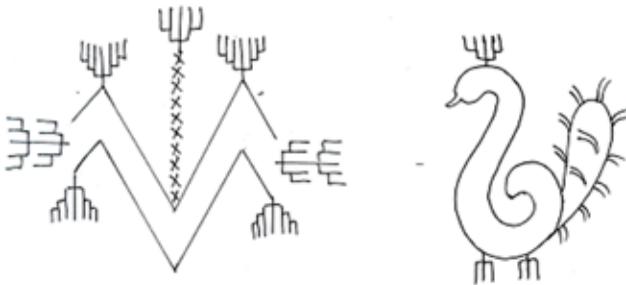
In earlier times, abstract forms of the peacock have been made because the abstract forms look more beautiful and stylized. Another reason behind such adoption may be to save time and effort and give it a more traditional look. In Indian folk and tribal arts, geometry has always remained a frequent style and depicted in folk arts in abstract forms. In contemporary times, the images of the peacock are made in semi-abstract and curvy forms because *Phulkari* has taken new parameters due to commercial benefits. Earlier, these forms only related to a woman's life but now they have been commercialized for market benefits. Now, there are other groups involved in the process alongside the women producing the *Phulkari*. In this context, it cannot be said that women are excluded from the benefits as they are getting empowered in the process but the originality of *Phulkari* motifs has been lost in this process. Therefore, the forms of the peacock have also been changed as have other things in *Phulkari* because it is not only the demand of the market; it is also the availability of resources. They are getting numerous substitutions for the previous mediums such as frame, tracing paper, variety of colors, fine base cloth and proper needles and minimum effort to produce designs.

Some semi-abstract forms have also been made during the 20th century, which also looks very appealing but not as attractive as compared to the geometric ones.

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Amrita Sher-Gill's Paintings: A Cultural Evaluation

Mandakini Sharma, Prof. Ila Gupta, PhD and Prof. P. Jha

Introduction

Amrita Sher-Gil is among the pioneers of modern Indian paintings. She was born in Hungary (Budapest, in 1913) and grew up in a Sikh family. Her father was a Sikh aristocrat and her mother was a Hungarian musician. She took her artistic education from Florence and from the world famous Ecole Nationale Des Beaux Arts under the direction of Lucien Simon. After working in Europe, she returned to the Indian sub-continent in 1934 and started to depict the spirit of rural life through paintings. She was an admirer of frescos of Ajanta and Ellora caves and loved Indian miniature paintings. She was wholeheartedly devoted to Indian art and culture and her devotion is immensely blended in her paintings after her arrival in the sub-continent.

She had married her cousin Victor Egan and spent her last moments in Lahore (Pakistan). Her artistic voyage has remained unfinished due to her sudden death at the age of 28. She particularly painted rural women in a strong and powerful manner and almost succeeded in capturing some neglected areas of the life of women in dull color schemes (Lutzker and Ann 2002, Sinha 2003, Sen 2006).

In Amrita Sher-Gil's paintings, a cultural variation may be seen between the two periods of her life, first one during her residence in Europe and the next one after her arrival in the sub-continent. It is her hybridity which made her an accomplished observer of the indigenous spirit of sub-continental culture. She gripped the intimacy of the Eastern culture after exploring the multiplicity of the Western one. She admitted, after coming to the sub-continent, that it is the only solution to her artistic pursuit. This residential switch from Eastern to Western world is not only visible in her life style but is reflected in her paintings as well. Likewise, her personality, living style, dressing sense also changed after relocating. She was fascinated more by folk and rural culture than the urban one (Sundaram 2010).

This paper aims at discussing four paintings of Sher-Gil to understand this "bicultural" lineage (Mathur 2011). Among these paintings, two are of the earlier period and the rest are after her arrival to the sub-continent. The first category of comparison is based on the concept (in both of the paintings, she has chosen two women), depicted in both the paintings and the next category is based on the projection of a body on surface (like the projection of the backside).

Discussion

Culture is a key to access the way of living of human beings and also a medium to differentiate their individual identity. The identity varies from place to place and from religion to religion, which is represented through their customs, traditions and other rituals. The cultural values are also represented through art and visual narrations. Visual culture is significant in defining the role of Indian sub-continent's antiquities and the recent trends in culture. In this cultural narration, paintings are the best medium to define the socio-cultural aspects of society. For instance, the people of pre-historic times were involved in hunting and gathering activities, so the cave paintings depicted the same. Similarly, narratives of surroundings and way of living of the people have been depicted in the Indus Valley Civilization. To some extent, such narratives have been painted by artists of almost all periods till the 17th century. After the mark of modern concept, paintings have been represented with a more innovative and realistic approach but the basic stereotype of cultural phenomenon has been simultaneously represented by artists. In this way, culture has always remained an essential aspect in representing artistic productions.

During the 19th century, the Indian sub-continent was a land of cultural and political hegemonies of the British and seeking its authentic values with respect to various spheres, including painting. Sher-Gil is not only solicited by cultural and traditional values but she truly lived in its roots (Wojtilla 1981, Tillotson 1997, Tuli 1998, Kumar 1999). Her interest towards the rural life of the sub-continent is not only appreciated but adapted by numerous prominent artists of India. Her portrayal of womanhood, after returning to the sub-continent, is a very concrete instance of her genius. Through this way of projection, she has not only settled a neglected phenomenon of a woman's life but she has also become a role model for the feminist artists of the sub-continent. To observe cultural variations in

her paintings, some of her paintings have been taken into consideration because before her arrival to the sub-continent, Sher-Gil was inspired by great Italian masters and modern Western artists. She was an academic and her paintings appear to be more connected with academic realism.

After returning to the sub-continent, Sher-Gil's subjects dramatically changed into feministic interventions and tragic display (Kapur 1978). The gloomy faces have been perfectly portrayed to give a glimpse of the life of middle class people, which Sher-Gil found strangely attractive. She depicted villagers and women as either engaged in work or constructed in idle form (Chawla 2003). There are some issues too which are related to their tragic life and trauma due to societal inequality (Doctor 2002).

Apart from this, if the painting is analyzed on the basis of cultural aspects, there are some semiotics of culture which differentiate both of her styles. There is an indigenous mechanism which drives her creativity to reproduce the realistic life of Indian people. This mechanism is also surrounded by some other factors, like social and religious factors, climatic conditions and others. To observe the cultural aspects in Sher-Gil's paintings (Indian sub-continent Period), it is essential to revisit her previous paintings (European Period) through a comprehensive study of both the painting styles.

The painting titled 'Young Girls' was painted when she was in Europe (Figure 1). Sher-Gil was only 19 and for this painting she won the honor of an associate at the Grand Salon of Paris. Her sister Indira and her friend became models for the painting as Sher-Gil used to paint through models (Dalmia 2013).

Figure.1

Young Girls (1934). Oil on Canvas, Size- 134 x 164 cm. Acc. No-29, Courtesy NGMA

Figure 1 has been painted in oil colors with an impressionistic style in blue and white tones as Sher-Gil was inspired by Paul Gauguin and Paul Cezanne (French post-impressionist painters). In this painting, both girls are sitting casually and are engaged in conversation. The style of dressing is typically European, in which a semi-

nude French girl (Denise Proutaux) has been depicted. Another girl (her sister Indira) has also been painted in the same Western outfit. In this painting, ornamentation has also been done through jewelry and other things of beautification, which is particularly related with Western style. The posture of sitting is also Western as the sitting posture with cross-legs was mostly forbidden to the women of the sub-continent at that time. The face of the blonde woman has not been highlighted as her hair is across her face. The blonde woman has a comb in her hand and is engaged in conversation with the other girl. The theme of the painting indicates Sher-Gil's inner dilemma, where she was exploring her individuality not only as an artist but also as a person in the West. It may be assumed that for Sher-Gil, it was very difficult to accept that alien culture as her roots were deeply connected with her homeland. In this painting, Sher-Gil symbolically represents the culture of the West in the form of a blonde girl and herself as the woman sitting in front of the blonde girl. According to Dalmia, the concept of this painting is closely connected with Sher-Gil's Eastern and Western conflict and it is further explored by the artist in the painting titled 'Two Girls', where she has painted two girls with contrasting complexions (2006 and Gupta 2011). The application of colors is also according to prevalent Western techniques. Sher-Gil was influenced by Cezanne and his style of composing things has been carried over into some of the areas of her paintings with 'shape simplification' and 'spatial tilts'' (Subramanian 2014). 'Young Girls' represents an elite class of European women as Sher-Gil was not yet familiar with the marginalized or the middle class. The detailing and other aspects have also been structured to give a calm and soothing touch with a balanced color composition. If the painting is observed without comparing it with her later paintings, it has a feministic approach. Women are portrayed as engaged in conversation and in sensuous display, which was in fashion at that time. The women are busy in themselves and display their individual identity rejecting the male-oriented stereotype of female projection.

The same concept of depicting two girls or women has been painted again by Sher-Gil after returning to the sub-continent titled, 'Woman Resting on a *Charpoy*' (Figure 2). The painting was made at Saraya, Gorakhpur (India). At first glimpse, it is difficult to find out that this painting has been made by the same artist (of 'Young Girls'). There is only one similarity in both the paintings, the concept of depicting two

females together on a dull background. In this set of observations, the same tool of socio-cultural and religious aspect can be used to study the Indian semiotics in Sher-Gil's painting. Their titles are also very different from each other; the title 'Young Girls' is simple and the concept is not entirely clear by the title itself. On the other hand, 'Woman Resting on a *Charpoy*' explains most parts of the painting through its title as it narrates the theme behind it.

