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Chairperson's Note

Ayesha Noorani

Surely it is with the blessings of Allah [SWT] that we are now holding our seventh event and the publication of the second issue Daachi Nama.

Again, this biannual event at Heritage Museum brings you a diverse array of arts and crafts from all over Pakistan with the addition of new craftsmen bringing in a variety of wares to sell at this event. When the booking for this event was opened two months ahead of the Exhibition, we were over whelmed by the tremendous demands for stalls which were all booked in no time at all. Even though I am glad that Daachi Foundation has gained such popularity within this short span of time, we were sorry to disappoint many more who wished to be represented here.

We will sorely miss the presence of Colonel Abdul Naeem at this event who, as administrator of Daachi Foundation, shouldered a lot of responsibilities. His untimely death made us all the more aware of the urgency to accomplish our mission and complete what we have set out to do.

Our eventual goal is a Daachi Artisan Village which is being planned on 28 kanals of land on Raiwind Road near Green Acres. It will have ample shops, stalls, an art gallery, performance area, workshop area, residences for craftsmen a food court representing cuisine from all over Pakistan.

Our Daachi Exhibition events touch on areas which we wish to address in our village. The vision of our project stems from the teachings of Islam which is a peaceful religion demanding mankind to act responsibly to preserve the bounties of our Earth and to take care of the environment and not to pollute it. We have to take responsibility for fellow human beings regardless of their race, culture or creed and address their needs economically to earn a respectable income and to treat everyone with kindness and tolerance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our contributors who wrote excellent articles for our magazine, and our sponsors who gave advertisements for this magazine to cover our expenditure. It would be amiss on my part if I did not mention the dedicated team of Daachi members. They whole heartedly embraced this project, owned it, and contributed to it by their time, talent, and presence to make it a success.













Editor's Note

Ismat Riaz

Pakistan's fascinating range of arts and crafts provides ample opportunities to examine and explore their stories and history from all corners of the country. From truck art to the finest piece of pottery, there is a compelling need to examine and convey the beauty and intricate designs through the medium of writing or a pictorial journey. Daachi Nama amply fulfils this need to connect with the marvels of handicrafts by presenting a variety of articles that describe and explain what painstaking work goes into making a piece of art. The present issue delves into an interesting array of articles that cover architectural innovations and environmental preservation; cultural handicrafts that have been handed down through generations; historical monuments; music and musicians; art and artists; cities such as Lahore and the diverse cuisine that entices the palate with mouth watering recipes.

Daachi Foundation's Nama reflects the ideals of its futuristic plan to construct an Artisans Village where a permanent base will be provided for craftsmen and their crafts; gallery for exhibiting young artists' work; seminars on a healthy lifestyle; a food court catering to specialities from all four provinces; and a performance area to celebrate all religious, cultural and national festivals. The Daachi Artisans Village will become a creative and visually pleasing part of Lahore's cultural and artistic landscape providing entertainment, hands on activities and an educational environment for school and college students to interact with craftsmen and their handiworks.

We, at Daachi Nama, hope to continue providing quality articles concerning crafts, architecture, music, art, cuisine and preservation of the environment.





OUR NATIONAL LANGUAGE

اُردُو

Today's Pakistan is a state which is still in the throes of defining its nationality and accepting it in totality even though we are 68 years into our independence. One example is that of the confusion about our national language – Urdu. This is apparent in no less than the most visible symbol of independence i.e road signs which are more and more being written in just English rather than sharing space with our national language, Urdu. Even though the names of roads were changed in great haste and vigilance after 1947 from their colonial past and renamed after Pakistan's leaders and accomplished citizens, road signs, though, suffer from a sense of ignorance, misconception and laziness on the part of our municipal brotherhood. At present, the Lahore Cantonment area is being provided with brand new, reflective road signs but all written in just English. Writing the same in Urdu above the English is too much of a bother for the Cantonment Board to execute. If the most visible identification of nationhood that happens to be Urdu as the national language is allowed to disappear from sight, what solidarity and unity can be developed and sustained among Pakistanis?