In her Paris residence, she had painted numerous paintings which were titled in a simplistic manner; for instance, Two Girls, Torso, Reclining Nude, Portrait of a Lady, and Portrait of a Young Man. These titles are not associated with that culture or tradition and fail to narrate the story of the painting. In contrast, the titles of her paintings from the sub-continent indicate the theme and its cultural association. Sher-Gil became more expressive after coming to the sub-continent with respect to elaborate titles as they played an important role in the sub-continent's paintings. 'Child Bride', 'South Indian Villagers Going to Market', 'Story Teller', 'The Musicians', 'The Swing', and 'Bride's Toilet' are some of the titles of her paintings in the sub-continent. A painting's perception, which is generated through the combination of title and representation, varies from person to person. According to Sen, these two paintings (Figures 1 and 2) are better instances to observe the approach of Sher-Gil's treatment of subjects after returning to the sub-continent (Subramanyan 1978, Thompson 1982, Sen 2006).

In 'Woman Resting on a *Charpoy*', red is the dominant color, while in 'Young Girls' red has not been used at all. This dominance of red color may be understood through certain socio-culrual and phsychological parameters as red is the most auspicious color in Hindu religion for married woman. In this painting, a woman is depicted laying on a *charpoy* or cot and is attended by another woman. The other woman is depicted as holding a hand fan and sitting in a tense mood. The slightly
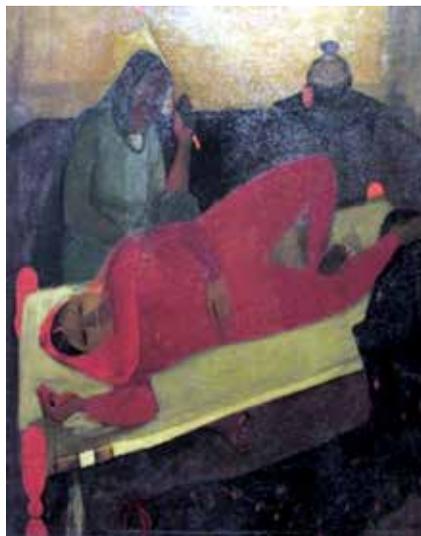

Figure.2

Woman resting on a charpoy (1040). Oil on Canvas, Size- 74.5 x 87.5 cm. Acc. No-129, Courtesy NGMA

constructed dullness through the background in 'Young Girls' has been changed into the focal point in the 'Resting' as all adjustments have been made to represent the traumatic state of rural women. Most of her paintings depict the realistic phenomenon of a woman's life which was rarely observed at that time (Kapur 2000, 2009). Before Sher-Gil, women had mostly been painted to display patriarchal hegemonies or to promote religion. Women were often treated as an object in paintings and represented as engaged in erotic display or to simply meet the need of the theme. In Indian miniature paintings, the depiction of a woman was based on gender politics, where a man's power was celebrated through the projection of a woman. In numerous miniature paintings, women are offered to onlookers through symbolic arrangements (Aitken 1998). A woman is mostly depicted as engaged in love-making, preparing for a meeting with her lover, waiting in a lovelorn condition, taking care of the child, serving her mistress or master and participating in social activities and so on. Those miniature paintings may be a reflection of that society in which the kings had been represented as heroes, surrounded by women as attendants, concubines, mistresses, queens and such.

The miniature painting style collapsed after the establishment of East India Company; at that time, art of the sub-continent had lost its identity and the artists had lost patronage. During that time, the Bengal School also emerged to set new paradigms of modern art. Raja Ravi Verma, Abanindranath Tagore, Jamini Roy and other prominent artists were also engaged in depicting women with beauty and sensuousness. In such an ambience, Sher-Gil had chosen her subjects without any political or sensual display. Amrita Sher-Gil picked up only those subjects which had conceptual beauty and which were avoided by her contemporaries. Her contemporary artists were engaged in producing paintings after being inspired by the Western technique and style. For instance, Ravi Verma, one of her contemporaries, painted Hindu mythological subjects in Western style and technique; in most of his paintings, the spirit of contemporary culture of the sub-continent has been lost entirely. Abanindranath Tagore was involved in experimenting with Indian miniatures for the establishment of a national Indian style, mostly related to history and mythology. Sher-Gil used her genius to capture the contemporary view of the sub-continent rather than its historic events. The concept of a reclining woman was very much in fashion and was depicted by numerous eminent artists such as Eduard Monet, Picasso and many more. This subject had also been painted by Verma.

In Indian miniature paintings, a reclining woman had only been associated with erotic display. All of these reclining nudes were made in a seductive way with an inviting attitude. On the contrary, Sher-Gil subverted this imagery of a woman without distorting her art and created a unique representation of the sub-continent's culture through the portrayal of women. It is a unique virtue of Sher-Gil to paint reality in modern style; her women, therefore, belong to the group of ordinary villages of the sub-continent and the Western elite class. Sinha states that this painting is a subversion of that representation of a woman in miniature, which is often associated with bed as waiting for her lover or in highly enchanting mood. They (Sher-Gil's women after coming to the sub-continent) do not belong to any character that is narrated in ancient Hindu literature or painting; they are "modern", "recognizable" and "common" with its "striking spontaneity" (Sinha 1996).

In 'Woman Resting on a *Charpoy*', the resting woman looks unhealthy (possibly with a stomach ache as her hand rests on her stomach) while the other woman seems to be her attendant as it was very difficult for a rural woman to spare time for herself. This subject matter was entirely avoided by the artists of that time and sensual imagery was the focal point in the portrayal of women. A resting woman was also usually depicted with the same erotic or sensuous display surrounded by a group of females.

The resting woman in the painting appears to be married as indicated by the red powder lining the middle partition on her scalp - a sign of marriage in Hindu religion and prohibited for unmarried and widowed women. This line is applied with auspicious red pigment called *sindoor* by the Hindu women after marriage and this custom is strictly followed till the time of their death. In this painting, Sher-Gil has focused on a major aspect of paintings in which a woman is depicted without a man but his presence is construed in a symbolic way. She took this concept for sarcasm after using some signs of marriage by the use of red color but her depiction does not support the male presence but criticizes the situation of a married woman.

In Western culture, marital practices were not as complicated as in the sub-continent; therefore, in 'Young Girls', Sher-Gil chose casual themes. In 'Young Girls', women have been painted as involved in objects of amusement - one is holding a plate of apples and the other one a music script in her hand. They are well educated and beautifully dressed with

fine makeup. On the contrary, the 'Resting' woman and her attendant have been portrayed in simple appearances. There is no sign of male presence in 'Young Girls' because this painting is not interrelated with patriarchal politics or male dominance like the 'Resting'. In 'Resting' the pillars of the cot are also painted in bright red, which may be an effort by the artist to project the boundary of the painted woman's in-laws house which she wants to cross but always fails to do so. The women in 'Resting' have been painted in traditional Punjabi dress but this dress is also worn by the women of Uttar Pradesh (India) where the painting has been painted. It is mentioned by Sher-Gil, in one of her letters to Karl Khandalavla, that "I have just finished a picture -- a girl in red-flowered clothes (the Punjabi dress, tight red trousers, shirt and veil)" (Sundaram 2010). The dress is known as the *Salwar Kameez* (fully covered upper and trouser) and worn with a long scarf (*dupatta*). The scarf is used by the women to cover their head and was mandatory for all women in the culture of the sub-continent. In 'Young Girls', the women have uncovered heads as this trend was mostly avoided in the Western culture.

Another painting of Sher-Gil, titled 'Female Torso' (Figure 3) has been taken to compare with the painting titled, 'Woman at Bath' (Figure 4). Firstly, the theme of both paintings is different from each other. In both paintings, the woman is depicted as showing her back to the onlookers

Figure 3 (L)

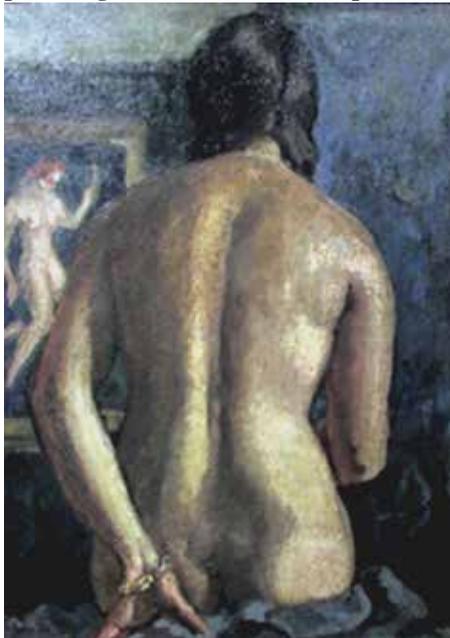Torso (1931). Oil on Canvas, Size-62x 81 cm. Acc. No- 50, Courtesy NGMA

Figure 4 (R)

Woman at bath (1940). Oil on Canvas, Size- 68.5x 92.4 cm. Acc. No- 41, Courtesy NGMA

but the handling of structure, theme and sites is entirely different. In 'Torso', the woman is posing as a model, whereas in 'Woman at Bath', the woman is depicted as slightly showing her face and bathing in a bathroom.

Sher-Gil has again painted two diverse cultures and ideologies. At first glance, the 'Torso' represents an artist's studio while the 'Bath' is based on a private practice. Nude model study was prohibited in the sub-continent in the pre-colonial era; it particularly came into practice after the arrival of East India Company and was then practiced by male artists only. For female artists, it was taboo; Amrita Sher-Gil is the first noticeable female artist of the sub-continent who did so. Sher-Gil painted a woman as showing her back which was singular in itself. The depiction of 'Woman at Bath' is also connected with traditional culture of the sub-continent. In the sub-continent, the girls and women have to follow a set of do's and don'ts from their childhood in which their body is restricted by certain rules. In these rules, they have to maintain and hide their sexuality. Shyness and morality are considered their virtues but these norms of society might have looked strange and shocking to Sher-Gil as she had spent most of her time in the West. Such subjects, which are related to social customs, were projected by Sher-Gil in a very different way.

Bathing women have also been painted numerous times by artists but like the 'Resting', Sher-Gil again subverted the female imagery from sensual to rational in the 'Woman at Bath'. The title 'Torso' is again unexpressive as compared to 'Woman at Bath'. The background and interior of both the paintings is very different from each other. In 'Torso', a studio scene has been created through a painting hanging on the wall. In contrast, the interior of 'Bath' is typically rural because in rural places, this kind of bathroom may be seen till today. These small and congested bathrooms are constructed without any decoration because in rural areas interior decoration was not preferred as in the urban areas. In 'Woman at Bath', the woman uses a clay pitcher and a small clay pitcher jug for the bath. The rural women use the clay pitcher to carry water from ponds, riverine and wells, while in urban areas plastic buckets are used. The pitcher of water is also painted by Sher-Gil in 'Resting' and in many of her paintings. The sitting posture in the 'Bath' is also to be noted as in rural India, women mostly take bath or change their clothes in the same

posture. The woman is wearing traditional footwear of wood called *Kharanu* (wooden sandals). This kind of footwear is particularly used by woman for doing domestic chores and frequently mentioned in Hindu and other religious myths. In Hindu religion, *Kharau* is considered very auspicious. The woman's undergarments have also been shown hanging in the interior. However, in 'Torso' these details have been avoided by the artist. Red is again dominant in the background. The woman in the 'Torso' appears to be from the elite class while in 'Woman at Bath' the subaltern or lower class woman has been shown. Similarity in both paintings is in the treatment of onlookers by positing the back side of the body towards the onlookers.

During her residence in Europe, such type of depiction (Torso) was very common because each and every artistic production is, most of the time, based on the observation of the individual. In Europe, she painted subjects but in the sub-continent, she painted the reality associated with subjects. At that time, rural women mostly belonged to domestic and isolated spaces.

While in Europe, her subjects were entirely based on studio practice and she painted nudes as well; however, when she arrived in the sub-continent she developed a strong sense in the selection of her subjects. She usually avoided nude depiction in the portrayal of women as they remained mostly fully covered. This custom of remaining fully covered is not only limited to her painted women but also influenced her lifestyle. She was mostly found in a *Sari* (a traditional outfit of Indian women), with the *Bindi* (a red dot, usually applied by married Hindu women) on her forehead. In her painting style, she switched from urban and elite class into rural and traditional after being influenced by the local culture.

Conclusion

In this cultural evaluation, it is observed that her paintings of the later period have two major approaches. In the first approach, she explores early Indian art and then molds its virtues and attributes in her own way to represent true indigenous culture. She took subjects which are contemporary to her rather than mythological history. In the second approach, she particularly focused on the depiction of rural women and changed the sensual or political depiction into significant forms with the help of cultural semiotics.

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Modern Art in Pakistan and Sheikh Safdar Ali

Samina Iqbal

Introduction

Sheikh Safdar Ali (1924-1983) a founding member of The Lahore Art Circle (LAC), established in 1952 with five other artists,[1] was one of Pakistan's most important avant-garde artist. As similar to other LAC members, Safdar's visual and stylistic conventions engaged with the modernist abstract syntax of early 20th-cenutry Western art movements such as *De Stijl*, Abstraction, Cubism, and Post-Impressionism. Frequently, Pakistani scholars and critics have dismissed and devalued mid-20th-century Pakistani modern art as merely a derivative of Western art movements.[2] Through the analysis of several works of Safdar, this paper will argue that Safdar was not only a successful designer and entrepreneur for the SV (Safdar and Vivian) Advertising Agency, but also one of the leading modern artists of Pakistan who played a key role in innovating a new wave of modern art in Pakistan. Furthermore, although Safdar borrowed the visual vocabulary from European Western art movements, his work is very much grounded in the locality of Indian subcontinent and thus cannot be written off as merely derivative. Safdar's use of black outline and denial of perspective connects his work to the centuries' old tradition of Ajanta Cave painting and Indian miniature painting. While the use of grid in his work can be attributed to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian's *De Stijl* movement. However, Safdar's employment of the grid to merge figure, landscape, and still life together is his unique modernist innovation. Partha Mitter in his pivotal essay, *Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant Garde Art from Periphery*, questions crediting all modern works as stemming from the Western canon. He suggests to shift the prevalent, homogenous discourse of modernism to a more heterogeneous definition and focusing on global modernism by including other regions in the world to produce a more inclusive art history. He also calls into question the "purity" and worldwide preponderance of Western modernism and the consequent effect of the periphery's necessarily derivative character. Mitter argues:

"The discipline of art history has yet to change in any substantive manner the implicit evaluation of non-Western modernism as derivative and devoid of originality (Partha Mitter 2008, 534)".

Ironically, in the case of Pakistani modernism, the challenge for art historians and others is to question not only the prevalent homogenized Western canon of modernism, but also the simultaneous perception of it as an unoriginal transplant. Following Mitter's suggestion to destabilize Western modernism's hegemony, this paper will analyze Safdar's work using the theoretical framework of postcolonial studies. Because Safdar created art during the Indian subcontinent's postcolonial-era when Pakistan became a separate nation, the concept of *hybridity*, a term coined by Homi K. Bhabha, a notable English and American Literature scholar and Director of Harvard University's Humanities Center, will be invoked as a diagnostic. For Bhabha, hybridity is a discourse that enables him to focus on the contrapuntal nature of cultural works in colonial and postcolonial contexts, which are critical in their impure appropriation of elements from mainstream and either subjugated or developing cultures, as is the case with Pakistan in its formative years (Homi K. Bhabha 1994). The notion of hybridity will enable this paper to undertake a postcolonial analysis of Safdar's work in order to pinpoint the significance of his work and its special contribution to the initiation of Pakistan's art history.

Background

Born in Gujarat, (now Pakistan) in 1924 to the middle-class family of Rabia Begum and Mohammad Ali, Safdar demonstrated from an early age an exceptional talent for drawing. Initially self-taught artist, he pursued an informal art education by copying reproductions of famous old and modern Western masters, which he found in his elder brother's poster collection.

Safdar experienced a difficult childhood, occasioned by his father's death when he was only two. His elder brother Barkat Ali, supported the family financially throughout Safdar's early years. According to Safdar's son Nasir Ali, his grandmother would tell him stories about his father's passion for drawing. She described how Safdar, at the age of 13, would draw huge charcoal pictures of the neighborhood on the walls of his home. Due to grim financial circumstances, in 1940

Safdar had to move to Bombay at the age of 16 to make a living and to learn art. Safdar managed to meet Karachi-based artist Muhammad Turab (1907-77), who was working as a set designer in the Bombay film industry.[3] Safdar used his proficient drawing skills to persuade Turab to employ him as a member of his set designers' team. He began to earn his livelihood by painting the backgrounds of the film sets in Bombay. Whenever his financial situation allowed, Safdar would take occasional art classes at Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy School of Art (famously known as the J.J. School of Arts). Later, Safdar worked on freelance projects, designing brochures and press layouts in addition to the film set designs he made for Turab. From 1944-1946, he received the commission to design decorations for the *All India Industrial Exhibition* in Karachi. During these same years, Safdar, along with several fellow artist friends, formed *The Muslim Art Sketch Club,* which many young commercial artists joined, including the most celebrated Indian/Qatari artist, Maqbool Fida Husain.[4] At this time, Safdar established himself as a successful commercial artist. He lived well, traveled throughout India, and enjoyed becoming acquainted with its spectacular art and architecture. His visits to Ajanta, Ellora, and Elephanta sparked his great respect for traditional Indian painting, including the Mughal and Pahari Schools. Among Western artists, Safdar appreciated works by Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Henri Matisse, and Salvador Dalí, all of which were familiar to him from mass-media journals he had studied in his childhood (Anna Molka 1957).

Among the most important artists in the pre-partition India, Safdar admired the earlier landscape paintings of Krishana Howlaji Ara (1914-85), Syed Haider Raza (1922), and Sadanand K. Bakre (1920-2007), which he was able to see in the annual exhibition of paintings of the Bombay artists. He was also a great admirer of the Indian painters Kanu Desai (1907-1980) and Jamini Roy (1887-1972).

After the partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947, Safdar migrated to Pakistan to join his family in Lahore.[5] He then moved to Karachi with his family to work in the film industry again. He was successful in securing contracts to decorate the interiors of cinema theaters such as Nishat, Nigar, and Nagina in Karachi. As these were difficult times, he tried to use his drafting skills in various other fields. He made perspective drawings and building designs for a construction

company and simultaneously worked for the advertising agency called "Kontakts" in 1951. Kontakts's clientele included major Pakistani industries such as Bata Shoe Company, Lipton Tea, and General Motors (Molka 1957). Kontakts sent Safdar to Lahore in 1951, to open the art department of its new branch.

The Art Scene in Lahore

Because of its geographical location and rich history, Lahore had been the center of art and culture in West Pakistan for centuries.[6] Hence, Safdar's move to Lahore provided him opportunities for new and important artistic ventures. Later in 1952, besides successfully launching his own business with his friend Vivian Jacob, which they named SV Advertising Agency, he attached himself to a group of young artists in Lahore.[7] These young artists regularly met at the Coffee House and the Pak Tea House, located at Mall road in Lahore. The Coffee House was the artists' meeting place for informal yet meaningful discussions about the visual arts, while the Pak Tea House was the center of activities for Lahore's justly famous literary circle of prominent writers and poets such as Sadaat Hassan Manto, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Intizar Husain, and Abdullah Hussain, who would gather there in the evening. At both places the young LAC painters participated in lively debates about the prevalent social, political, literary, and artistic affairs of their newly established country, as well as international issues.

With the end of the Colonial era in 1947, a new and exciting phase in the history of Pakistan began. It was a time of anticipation and flux. In 1951, Pakistan, only four-years-old, was still trying to construct its government and restructure its cities while establishing a distinct culture separate from India. These activities included reallocating migrants properties, reformulating new government institutions, the educational system, the economy, and other such social structures. The Pakistani government's unspoken political agenda was to shed thousands of years of the history it had shared with India and to establish itself as a new Islamic Republic. During this time, in the field of fine arts, several different trends were developing. The pre-partition senior artists, Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Fyzee Rahamin, Anna Molka, and Ustad Allah Bux, already held prominent positions in the art scene of Pakistan with their respective Persian-Mughal, Bengal and European academic painting styles. These artists were creating art with Islamic

references to the glorious, pre-colonial past of the Mughals, as well as the pure, regional themes of Punjabi folklores. Rather than carrying any reference to Indian history, these subjects and themes were politically correct and benign, fitting the ideology of the nation-state of Pakistan.[8] Among the younger generation, Zubeida Agha was the only artist at that time in West Pakistan whose training by an Italian war prisoner in Lahore, Mario Perlingieri, introduced her to the abstract art movements of the West.[9] In East Pakistan, Zainul Abedin was well known for his minimal modernist pen and ink drawings.