Nation states became a norm in the 19th and 20th Centuries and adopted symbols that would mark their exclusivity from other nations such as flags, anthems and a national language. Pakistan's creation in 1947 demanded a similar exercise – a flag and anthem had to be chosen as well as a language that would be a distinctive symbol of independent statehood. Even before partition, Muslim League members had sketched the flag for Pakistan and asked a tailoring house in Delhi to sew it. This was proudly displayed at the meeting of the first Constituent Assembly on 11th August, 1947. The music for the anthem had already been composed by Mr Chagla so an All-Pakistan competition was held to send in entries for the wordings of the anthem. Haleez Jullundri won that competition and that became another feather in Pakistan's cap; Pakistan's anthem is unique as the musical composition was made first and then the words were set to it.





اردو ہے جس کا نام ہم جانتے ہیں داغ
سارے جہاں میں دھوم ہماری زبان کی ہے







In the case of a national language, the new nation looked for guidance to the Quaid-i-Azam as Pakistan had four strong regional languages and a fifth, old and cultured language in Bengali. Addressing a mammoth gathering of 300,000 people at Dacca's 'Paltan Maidan' in 1948, the Quaid declared Urdu to be the national language of Pakistan. He said 'But let me make it very clear to you that the State Language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Anyone who tries to mislead you is really the enemy of Pakistan. Without one State language, no nation can remain tied up solidly together and function. Look at the history of other countries. Therefore, so far as the State language is concerned, Pakistani language shall be Urdu.' The Quaid also warned of the fifth columnists that were Muslims being financed by foreign agencies to disrupt the peace in Pakistan. The language riots of the 50's are a testament to his warning although in the same speech he had advised, "Let me tell you in the clearest language that there is no truth that your normal life is going to be touched or disturbed as far as your Bengali language is concerned. But, ultimately, it is for you, the people of this province, to decide what shall be the language of your province." In the 1956 Constitution, Bengali was also declared a national language along with Urdu to fulfill the demands of the people of East Pakistan.

The majority of Pakistanis are not versed in the English Language and it must be difficult for people on the roads to decipher just sign posting in English. Furthermore, billboards do not use English but write Urdu words in the Roman script which is even worse as the English alphabet cannot be read by those unfamiliar with English. The crux of the matter is that neglecting or being shameful of using our national language sends out alarming signals to our new generations who, in the final analysis, must be made to be proud of their heritage and culture and dedicatedly uphold the flag of independent statehood.

Ismat Riaz
The writer is an author, columnist, educationist and teacher trainer











لاہور جسے باغوں اور ہرے بھرے درختوں کا شہر کہا جاتا تھا آج اُس لاہور کا مرثیہ لکھنے پر مجبور ہیں۔ لاہر میں ہر جگہ درختوں کو کٹتے دیکھ کر انسان خون کے آنسو رونے پر مجبور ہے۔ ہر طرف ایک ویرانی' جدھر نظر اُٹھائیں مٹی اور ملبے کے ڈھیر ہیں۔ معلوم ہوتا ہے ہر نقش قدیم کو مٹانا مقصود ہے۔ فضا میں آلودگی ہے۔ انسان تو انسان پرندے پریشان ہیں۔ وہ حسین درخت جن پر وہ بسیرا کرتے تھے اب کرینوں اور مشینوں کی زد میں ہیں۔ ہر طرف دیوہیکل ستون نے ڈیرا ڈال رکھا ہے۔ پارک خیموں اور بیت الخلاء میں تبدیل ہو گئے۔ اربوں روپے محض ایک سڑک پر خرچ ہو رہے ہیں جو اس شہر کے حسن کے اضافے کے بجائے اسے بدنما بنا رہے ہیں۔ آہ وہ لاہور جدھر سے گزرتے تھے ہریالی نظر آتی تھی۔ اس شہر کی ویرانی کا سہرا تو ایل-ڈی-اے کے سر ہے۔ جنہوں نے اس شہر کا حلیہ بگاڑنے میں کلیدی کردار ادا کیا ہے۔ دنیا میں کہیں بھی چلے جائیں۔ کوئی بھی اپنے قدیم شہر کو محفوظ کرنے کے لئے ایسی کسی عمارت کی اجازت نہیں دیتے جس سے وہ اپنا تشخص کھو دے۔ شہر کے مضافات میں نئی بستیاں بسائی جاتی ہیں۔ لندن' پیرس' روم' سپین میں پرانے شہر اپنی قدیم شان و شوکت برقرار رکھے ہوئے ہیں۔ کوئی بدنما عمارت اُن کے حسن کو گہنا نہیں رہی ہے۔ لیکن لاہور جو ایک حسین شہر تھا اب دن بدن بدنما عمارتوں کا شہر بن گیا ہے۔