In 1952, the painter Shakir Ali returned from the Europe after studying at the Slade School of Art, London (1946-49) and working at André Lhote's studio in Paris (1949-50). He settled in Lahore while taking a teaching position at the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore (presently The National College of Arts or NCA). Shakir's arrival in this city presented fresh ideas for young artists who were looking for new directions in their art practices commensurate with the new nation and its future. They wanted to introduce an innovative and distinct form of expression that would distinguish their work from the older generation of artists by using a modern visual language that was not limited by past Indian traditions, but instead engaged in dialogue with the modern art movements of the West. Their effort was to situate themselves in the larger art world that included Pakistan, the West, and Non-Western countries. According to Akbar Naqvi, scholar of history of art:

The Art Circle came into being because these artists wanted freedom to breathe and to do things beyond the range of Anna Molka, Chughtai, and Allah Baksh, the three icon of Lahore's art establishment. They wanted to go modern whether anyone liked it or not (Akbar Naqvi 1998, 270).

 Shakir was the first artist of Pakistan to be formally trained in the West, therefore, had first-hand experience with the Western art movements. He was enthusiastic about stimulating discussions pertinent to Western artistic trends on his return to Pakistan. His presence, views, and steady encouragement helped catalyze the group of young artists and writers to form The Lahore Art Circle (LAC), which besides Shakir Ali, included artists: Ahmed Parvez (1926-1979), Ali Imam (1924-2002), Anwar Jalal Shemza (1928 -1985), Moyene Najmi (1926-1997), and Sheikh Safdar Ali. Later, several other artists joined the circle as

well[10] and LAC became pivotal in Pakistan's modern art movement. LAC members had no first-hand exposure to Western art movements except for Shakir Ali. Therefore, they all relied on and gave deference to Shakir's views. LAC members were not only involved in debates and dialogue about visual arts, but they were also very interested in acquiring knowledge about literature and theories of various Western philosophers and poets. Shakir, himself, was a great admirer of Julius Fucik (a Czech Communist journalist) and would talk at great lengths about Rainer Maria Rilke's poetry. Such debates were very fruitful as they introduced the young LAC members to the ideas and issues of art in the West, thus encouraging and inspiring them to explore new directions in their own work by experimenting in their chosen media. Thus, each member of LAC invented his and her own syntax of modern art, and they collectively introduced a new wave of modern art in Pakistan.[11]

Theoretical Framing

Before analyzing Safdar's work for a better understanding of what "Modernism" meant for this modernist artist, it will help to introduce some of hybridity's important concepts. Homi Bhabha, argues that the relationship between colonizer and colonized is much more complex because of ensuing ambivalent relationships between the two, culminating in dynamic interactive patterns that disrupt the clear divisions between them. Hybridity creates a third space, a place of liminality that is neither here nor fully there.[12] Therefore, the works of art produced in postcolonial societies are inherently hybrid, being both ambivalent and destabilizing in their ability to mimic aspects of the colonizer without being subsumed under this power's auspices. Bhabha further states that "ambivalence" refers to the ambiguous way in which colonizer and colonized regard one another. The colonizer often regards the colonized as both inferior yet exotically Other, while the colonized considers the colonizer as both 'enviable' and yet 'corrupt'. It is the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizers and colonized. This relationship is open ended because the colonized is never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer.

In mimicry [one of hybridity's strategies], the colonizer compels the colonized to imitate them - to use their language, customs, religion,

schooling, and government. Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite (Homi K. Bhabha 1984, 126). Mimicry is thus the sign of a double articulation, a complex strategy of reform that appropriates the Other as its visualizing power (Bhabha 1994). Hybridity, in fact, creates a space that is the passage or the gap between the fixed identities of established binaries. Bhabha states:

> It is in this space that we will find those words with which we can speak of ourselves and others, and by exploring this 'third space' we may allude to the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves (Homi Bhabha 2003, 209).

In the case of the Indian subcontinent, the introduction of European academic style in the field of fine arts was imposed to inculcate a "good" taste among native artists, so that quality commodities were produced for the European market, and yet on close inspection, these so-called commodities did not entirely subscribe to market dictates since they are hybrid works reflecting certain aspects of dominant European styles while differing from the other at the same time. One such example is the development of company painting- a hybrid of Indian court painting and European academic naturalism that flourished in India from 1760-1860.[13] This brief overview of hybridity, ambivalence, and mimicry is to provide the theoretical framework to analyze Safdar's work. Bill Ashcroft, professor of postcolonial studies and literary theory argues:

> "It is not possible to return to or rediscover an absolute pre-colonial cultural purity, nor is it possible to create national and regional formations entirely independent of their historical position in the European colonial enterprise (Bill Ashcroft, Griffiths Gareth, and Helen Tiffin" 1989,196)

In the postcolonial time following the partition of 1947- it became evident for the Pakistani artists that the next stage in the development of the fine arts was to create a distinction in the use of visual vocabulary, style, and ideas that would resonate to the progressive prevalent time; a syntax compatible with the global art scene representing the newly established country. However, the artists must have realized that it was not possible to completely divorce the traces of Indian history and colonial experiences. Thus, the following analysis of Safdar's work represents just that struggle and experimentation to carry the two with

the adoption of new stylistic vocabulary.

Safdar's Work

Safdar's earlier landscape paintings from late 1940's are a mix of naturalist and abstract renderings. His picturesque landscapes appear to be mimetic in their use of color, but abstraction is evident in its various forms. His thick application of impasto oil paint on masonite testifies to his early childhood exposure to Vincent Van Gogh paintings.

Figure. 1

Landscape. Early 1950's, Collection of Lahore Museum

The *Landscape* painting Figure 1, is an example of his earlier work that shows Safdar's self-taught artistic skills acquired from his own drawing and painting practice, as well as from his professional experience of designing film sets for Bombay Talkies before partition. His two-dimensional treatment of space in this painting renders the trees and mountains by fusing the two together. The mountains in the background are thickly outlined with a slightly darker color of the mountains, the impression of which seems to go straight through and over the trees in the foreground, hence flattening out the sense of perspective, and placing the mountains on the same visual plane as the trees. The proportion of the trees is either far too small or too tall considering the size and placement of the mountains, further denying the illusion of any kind of space altogether, as the various elements seems to be pasted together. The scene depicted appears to be naïve and

rendered from memory, thus denying the European academic painting style, which was in practice by Ustad Allah Bux, a renowned painter of Punjab in West Pakistan. The painting also does not conform to Abdur Rahman Chughtai's Mughal Persian stylistic tradition that was actually very popular in Pakistan after its establishment, as he rendered themes celebrating the Muslim's glorious past.[14] Safdar's thick application of oil paint is similar to the post-impressionist painters of the West, as well as his use of masonite board and oil paints also reflects the adoption of the Western commodities.[15] This particular representation dwells somewhere between the ideal and the familiar, in a sense that it is neither purely abstract nor realistic. Mitter argues that the Indian artists adopted the idiom of Western abstraction to challenge the traditional mimetic practices. He states:

> "The language of modernism, signifying changes in artistic imperatives in a rapidly globalizing world, offered the Indian avant-garde a new visual means to challenge the previous artistic paradigm centering on mimetic representation" (Mitter 2008,40).

So was the case with Safdar, along with his other friends of LAC, explored the genre of *still life* in his experimental work to move away from his earlier mimetic practices. As a genre, *still life* does not exist in the history of Indian painting, but actually belongs to the Western painting tradition. For example, in Dutch still life painting of seventeenth century, the purpose of still life at that time was to depict the unprecedented prosperity and wealth brought to the Netherlands through the global trade of commodities from various colonies including the East India Company. According to art historian, Julie Hochstrasser:

> "The genesis of Still-Life painting as an independent genre coincides in time and place with a key period in the birth of consumer society. Indeed the still life painting mirrored the general course of the Dutch prosperity" (Julie Hochstrasser 2007,1).

The genre of still life painting in the West, included: (1) *ontibijtjes* (breakfast pieces); (2) *banketjes* (banquet pieces) and sumptuous *pronkstilleven* (still lifes of display).[16] The genre also demonstrated the technical virtuosity of the artist. Quite differently from Dutch still life painting, the nineteenth-century French artist, Paul Cézanne, painted still life objects to experiment with shape, color, and lighting. Dutch

painter, Vincent Van Gogh made paintings of sunflowers that demonstrated his dynamic brush strokes, thick and intense application of paint. In some cases still life paintings are also allegorical, denoting religious or quasi-religious narratives.

However, Safdar's borrowing of the still life genre from the Western tradition is very different, his painting has its own distinct character. It cannot be placed into any one of the aforementioned categories of the Western tradition of still life painting, because they neither display prosperity of trade commodities, virtuosity of painting perspectives, nor allegorical narrative. In Safdar's *Still life* painting (Figure 2), the picture plane is divided and subdivided in several different planes and spaces by geometric shapes with black outline. Safdar experiments with cubist sensibilities in which the still life does not show one perspective, but presents the objects from multiple perspectives. For instance, the strong black outlined plate with fish and two lemons shows the view from the top and sideways simultaneously. The two fish and two lemons placed in a round dish, on the right side of the painting, almost looks three dimensional with skillfully blended strokes of various tones of grey, yellow, and green, but the black outline immediately gives the objects a two-dimensional cutout shape, hence depriving the objects of depth and dimensionality. The carefully placed jug with a black designed neck on the left side of the painting appears to be painted from eye level as well as above eye level. The strokes of the brush sometimes seem to be following the round form of the jug, however, the handle is painted in flat patches. The black outline around the jug defines its shape thus flattening it too. In the center of the painting there is a framed image, the inside of which is painted with ambiguous abstract shapes that could be viewed as a human form, foliage or something else. Whatever the form may be, this part of the painting becomes charged as it contains the most dynamic abstract image in the composition, thus making it the focal point of the painting. The painting in totality looks like a scene

of an interior space. It may be a room, where all the objects are placed almost to the edge of a table—an awkward position. The window in the background highlights the foliage on the top right of the painting, which may be inside or outside. The leaves are carefully painted in an alternative dark and light pattern, not with any observation, but purely as an element of well-thought-out composition. This painting is one example of Safdar's work in which elements of design such as shape, line, and color are dominant. The thick outlines of objects in the painting resonate with the eastern stylistic tradition of Ajanta cave paintings, and traditional Japanese scroll paintings of Heian period, and 20th century paintings of Jamini Roy based on Bengali folk art. This is a typical example of Safdar's hybridization of the Eastern and the Western artistic sensibilities.

Safdar's restless artistic nature compelled him towards continuous experimentation in his work. Since he was a successful businessman, he was not risking his livelihood by relying on the sale of his artwork. His advertising career provided him the opportunity to experiment without any fear of financial failure. In fact his engagement and experience in commercial arts and acquisition of designing sensibilities played a vital role in his painterly endeavors that was continuously evolving through his rigorous experimentation with color, form, and texture. Safdar's experimentation with cubist approaches in his still life paintings further developed into introducing figure and grid into his work. The two motifs became interwoven, and his use of the grid became his signature style for the rest of his artistic career. In his *Untitled* painting from 1957 (Figure 3), the dominant feature is his use of an irregular grid pattern, which divides and a re-divides the picture plane as seen in his earlier, experimental *Still life* painting (Figure 1). His use of simple circular, oval, rectangular, and square shapes create a pattern, which is further divided into sub-shapes, thereby making the grid more complicated.

Four mask-like portraits in the middle of the painting are enclosed in a frame within

Figure 3

Untitled, 1957

Collection of Mrs. Hamida Salimullah Khan

the larger picture plane. The three portraits, strongly outlined in black are in a frontal position, confronting the viewer; the fourth one is in profile as seen in the Mughal portraiture of Shah Jahan and ancient Egyptian wall paintings. The three portraits in the middle of the painting are abstract and rendered in basic shapes, which do not reference to any particular culture, but present a general rendering of "a face". His use of simplified facial features here indicates his move away from his earlier traditional approach of rendering the figures as in (Figure 4, *Mother and Child*, 1954).[17]

This could also be understood as a transitory phase where Safdar is trying to find the balance between the Western syntax of abstraction and his earlier depiction of Indian figures. His use of blue-green colors in swatches is a clear reference to landscape, which he is using in an abstract manner in the background. This abstract background of landscape is probably coming from his *Landscape* painting (Figure 5), which he was painting simultaneously with the one analyzed above. The grid pattern in Figure 5 becomes stronger and more abstract and shows Safdar's drastic shift from his idealist *Landscape* (Figure 1) rendering to a completely abstract landscape. The painting resembles as if it is an aerial landscape picture. The strong black outline divides the picture plane in an irregular grid pattern and the application of thick paint and dynamic brush strokes creates various textures that define the spaces. This grid-laid abstract landscape can also be seen in reference to the four- thousand-years-old grid planning of Indus Valley civilization, which is the proud inheritance of Indian subcontinent (Figure 6).

One of the most recognizable characteristics of Safdar's work is his merger of grid, landscape, and figure into a unified composition. The *Untitled* (Figure 7) shows Safdar's progression from somewhat comprehensible grid *(Landscape*, Figure 5) to a completely abstract composition. The background of the painting is painted in various tones of greens, which is then juxtaposed with a strong black, geometric,

grid-like structure. The female figure is entirely fused within the grid, making the lines and figures inseparable. A careful look at the painting reveals certain embellishments of a traditional, eastern female figure, such as the hint of a nose pin and earring on the right side of the painting. Considering this painting and its predecessors, Safdar's work exhibits a continuous quest to find a distinctive idiom, one that is neither completely Eastern nor Western, but instead a hybrid that reflects both. Although one may consider his use of the grid and abstract landscape coming from the Western modern art movements, Safdar's use of visual elements are specific to the Indic region, which grounds his work in the locality of Indian subcontinent. The use of geometric shapes and colors bear strong witness to Safdar's calculated sensibility of balance.

The last *Untitled* work (Figure 8) epitomizes Safdar's abstraction. The painting seems to embody essential abstract elements while shedding those that are unnecessary. The strong black outline from his previous work is absent in this painting. The picture plane is filled with various geometric and organic shapes, which join and overlap, creating more complicated shapes; some of them are recognizable but most of them are not. The switch of color between enclosed areas or shapes distinguishes them from each other. As such there is not a pattern in the repetition of colors, but, somehow, it is harmonious. A closer look at the painting reveals several abstract figures, which are

Figure. 5

Landscape, 1958

Collection of Mrs. Rehana Taufeeq

Figure. 6

Aerial View of Indus Valley

(Reproduction from The Art and Architecture of Indian Subcontinent by J.C Harle)

Figure. 7

Untitled, 1960's

Collection of Lahore Museum

Figure. 8

Untitled, Late 1960's

Collection of Lahore Museum

not readable at first glance due to the complicated juxtaposition and overlapping of various shapes. The image is ambiguous and intriguing as it reveals more on a closer reading of it.

Conclusion

Bill Ashcroft offers a valuable insight into the inherent hybridized phenomenon of postcolonialism. He argues:

> "Postcolonial cultures are inevitably a hybridized phenomenon involving a dialectic relationship between the 'grafted' European cultural systems and an indigenous ontology, with its impulse to create an independent local identity" (Ashcroft, Gareth, and Tiffin 1989,195).

The analysis of Safdar's work in this paper demonstrates his progression and development of a particular version of modern art, a hybrid localized version that was not a complete break from the past of Indian tradition, but a synthesis of various Western art movements and schools of thought, including abstraction, Cubism, *De Stijl*, and Post-Impressionism. Indeed Safdar's specific syntax of modernism was different from prevalent and traditional art practices at that time, yet it was very much grounded in the locality of the Indian subcontinent. If his use of the grid comes from Piet Mondrian, and application of paint from Paul Cézanne, his use of the strong black outline and treatment of two-dimensional space must be attributed to the Eastern tradition of painting.[18]

Safdar is an intermediary figure, largely seen as a graphic designer of an advertising company, yet his serious engagement with modern art is an important contribution to the art history of Pakistan. His commitment to art is evident from his continuous experimentation, in the quest to find his own distinct style that persisted throughout his life. He never settled for one style over another and, instead, kept inventing new ways of exploring formal language of color, shape and form.[19] He participated in the national and international art scene by exhibiting in several shows within Pakistan and around the world including São Paulo, England, and United States of America.

The author contends that although the Western art movements fascinated Safdar and he adopted visual elements from various art movements of the West, he invented a visual language of modern art

that was his own innovation and not a derivative. Instead of a reductive reading of Safdar's work as derivative of Western art movements; the concept of hybridity offers a critical lens to reexamine Safdar's work. The framework of hybridity is the most effective tool to challenge the hegemonic canon of Western modernism and "to fashion a more nuanced art histories, drawing on the richness of truly global experiences" (Mitter 2008, 541). Hybridity is represented not only in Safdar's work but also in his choice to simultaneously work in two disciplines, design and fine arts. Safdar's hybrid work in fact disrupts the universalizing notions of center and periphery, which occupies the Western canon of modern art movements.

Endnotes

1   Shakir Ali (1914-1975), Ali Imam (1924-2002), Moyene Najmi (1926-1997), Ahmed Pervez (1926-1979) and Anwar Jalal Shemza (1928 - 1985) founded the Lahore Art Circle, Later Mariam Habib, Razia Ferroz and other artists joined the group too.

2   Jalaluddin Ahmed in his book *Art In Pakistan* (1964, pp.111) references to Shakir Ali's earlier work carrying the invisible tag of " Imported from Europe". Akbar Naqvi, Ijaz Ul Hasan and Marcela Sirhandi also implicitly refer to the modernists work influenced by Western Modern art, but do not focus on what modernism meant in the context of Pakistan. *Ali Imam*, monograph by Marjorie Husain quotes Ali Imam " The British opened art schools in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Lahore and the concept of the nineteenth and twentieth century were forced on us. We were taken away from our roots and we began to look four thousand miles away and started emulating, mimicking western painters with the result that a complete new concept of painting was created, having certain elements of Rajasthani painting and the Jain or Gujarati painting style. Eventually in 1940s and 50s a complete breakthrough came and people like Husain, Raza, Souza, Gada and many others started painting in the style of western painters. Now when this western painting style took off, they started being patronized by the west, and in the subcontinent our own people started thinking we are doing tremendous art. Unfortunately painters like Souza, Hussain, Raza, Sadequain, Shemza and Shakir Ali are derivatives. pp. 67

3   Muhammad Turab was born in Hyderabad Deccan and learned painting from Ustad Mohammed Abdul Qayyum, famous for painting stage sets. He worked as a set designer in Bombay from 1924-47, till he migrated to Karachi Pakistan at the time of Independence. This information was provided to the author interviewed Nasir Ali,son of Safdar Ali on March 23, 2015 in Houston Texas.

4   In many of his exhibition catalogs and Anna Molka's Monograph, Sheikh Safadr has mentioned the formation of *The Muslim Art Sketch Club*. But the author was unable to find any reference outside the above mentioned. Anna Molka, "Monograph Number Seven," *Sheikh Safdar*, The Department of Fine Arts, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 1957, p. 10

5	Nasir Ali describes that his mother was already in Gujrat at the time of Partition. He also informed the author that Safdar did not go through the trauma of migration as other general public was walking on foot and taking train. He instead took a flight to Lahore.