مال روڈ کی پرانی عمارتوں کو دیکھئے تو کیا کاریگری کے شاہکار تھیں۔ شاہ دین بلڈنگ' دینگا سنگھ بلڈنگ وغیرہ کس قدر نفیس بنی ہوئی تھیں۔ اسمبلی کی عمارت کیا شاندار تھی۔ لیکن اب ان کے ساتھ الفلاح جیسی بدنما عمارت' واپڈا ہاؤس جیسی عمارتیں اُس کا منہ چڑاتی نظر آتی ہیں۔ مال روڈ ایسی شاندار سڑک تھی جس پر دو رویہ چنار درختوں سر اُٹھائے کھڑے تھے اور گرمیوں میں لوگ ان کے سائے تلے آرام کرتے تھے اور شام ڈھلتے ہی اس کی روشوں پر لوگ بن سنور کر چہل قدمی کرتے تھے۔ ان خوش رنگ لباس اس سڑک کے حسن میں اضافہ کرتے۔ لوگ اسے ڈھنڈی سڑک کہتے تھے اور واقعی شدید گرمی میں بھی اس سڑک پر عجیب ٹھنڈک اور فرحت کا احساس ہوتا تھا۔

عابدہ خواجہ

لاہور

Lahore the city of Gardens, Pakistan











ڈیوس روڈ اپنے حسن میں یکتا سڑک تھی۔ اس سڑک پر دو رویہ گل نشتر کے درخت فخر سے سر اُٹھائے کھڑے تھے۔ موسم بہار میں ایسا لگتا تھا جیسے شگوفوں کا طوفان آ گیا ہے۔ حسین تاریخی پھول درخت جھڑے تو روشوں پر پھولوں کی برسات ہو جاتی۔ اس سڑک پر خوبصورت بڑے گھر تھے۔ ہر گھر کے اندر داخل ہونے سے پہلے قدآور درخت اور پھول بوٹے آنے والے کو خوشامدید کہتے تھے۔ جیل روڈ کی اپنی ہی شان تھی۔ ہر سمت خوبصورت بڑی کوٹھیاں' ان کے باغات منظر کی جنت تھے۔ کینال کے کنارے چند بڑی کوٹھیاں تھیں۔ کینال اس شہر کی حسین ترین شے تھی۔ اس کے کنارے پر شمشاد کے قدآور درخت سر اُٹھائے آسمان سے باتیں کرتے۔ دھوپ میں اس کے پتے ہوا سے اُڑتے تو لگتا ہر سُو چاندی بکھر رہی ہے۔ نہر کے کنارے پر بید مجنوں کے درخت شاخیں بکھیرے گریاں کناں لگتے اور ان کے درمیان موسم بہار میں آڑو اور آلو بخارے کے شگوفے اس کے حسن میں اضافہ کرتے۔ دوسری جانب شالیمار باغ تک گل نشتر' سنبل اور نیلم کے درخت رنگ بکھیرتے اور نہر کے پانی میں اپنے عکس دیکھ کر مسکراتے۔