6	Until 1971 Pakistan consisted of East Pakistan (today's Bangladesh and West Pakistan (today's Pakistan).

7	These young artists included Shakir Ali, Ali Imam, Moyene Najmi, Ahmed Pervez, and Anwar Jalal Shemza.

8	It was ideologically consistent with the nation-state agenda to promote an ideology that supported the two-nation theory at the basis of which Pakistan was established and to promote Islam as the state religion.

9	Agha received her initial training by B.C Sanyal and later Agha's brother Abdul Hamid Agha introduced her to Italian war prisoner Mario Perlingieri, a student of Pablo Picasso, who was based in the suburbs of Lahore. Perlingieri guided her concerns about form and structure, liberating her from her earlier academic training of painting.

10	Mariam Habib, Razia Ferroz, Ijaz ul Hassan, Hanif Ramay, Qutub Sheikh and Raheel Qutab also joined the art circle.

11	I use "new wave of modernism" because LAC is not the first ones to introduce modernism in Pakistan. Previously, the Indian subcontinent has a history of multiple modernisms in its artistic arena, which is perpetuated with the rise and fall of political and social conditions. (For further reading, see Geeta Kapur (2000). *When was Modernism*, India: Tulika)

12	Other scholars such as Ranajit Guha has also identified this third space. Gayteri Spivak quotes Guha, "While constructing the definition of the people proposes a dynamic stratification grid describing colonial social production at large. The third group on the list, the buffer group, as it were between the people and the great macro-structural dominant groups, is itself defined as a place of in – between-ess, what Derrida has described as an '*antre*'. (quoted in Can a Subaltern speak? : 79) See Ranajit Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India." *Subaltern Studies I: Writing on South Asian History and Society*, Oxford. This is just a footnote, so not totally urgent now, but clarify the link between the institutional/political structures that Spivak addresses and the hybridity of works of art.

13	In the beginning of the early 19th century, the Tanjore Company artists realizing the British attraction to study the everyday life, scenery, religious rituals, celebrations, cast, costumes, flora and fauna, of India; started making small folios of Indian paintings that would depict British life in India or of Indian topographic, architectural, ethnographic and Natural History specimens. They began to use blank backgrounds with a somber color palette and a highly naturalistic, Europeanized renderings.

14   The Mughal Persian style was very much similar to the Bengal School Style which had been used in pre=partition India as a form of fine art- for anti-colonial resistance.

15   In general the use of oil paint in Indian subcontinent is attributed to Raja Ravi Varma's late 19th, century oil paintings. However, during the anti-colonial, *Swadeshi* movement (1905-1911, which was part of Independence movement) resisted the use of Western products. As a result of which Bengal School art movement came into being that was in against the European academic painting and condemned the use of oil and canvas. In fact, the local indigenous folk style of Kalighat painting with water-based gouache on paper was promoted.

16   Accessed Sep 22, 2015 fro http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/102380/paul-cezanne-still-life-with-apples-french-1893-1894/

17   Author interviewed Nasir Ali (son of S. Safdar Ali) in Texas, March 2015. Nasir Ali shared pages from his personal diary from 1946 that showed his naturalist rendering of portraits.

18   Cezanne and Mondrian have also used the black outlines in their paintings, but the use of black outline in case of Safdar is exclusively attributed to the Eastern tradition because of the dominant traditional Indian paintings of Ajanta as well as Jamini Roys work that was very popular in pre-colonial India.

19   Nasir Ali described Safdar as a disciplined painter who would make time to work every evening after attending to his business and family affairs.

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The Isolated Communities of South Asia: An Outcome of the Political Mapping from the Indian Subcontinent

Tanzia Islam, Mehreen Mustafa and Sahjabin Kabir

Introduction

Segmentation of different communities due to the new division at the end of the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent has created many marginalized communities. People left their homes in order to join the newly defined communities. On the other hand, there are quite a few cases where people did not leave and could not become part of the newly formed society and became marginalized. This segregation is in social acceptance as well as in occupation and in living quality. This paper examines the living conditions of segmented communities from the newly formed countries of the former British India and provides an overview on the situation. Since the pattern and politics of human settlement and the tangible-intangible character of any city/place is greatly influenced by the historical and contemporary experiences and norms of its users and society, therefore any major political or cultural shift is often translated and reflected in the built environment of the cities/places, leaving long or short term psychological and social impressions on the minds of their users, particularly and on societies generally. The study explores several aspects of marginalized and gated communities that require attention in order to achieve harmony in cities. The focus is limited to the living condition, occupation and related social aspects of the community.

Definition

'Migration is a spatial phenomenon. People move from one place to another, alone or together with others, for a short visit or for a long period of time, over a long or a short distance'. (Hammar, Brochmann, Tamas, & Faist, 1997). Here, present isolated communities are the ones who became isolated during several events namely, Pakistan and India division, Pakistan and Bangladesh division. The general types include the communities who had to leave their home and were forced to migrate to another destination or those who did not leave their home with others and ended up becoming sidelined. The groups also have one

common ground, they are known as Pakistanis among the communities although the reality may differ. The belief of Fainstein, that the urban policy should be dedicated to justice for all residents, especially low-income groups so that they integrate in the society and be supported by the privileged community is rather missing here (Fainstein, 2010). The condition of segmented communities is also not often thought about during city development processes. The political segmentation creates segmented cities within the city itself (Eyoh, 2014).

"Urbanism as a characteristic mode of life" has been defined in terms of three perspectives: "physical structure", "system of social organization", and "set of attitudes and ideas" (Wirth, 1938). This concept will be followed in this paper to elaborate the current condition of the mentioned groups. The concept of segregation may be found in different research work since 1920s (Vaughan. L, 2011). The question arises why such a topic requires attention? The communities and their integration in the society and living conditions are not similar to the rest of the communities of the cities. This separation is currently ongoing in Europe and several countries in Europe are facing issues in this matter. How to provide a placement for the asylum seeker, what are the facilities they can avail and how they will be integrated in the cities are burning questions (UNHCR subregional operations profile - Northern, Western, Central and Southern Europe, 2015). According to the Eurostat statistics report from July 2014 till June 2015, around 296,710 asylum seekers have submitted their applications in Germany (Asylum quarterly report, 2015). The idea of refugees was different during the 1947 and 1971 war in Indian subcontinent. In these cities, immigrants and minorities choose or insisted to live in localized clusters and also maintained a variety of social relationships to the intermediate neighborhood (Hillier & Vaughan, 2007). Such areas with proper economic activity with well integrated streets and spatial planning enables the social integration (Legeby, 2009). In a number of cities of the Indian subcontinent, architectural segregation has been present since the colonial period. The major cities had a significant segregation between the white and the native quarters and the space allocation was clear (King, 2010). A similar case may be compared in smaller scale in here presented gated communities who have been segregated due to racial and political (in) justice.

There is often public interest in removing the slums for further city development, which may not be seen in similar illegal settlements which may look visually pleasing. Spatial (in)justice may have various patterns which are among themselves just/unjust. It is not often difficult to understand this behavior by a careful observation (SOJA, 2009). Spatial remedies are necessary; often the spatial justice may not be addressed in a system, which is political, economic, social and itself unjust (Marcuse, 2009).

Segregated Communities

The city planning decisions often produce spatial, social and environmental segregations through ignoring the current contextual paradigms and conventional urban governance which reshapes the growth of informal urban settlements; economic and political benefits often over overlook the necessary need of the people. Urban segregation in mega cities generates urban pockets that often show many distinctive features in those neighborhoods. Limited economic activities, cultural differences and political differences form inaccessible communities. This isolation causes a limited communal environment which also at times fosters sets of crimes and other unwanted occurrences.

Geneva Camp, Dhaka, Bangladesh

As part of the partition process in 1947, a large number of Muslim community from Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh migrated to former East-Pakistan which became Bangladesh in 1971 (Sholder, 2014). According to a PEW report, Bangladesh currently has 89.8% Muslim, 9.1% Hindu, 0.4% Buddhist, 0.4% folk religion, 0.2% Christian and less than 0.1% Jewish, other religions and those non-affiliated to religion (Global religious lanscape, 2010).

Figure 1a

Overview of Geneva Camp, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photograph by Al-Abu Ahmed Ashraf-Dolon

Figure 1b

Overview of Geneva Camp, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photograph by Al-Abu Ahmed Ashraf-Dolon

"The loss of East Pakistan not only meant a loss of people but it changed the nature of the state. East Bengal, though Pakistan's poorest region, was home to a more moderate Islam" (Cohen, 2004). This, however, had greater aftereffect on Bangladesh. In Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, a large segmented community is present at Geneva Camp who are known as Bihari; the community is a distinct cultural linguistic group.

After the two nation division in 1947, this community remained as a different linguistic group in East Pakistan. After 1971, many took shelter in Geneva Camp and currently the community consists of 250,000 people (World public library, 2015). This particular community is often addressed as Pakistani nationality living in Dhaka. The gated formation of a community is an expression of architected urban landscape which regulates the community and the architecture itself is also a form of regulation (Schindler, 2015). In 2008, the high court announced the camp dwellers as Bangladeshi citizens (Sholder, 2014). Urbanism plays an important role in terms of social organization which clearly may be observed here in the case study area (Wirth, 1938). The inhabitants of this community have limited place allocation for housing and mostly their work places are also inside or at the vicinity. The camp has an approximate area of 55,277 square meters which is divided into nine blocks (Sholder, 2014).

Hindu Camp, Lahore, Pakistan

The Hindu Camp community on Dev Samaj Road, Sanat Nagar (officially known as Sunnat Nagar), Lahore was born out of the womb of 1947's partition of British India as the result of mass migration. The Hindu Camp community was and is neglected and sidelined by the government and state of Pakistan but is often exploited to feed the political motives of various stakeholders. The living conditions at the

Hindu Camp, a rendition of segregation revealed through its social life and built form, cannot be analyzed without investigating the origin and history of the area and its context, that is, the city of Lahore.