گلبرگ بنا تو ظفرالحسن صاحب نے واقعی اسے اس کے نام کی نسبت سے گلبرگ ہی بنایا۔ ایک بڑی شاہراہ کے درمیان خوبصورت اور سبز مخملیں گھاس کے قطعے اور خوبصورت پھولوں کے درخت خوشبودار پھولوں کی جھاڑیاں تھیں۔ بڑی شاہراہ پر بارہ کنال کے پلاٹ جن میں گھر تو چھوٹے تھے' باغ بڑے بڑے تھے۔ جن پر مکینوں نے حسین پھولوں اور درختوں سے اپنے گھروں کو آراستہ کر رکھا تھا۔ گزرتے ہوئے پھولوں کی مہک اور گھنے درختوں کی چھاؤں استقبال کرتی۔ زیادہ تر مکان ایک منزل کے تھے یا کوئی دو منزل کا۔ مکان کے وسط میں ایک کمرشل ایریا تھا۔ اس کے علاوہ کسی کو اجازت نہیں تھی کہ کوئی مکان' کوئی کاروبار چیز رہائشی علاقے میں کھولے۔ جو اس وقت گلبرگ سے گزرتا اُسے ایک بڑے باغ کا گمان ہوتا۔

ایل-ڈی-اے کی مہربانی سے اب گلبرگ کی شاہراہ بدنما اور ولچر فصاحت عمارتوں کا ایک جنگل میں گئی ہے۔ رہی سہی کسر اب سنگل فری کے جنون نے پوری کر دی۔ ہر طرف درخت بیدردی سے کٹ رہے ہیں۔ بنی بنائی سڑکیں کھودی جا رہی ہیں۔ ایسا لگتا ہے کہ پورا علاقہ فنا کیا جا رہا ہے۔ یہ ابتدا بڑے درختوں کو کاٹ کر کھجور کے درخت لگا کر صحرا کا نقشہ پیش کرنے سے ہوء۔ اب سڑکوں کا جنگل بنایا جا رہا ہے۔

لاہور کا مرثیہ نہ لکھوں تو کیا کہوں؟ بچپن یہاں گزرا' جوانی اور اب بڑھاپا۔ ایسا زوال کسی شہر پر نہ آیا ہوگا جو ان چند سالوں میں اس شہر بے مثال پر آیا۔ کاش! ہم اسے اس دست برد سے بچا سکتے۔ اب تو صرف یہ دعا ہے کہ جو قدیم آثار رہ گئے ہیں وہی سلامت رہیں۔

کچھ لوگ ابھی تک کاوش میں مصروف ہیں کہ ہم اپنی پرانی روایات' گھریلو صنعتوں کو محفوظ کر لیں۔ اللہ تعالیٰ ان کی کوششوں کو بارآور کرے اور وہ نامی سے ہمارا ناطہ جوڑے رکھیں۔ ڈاچی اس سلسلے میں قابل تحسین ہے۔ وہ پرانی روایتوں کی تجدید کی کوشش کر رہے ہیں۔



Abida Khwaja
The writer is an academic in Quranic Studies

ہم تو اپنی پرانی صنعتوں کھانوں' لباس سب کو ہی فراموش کرتے جا رہے ہیں۔ ہماری لسی' ستو' شربت کی جگہ کوکا کولا وغیرہ نے لے لی۔ جو نہ صرف مضرصحت ہیں خودغرضی بھی سکھاتی ہیں۔ کوکا کولا پینے والا بچہ ایک گھونٹ بھی کسی کو دینا گوارا نہیں کرتا۔ یہی حال برگر اور پیزا کا ہے۔ ہمارے کھانے ہر موسم کے لحاظ سے صحت بخش اور لذیذ ہیں۔ اپنی روایتوں سے کٹ کر کوئی قوم بھی اپنا تشخص برقرار ہیں نہیں رکھ سکتی۔ اللہ تعالیٰ ڈاچی کو ترقی دے اور ان کے اعلیٰ مقاصد کو پورا کرے۔





















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Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Crafts Of Pakistan

Its role in income generation and empowerment.

Paper by Niilofur Farrukh for UNESCO Craft Conference in Karachi, 2004

In Pakistan, we are still lucky to be able to find, the uninterrupted craft continuum of several millennia, but this link to our past hangs by a thread and will soon disappear, forever, if we are unable to save it with a comprehensive national policy that focuses on the preservation and promotion of traditional crafts.

A large percentage of the rural population lives below the poverty line so any attempt to preserve the craft has to directly address issues of income generation.

Craft regeneration involves both a preservation of the traditional craft in its original form with its deep roots in the geographical, historical and creative sensibility of the people, and an expansion of this legacy with contemporary design intervention. The resulting value added craft product will be better equipped to capture demanding markets at home and abroad.

Exposure to craft exports will open an additional window to the culture of Pakistan for the international community.

The paradigm shift in the study of culture recognizes its influence on national identity and development. Traditional craft has the potential to make the rural population an active player in the nation's progress, a position marginalized by urban industrialization and globalization.

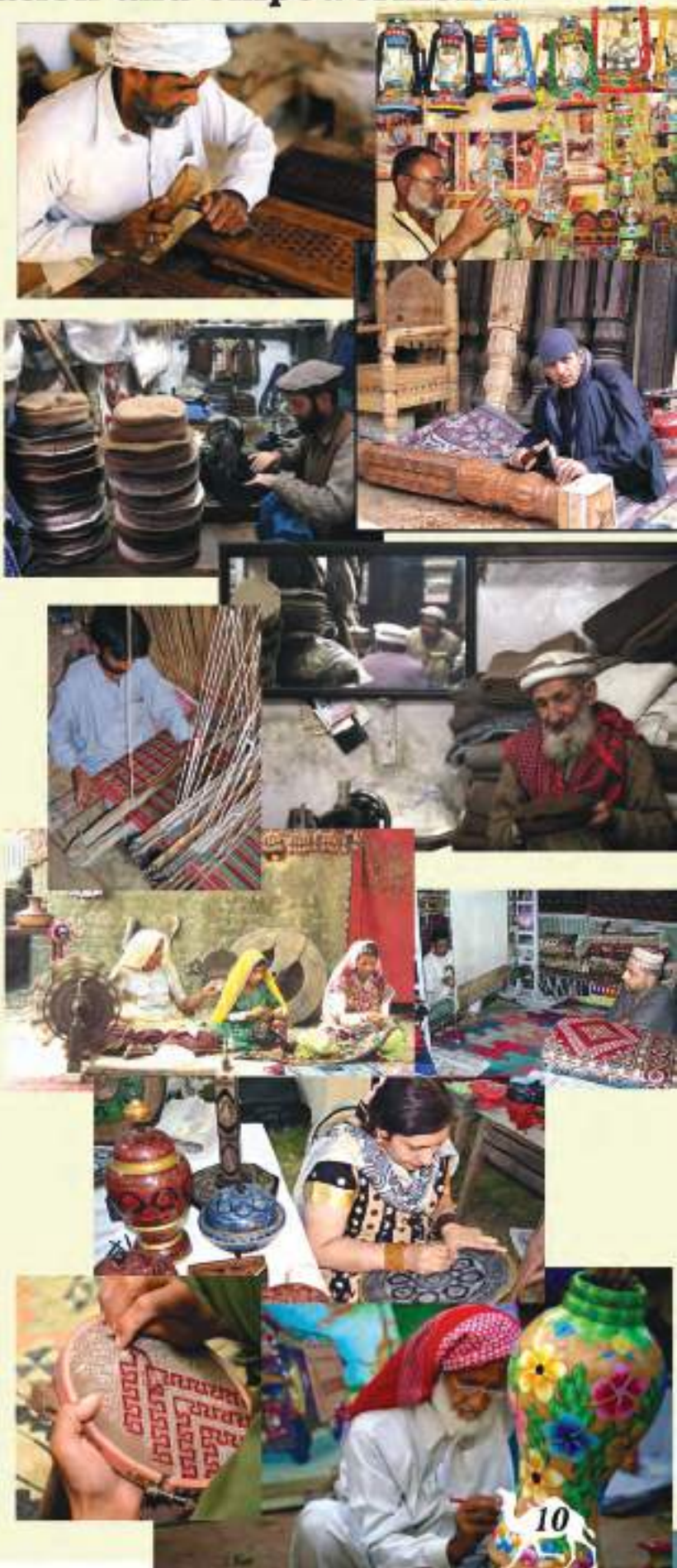
The grassroots re-energization of these communities through ancestral craft practices can also contribute to an enhanced self- esteem and nation cohesion.