The diverse architectural and urban character of Lahore reflects upon its rich historical, cultural and political endeavors endured by the city and its people. The city of Lahore, currently the second largest metropolitan city of Pakistan, is facing several challenges of rapidly growing population and lack of adequate space for its residents; it has been the center of political, cultural and economic activities for centuries. The city flourished tremendously, especially during the Mughal and Sikh regime and emerged as the spectacular post-1857 accomplishment of the British Raj in terms of urban planning and development by expanding outside the Walled City of Lahore (Ahmed 2013).

Pre-partition Lahore had attracted and hosted communities encompassing diverse backgrounds in terms of region, religion and income class, generating a multi-cultural, ethnically diverse and tolerant society. A number of *Masjids*, *Gurdawaras*, *Ashrams* and *Mandirs*, roads, colleges and hospitals managed by and affiliated with the names of non-Muslims, the Muslim and non-Muslim neighbors peacefully residing next to each other were the physical manifestation and translation of the cultural diversity once encompassed and celebrated by the people and city of Lahore. The majority of the population of pre-partition Lahore was largely composed of Muslims; in 1941, the population of Lahore was 671,659, out of which 433,170 were Muslims and 238,484 were non-Muslims -- Hindu, Sikh, Christian and others (Sadullah 1993). However, the overwhelming bulk of real estate in the city was owned by Hindus (Ahmed 2004) while the Sikhs were an omnipresent community of the cityscape. The city, however, was divided along political and economic lines and the effects of such segregations may still be observed by analyzing the differences evident in the urban fabric of the Walled City, Cantonment and Model Town.

Since all the three communities, that is, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, amicably residing in the city of Lahore before the 1940s, had valid historical, cultural and emotional claims and ties associated with the city (Ahmed 2004), therefore, all the three groups fully participated and fell victim to the violence, atrocities, displacement and trauma prevalent before, during and after the partition of 1947.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent, often referred as the largest displacement of people in history (Fazila-Zamindar 2007) redefined the identity of Lahore from a multi-cultural society to a monotonous one. The post-partition Muslim monotony allowed the locals as well as the relocated influential Muslims to not only take charge of the political and economic arena but to also occupy and affiliate the properties and associations of Hindus, Sikhs and other non-Muslims with their names. Such trends may still be traced in the conversion and islamization of various roads, institutions and neighborhoods once associated with non-Muslims in Lahore specifically and all over Pakistan generally. Dayanand Vedic College (DAV) renamed as Islamia College, Sanat Nagar renamed as Sunnat Nagar and Krishan Nagar renamed as Islampura are few examples of areas and buildings affected by such trends of conversions in the vicinity of the Hindu Camp, Lahore.

During the partition, Lahore not only observed the migration of minorities from the east leaving their properties and belongings behind (Singh 1997) and their exodus into the west but also received large amount of Muslim refugees from the west. This influx and efflux of refugees disturbed the social and spatial organization of Lahore, resulting in urban congestion and chaos. A large number of refugees were accommodated into the urban fabric of Lahore by setting various refugee camps inside and outside the periphery of the city. The camps were either set up on the evacuee edifies and properties such as hostels, colleges, schools and *ashrams* (such as Amar Jain Hostel, Dev Samaj Girls Hostel, Mohial Ashram and Khalsa Hostel) or on vacant pieces of land, illustrating the vast parody of a city, occupied by an array of tents and shelters constructed from rags, bamboo and sheet metal (Alvi 2013) such as the Walton group of Camps, Lahore.

The government of the newly created state of Pakistan was unprepared to host such a large number of refugees as it failed to cater them in terms of accommodation, facilities and security. The Ministry of Refugee and Rehabilitation, formed in September 1947, made no significant efforts to delineate and implement long term rehabilitation policies or strategies for refugees for months following the partition of 1947, until Mian Iftikhar-uddin, as the Minister of Refugee and Rehabilitation, devised a radical land reform plan for refugee rehabilitation in 1949. The plan was however turn down by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan which was dominated by landlords (Malik, 1971, 58-59).

The Muslim refugees, especially from low income class, who had migrated to Pakistan in hopes of a better future, home, identity and security, leaving behind all their valuable belongings, had to face the bitter reality of segregation, unemployment, lack of education and poor living standards at various refugee camps for years to come.

The post-partition resettlement pattern of refugees in Lahore particularly and all over Pakistan generally may be broadly categorized in terms of power and economics. The influential families were able to rehabilitate and resettle themselves in the existing structure of Lahore by either occupying or legally acquiring the evacuee land and properties, with or without the help of claim papers. Whereas, those without influences and resources weaved the process of their resettlement by adjusting in other remaining congested evacuee properties already flooded with refugees. Hindu Camp, Lahore is one example of various such evacuee neighborhoods in the shape of hostels, schools, *mandirs*, *ashrams* and houses on Dev Samaj Road, Sanat Nagar, Lahore.

Hindu Camp, DAV Hostels

The main building of Hindu Camp was first used for sheltering the refugees. The Hindu Camp on Court Street, Dev Samaj Road also comprises of a building originally dedicated to DAV School Boarding House, established in 1886 by DAV College Trust and Management Society in Lahore (Chopra 1997). The front façade of the main entrance containing the inscription of Dayanand Anglo Vedic Boarding School House and the hard black notice board fixed on the interior wall of the main building clearly narrates the pre-partition land use and function of the area now known as Hindu Camp.

The segregated community of Hindu Camp Lahore, comprising of the third generation of refugees residing in extremely poor conditions, is the finest example of the inevitable role and use of politics to reinforce urban divisions and economic inequality.

Figure 3a

Main entrance of DAV Hostels, Hindu Camp. Photograph by Mirza Hammad Hussain

Figure 3b

Jharoka on front facade, DAV Hostels, Hindu Camp. Photograph by Mirza Hammad Hussain

A built environment is often fabricated to restrict or enhance the community that fosters political goals (Vale, 1992). The Hindu Camp currently consists of two hostels namely DAV Hostel 1 and DAV Hostel 2, occupying an area of 23 *kanals*, 15 *marlas* and 34 *kanals* 5 *marlas* respectively. A total of 498 families were residing in Hindu Camp, as per the survey of 1992 conducted by Dr Arshad Mayo, Chairman Anjuman Ahliyan Dev Samaj Hostels and Mohliqa Abadiyan and approved by the Federal Government of Pakistan.
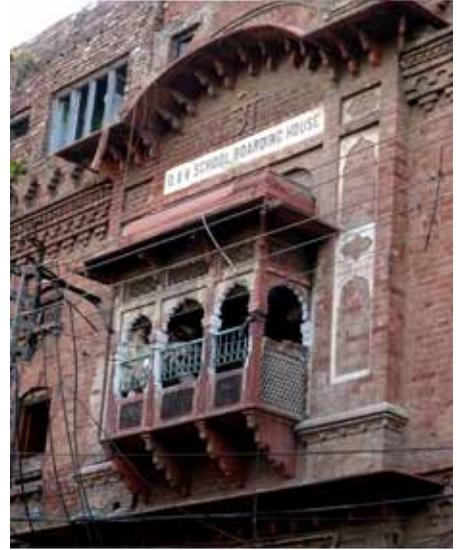
Table 1

Details of DAV Hostels. Source: Anjuman Ahliyan Dev Samaj Hostels and Mohliqa Abadiyan

Sr No	Name of Hostel	Property Number	Area	Unit
1	DAV Hostel 1 Court Street	SW-96-R-6	23 *Kanal* , 15 *Marla*	206
2	DAV Hostel 2 Court Street	SW-96-R-6	34 *Kanal*, 5 *Marla*	292

The residents of Hindu Camp faced the bitter reality of segregation, unemployment, lack of education and accommodation for many years until the Nawaz Shareef government (1990-1993) granted a 99 year lease to the occupants of the Camp. The grant of lease transformed the status of Hindu camp residents from occupants to tenants and disturbed the power equation between the residents of the camp and the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), a body established in 1960 responsible for looking after the affairs of properties and assets of minorities across the country. Political influences and high land value of the area engulfed by residents of the camp provoked the Evacuee Board authorities to decline the continuation of the lease agreement granted by the government of Pakistan in 1992. The notice released by the Evacuee Board in 2005, notifying the residents to evict the land owned by the Federal Government of Pakistan further complicated the relation between the governing body and those who are sidelined and

ignored. The positive role of Anjuman Ahliyan Dev Samaj Hostels and Mohliqa Abadiyan cannot be sidelined while delineating the resistance by the people when subjected to political and social oppressions implied by the responsible government authorities in segregating the community of Hindu Camp particularly and its adjacent evacuee properties generally.

The spatial shapes the social as much as the social shapes the spatial (Edward W. Soja 2009), therefore, the social inequality and its effect on the built environment of Hindu Camp was impressed from the unequal divisions and sub-divisions of land among the occupants of the camp on the basis of income groups and power structure together with incessant negligence from the concerned authorities in terms of maintenance. The shortage of space and resulting congestion allowed the people to renovate and amend the existing built fabric of Hindu Camp as per their need and capacity. Such initiatives have created a network of primary, secondary and tertiary pathways supporting the new encroachments - horizontally and vertically.

Figure 4a and 4b.

Horizontal and vertical expansion of the hostels. Photograph by Mirza Hammad Hussain

Another example of spatial congestion and neglect of authorities is the courtyard of Hostel 2 of Hindu Camp which has been completely occupied and blocked by the adjacent new grey structure. The wide verandahs designed to function as horizontal circulation around the courtyard are blocked by new infrastructural developments from one side and compressed by the growing room sizes of occupants from another resulting in a narrow alley (Figure 5).

The residents of Hindu Camp are forced to incorporate toilets, kitchen and other facilities to serve a family unit in a room designed to serve either as a class room or bed room for 2-3 students. The unguided adaptive reuse of the buildings of Hindu Camp together with new infrastructural developments planned and implemented

by the community itself demonstrates the effect of social injustice, segregation and poor policy making on the built environment. The built environment has a significant influence: urban space can both reinforce and mitigate certain social outcomes (Legeby 2010). Lack of employment, education, security, access to recourses, clean water and sanitation are important issues generated due to the social and physical segregation of Hindu Camp community surrounded by civil courts, three government universities and other administrative departments established to serve the citizens of Pakistan.