Economist Fred Magdoff in his critique of 'free trade' suggests a way out of the negative effects for nations on the periphery

' ...the removal of barriers to the flow of goods to capital permits a country to concentrate on developing the areas in which it has a comparative advantage...'

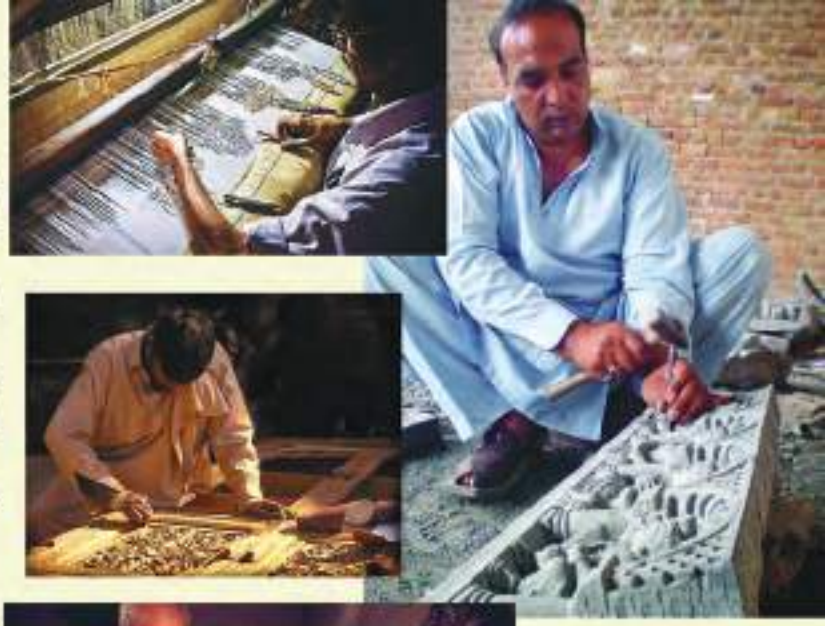
One of Pakistan's advantages lies in its untapped human resource of unique creative skills that can be employed in a productive craft industry.

The following actions focus on a multi-dimensional strategy that could provide a strong base for sustainable development and ensure the protection of craft persons and their way of life.



1.1-Formation of Craft Data and Research Cell
Presently no comprehensive and current data is available to create an accurate blueprint for a plan of action which puts a Research and Documentation Cell on high priority.
1.1 High on this list should be a directory of national crafts and craft persons and related organizations.
1.2 A website to facilitate access to existing archival material with Lok Virsa, Craft Council and Provincial Cultural Ministry data etc.
1.3 Catalogue severely threatened craft and techniques on film.
2- National and Provincial Craft Museums
These institutions at a national and provincial level modeled on a more interactive and collaborative model can offer many advantages-
2.1-Craft galleries and museums could highlight the craft continuum of Pakistan and showcase the diversity and excellence in the field and act as a vehicle of awareness and collective pride.
2.2- Samples of excellence in the collection could be presented as a benchmark for contemporary craft production.
2.3 – Exhibitions at these institutions can showcase contemporary crafts and traditional craft revival and act as a rich resource for future designers etc.

3-Financial Uplift of Craft Communities –
The financial uplift of craft communities is urgently needed to prevent crafts persons from abandoning their ancestral practice to seek alternate professions.
3.1- Immediate support is needed in the form of-
- Pensions for master craftsmen and craftspersons with an uninterrupted career of minimum 40 years,
-education stipends to young craftsmen who are willing to remain in the crafts.
- micro –credit to initiate craft production aimed at poverty alleviation.
3.2 – Creation of more job options within the field that explore both products and skills can be used to generate income like mandatory teaching of local crafts that will create the position of a craft teacher in rural and urban schools. This program can emulate Iran's program for calligraphers in the school system and the artist and craftsman in residence program in Canada.
3.3- Revenue generation by patenting authentic craft designs of Pakistan. This will also safeguard the craft legacy from being appropriated by international design houses.
3.4- Make it incumbent upon local fashion designers who base their collections purely on traditional craft to










contribute towards the preservation of craft and acknowledge their craft design source.
3.6- Tax holiday to craft based enterprises run by craftsmen.

4- A Social and Academic Partnership
A social and academic partnership through support groups that can act as pressure lobby to achieve the objectives of the policy. Penetrate all strata of society to influence present apathy towards craft issues.
4.1- Form a support network drawn from all members of the community to work towards the awareness of craft preservation and promotion to inculcate pride and social cohesion.
4.2- Establish a partnership with academic institutions through an integrated craft curriculum. A craft curriculum will have a positive impact on the rural communities as the integration of local craft will boost self esteem.

5- Up-gradation of Craft Skills and Support Technology
Today traditional craftpersons need urgent up-gradation of skills and support technology.
5.1- Workshops on skill up-gradation carried out by master crafts persons.
5.2- Technological assistance in the form of equipment and related training e.g. efficient kilns and glazing technical support to potters.
5.3- Training in quality control, pricing, marketing etc for members of craft community.

6-Supply of Raw Material
The non-availability of raw material has made it difficult to maintain craft authenticity. As can be seen in this slide, acrylic wool that has replaced cotton and silk thread and changed the traditional colour palette of embroidery and effected durability.
6.1-Put mechanisms in place that ensure the supply of original or an appropriate replacement for authentic craft production.
6.2-Subsidize material costs where needed.

7-Capacity Building
To develop crafts for the export market, it is important to develop capacity building and maintain quality control.
7.1- Identify the needs and provide financial support to expand craft production resources of the crafts community.
7.2- Provide training to increase skilled manpower.












.7.3- Create craft zones with well equipped large workshops that can be hired by craftsmen for the production of large orders.

8- Empowerment of Craft People

For the success of any cultural initiative it is vital to empower its main players. The empowerment of the craft people should be prioritized.

8.1- Initiate social awareness projects to educate crafts people of their rights.

8.2- Involve representatives of men and women from craft community in the making and implementation of cultural policy at the Provincial and Local Gov. level.

8.2 - To avoid exploitation develop a mechanism for fair wages and prices for their products.

9- Safety Awareness for Craft persons

Hazardous conditions in the production of some crafts like textiles and ceramics require emphasis on safety awareness for crafts persons

9.1-Creating an awareness of safe craft production in accordance to world regulations.

9.2- Training in first aid against toxic poisoning, accidents etc. for vulnerable craft communities.

9.3- Enhance awareness of healthy working environment.

11- Contemporary Design Intervention

Design Intervention to create value added products.

11.1- Training of product designers to carry out design intervention to cater to the changing lifestyle and fashion. To look at existing model of Thatta Kedona in Punjab and Object and Solo in Karachi.

11.2- Form partnership with local and foreign fashion designers to promote fashion related crafts, like textile and jewelry. The success of existing models like Khaadi which is responsible for the revival of handloom textiles can be studied.