The confused and chaotic architectural language of Hindu Camp is the juxtaposition of

a)   old school buildings constructed before partition

b)   amendments carried out within the existing structure of the schools during and after partition

c)   new structures introduced/built after partition

The community residing at Hindu Camp is not a distinct homogeneous community as it is composed of refugees who have migrated from different parts of east. They are nevertheless bonded together due to various factors such as religion, poverty and marginalized status. The role of Islam as a religion and the number of refugees settled in Hindu Camp have so far prevented the issue of identity crisis by encompassing the identities of refugees within the umbrella of Pakistani identity: an identity heavily dictated by the ideology of Pakistan. Therefore, the

residents of Hindu Camp are offended by the term refugee and stress on using the nomenclature of Pakistani for them.

The differences in the concerns and interests of all stakeholders, that is, Hindu Camp community, ETPB, private organizations and related government bodies, is another major reason behind the rapidly deteriorating built environment and living conditions of Hindu Camp. The sense of belonging and ownership vital for the long term sustainability of any structure, space or area is gradually vanishing from the residents of the amp. The non-provision of ownership rights to properties managed and maintained by the residents of Hindu Camp even after 86 years of partition has inculcated a sense of insecurity and injustice. The new generation of residents/tenants is interested in leaving the camp to seek better and bright future rather than fighting the endless battle of property rights with the State. This has also encouraged many families to sell the possession not the property rights of the land allotted to them introducing the locals/foreigners to the social and physical fabric of the camp.

ETBP, on other hand, has completely failed as an organization in terms of developing the relationship of trust and coordination between the residents/tenants of Hindu Camp and the government of Pakistan. It has so far been unsuccessful in regulating and maintaining the buildings

of Hindu Camp and its adjacent areas, few of which hold historical significance. It appears that high commercial value, corruption and other objectives accelerated by political influences overshadowed the genuine concerns and retaliation of Hindu Camp residents.

The positive role of Anjuman Ahliyan Dev Samaj Hostels and Mohliqa Abadiyan run by Dr. Arshad Mayo cannot be sidelined while delineating the resistance by the people when subjected to political and social oppressions implied by the responsible government authorities in segregating the community of Hindu camp particularly and its adjacent evacuee properties generally.

Pakistani Hindu Camp, Delhi

The Hindu migrants from current Pakistan migrated to different parts of India in 1947 due to the religious difference. Migration from another land and political tensions between the countries often create unfavorable condition for the migrants. Often the communities are under strict observation for security issues and relegated from the rest of the city inhabitants. On the other hand, in some groups, the resolution of redirecting traffic is to hinder harmful behaviors related to drugs and crime. The public is also involved in architectural barring in the way they project and place public transit and transportation setup (Schindler, 2015). The job facilities also are very limited for the inhabitants along with other facilities. This discrimination often sidelines them in economic and social terms from the rest of the city.
Currently, India has 14.4% Muslim, 79.5% Hindu, 0.8% Buddhist, 0.5% folk religion, 2.5% Christian, other religion 2.3 and less than 0.1% Jewish and non-affiliated to religion (Global religious lanscape, 2010). In Delhi, the capital of India, a similar camp existed which has been known as Pakistani Hindu Camp. As a matter of fact, a site survey was initiated in September, 2015 for this paper as journal references were not sufficient. The site survey in Jahangir Puri, Delhi indicated that the segmented community from the mentioned area mostly moved to Rajasthan, a neighboring province and a small community is currently living in Vasant Kunj, Delhi. After such experience and for safety reasons, the case study was not continued further to locate the inhabitants.

Conclusion

The discussion of segregated communities is not a simple issue where an easy solution can be found. It is not always easy to estimate what is happening there every day. Often these locations are not even safe to access by an outsider for research. The circumstances of the isolated groups under various political aspects make it more complicated. Such segregation often creates social as well as spatial injustice and an ugly, invisible and illegal urban space. The terms beautiful/ugly, visible/invisible, legal/illegal often determine the urban occupancy which may not be with proper definition in every case (Ghertner, 2008). A participatory approach in terms of design, policy making and its implementation involving all stake holders of Hindu Camp is required to address the complex social and built problems faced by the locality and its people. The government often isolates people in camps. This regulating and fostering of the political and spatial segregation is to exploit the users of the camps in order to fulfill their respective political objectives. This, however, creates special communal behavior which may indicate a risk factor for the city and society. For a just society and cities, segregated communities must be not be sidelined but should be converted as an integral part of the developmental process. Segregation is not solely an injustice in itself but furthermore negatively influences democracy (Wiebelhaus-Brahm, 2010). There is often public interest in removing the slums for further city development, which may not be seen in similar illegal settlements that may look visually pleasing. Spatial (in)justice may have various patterns which are among themselves just/unjust. It is not often difficult to understand this behavior by a careful observation (SOJA, 2009). Spatial remedies are necessary; often the spatial justice may not be addressed in a system, political, economic, social and itself unjust (Marcuse, 2009). A proper integration of the marginalized community in the urban economy and urban society is recommended in order to prevent negative impacts in general. The condition can be hostile along with different illegal activities which can be reduced by regular monitoring done by the city governance and the inhabitants. Gated or segregated communities require proper blending with the rest of the urban dwellers for the betterment of the cities.

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Editorial Board

THAAP JOURNAL 2016

THAAP, established in 2006, is registered as a not-for-profit Section 42 Company with the Securities Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP). It is a forum of academics and professionals dedicated to improving the state of education, particularly in the fields of Art and Culture, where multi-disciplinary discourses take place and diversity thrives; our particular focus is on teachers for they will, and can, lead the way and give us hope for a richer future - a future which is not stagnant with unitary thought but which carries the variety of a thousand flowers. To achieve this goal, International Conferences are held on an annual basis, while Seminars, Colloquims, Consultative meetings are organized throughout the year. THAAP recognizes the intrinsic link between history, tradition and culture and acknowledges that our present day beliefs, value systems and world view which constitute the culture of a society or community are shaped by the historical past. The resultant entity, while composed of many parts, operates as an integral body. Knowledge has grown into many fields of specializations yet as it flows from the human mind, it is integrated towards the common goal of human welfare. THAAP promotes integration and inclusivism and not the opposite. It aims to reassess and revisit history and create scholarship and knowledge of the old and recent history from the people's perspective and disseminate to a wide audience. There is no better way to learn than to learn from each other.

THAAP Crafts
Recognizing the rich craft traditions of Pakistan, THAAP-CRAFT seeks to enable the provision of livelihood opportunities for the marginalized craft communities and engender pride in the cultural heritage and expressions of the people of this nation. It works closely with THAAP Culture and Development Program for purposes of marketing the products and promoting crafts persons. It is currently working with the Women Collectives established as pilots in Bahawalpur District.

**THAAP Culture and Development Program**
THAAP Culture and Development Program was set up for purposes of working within culture and heritage sectors, to strengthen the nexus between culture and sustainable development and safeguarding communities' inalienable rights to their culture particularly their Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). THAAP Culture and Development Program works towards social and economic empowerment of the underprivileged village communities especially women by promoting their participation in the economic growth of communities through entrepreneurship and capacity building initiatives, mainly by enhancing non-agricultural income generation opportunities.
Its youth program aims to engage youth in safeguarding heritage and promotes intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge in schools through collaboration with Intangible Culture tradition bearers. THAAP also maintains a pool of associates who participate in projects as and when needed. Experts and ustads are currently working in South Punjab, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, and Kalaash with an aim to empower local communities and train them in capacity building and the Convention 2003.

THAAP Publications
THAAP Publications have published "Cultural Expressions of South Punjab", author Sajida Vandal with contributions by Dr. Nasarullah Nasir, Ms. Saba Samee and Ms. Ayesha Imdad; the "Historiography of Architecture of Pakistan and the Region", based on the Papers of the THAAP Conference - 2010; "Portrait of Lahore – Lahore Nu Salam" based on the Papers of the THAAP Conference - 2011; "Life in Small Towns", based on the Papers of the THAAP Conference – 2012; "Cultural Roots of Art and Architecture of the Punjab", based on the Papers of the THAAP Conference – 2013; "Culture, Art and Architecture of the Marginalized and the Poor", based on the Papers of the THAAP Conference – 2014; edited by Pervaiz Vandal.

Sajida Haider Vandal, CEO THAAP **Pervaiz Vandal, Director THAAP**
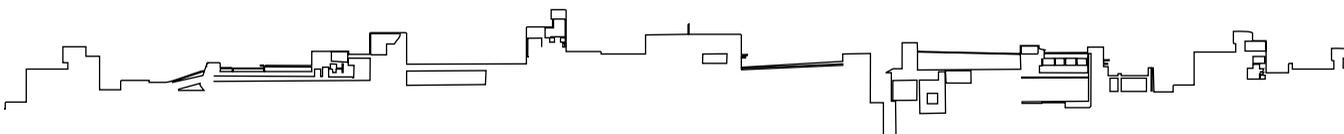
PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF PAKISTAN

The Peoples' History of Pakistan since the great upheaval that came with the partition of the Subcontinent has been a story of unrelieved struggle for survival. For those who came to the 'Promised Land' and those who received the endless stream of tired, hungry, heartbroken and sick humanity, it was a trauma that has taken decades to overcome, if at all. In the main, they settled in the larger towns and cities occupying the state lands in makeshift housing - the jhuggi (slum dwelling) and Katchi Abadi (squatter settlement) came into its own and grew. The elite, the ashrafiya, quickly got down to the sordid business of grabbing property left behind by the non-Muslims, while the unfortunate poor eked out a living in the refugee camps amid appalling sanitary conditions of filth and disease. The experience of the fortunate bureaucrats, who were the main instruments of evacuee property distribution against claims both legal and illegal, is thus world apart from those who sought jobs, any job, in their new country to feed themselves and their hapless families. The two histories are tales of contradictions.

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