12-Development of Domestic Craft

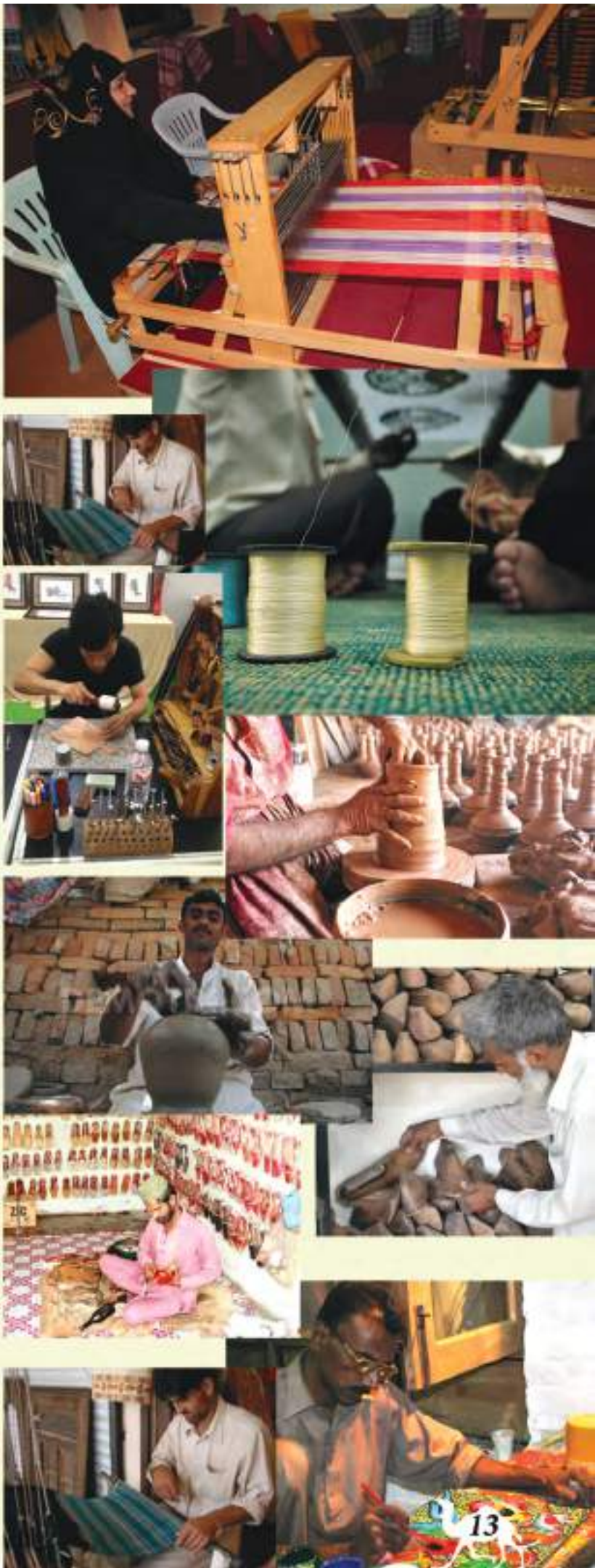
Development of a domestic craft market could have multiple advantages

12.1-The re-vitalization of crafts production through increase in demand.

12.2 Private sector can have a vital role in this initiative due to low investment.

12.3- Crafts in the domestic market could be explored for the promotion and awareness of crafts.

12.4- Test new craft designs for export in the local market.



12.5- Retail outlets in rural areas at petrol pumps on highways for easy access.
12.6- Explore innovative marketing strategies to meet sale objectives e.g. annual mega craft show that can rotate between big cities unlike the Lok Virsa mela that is limited to Islamabad.

13-An Efficient Export Craft Strategy
This Strategy could result in significant revenue generation.
13.1 To build a team of crafts persons, designers, merchandisers and exporters to shape an effective craft strategy in keeping with the capacity and capability of the craft community.
13.2- to create an enabling environment for craft export.
13.3 to collaborate with Export Promotion Bureau of Pakistan and SMEDA.
13.4- to link up with the international craft buyers and marketing network.

14-Multi-tiered Recognition Program
Multi-tiered Recognition Program to motivate and reward the craft community.
14.1- Initiate an annual program of recognition and rewards in the following categories.
- For craftsmen from the master crafts persons to outstanding apprentices among men and women artisans.
- School with best craft curriculum
- Outstanding craft design
- Craft exporters for reaching revenue targets
- Retailers for reaching sales targets
- Best research and documentation to individuals

15-Legislative support for effective policy changes
Federal, Provincial and Local Governments have an important role to play in the implementation of policy initiative through revised and new laws.
15.1- Laws are needed that make the smuggling of extinct crafts and the destruction of traditional craft precincts a punishable offence.
15.2- Protection of important craft villages as heritage sites.

16-Funding Support
To preserve and promote crafts a National Craft Fund is needed.
16.1- A National Craft Fund for the preservation and promotion of traditional craft supported by international cultural organizations, corporate and private donors.

16.2- This fund should focus on both the craft and craftspersons.

It could help with the setting up of pensions, awards etc and also fund craft museums, documentation, technical uplift etc.

Neelofer Farrukh
The writer is an Art Critic, and founder of Nukta Art





WEDNESDAY 8:00pm

Haseena Moin's

محبت ہوگئی ہم سے



FRIDAY 8:00pm

YEH JUNOON



MONDAY 8:00pm

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My experience with Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB)

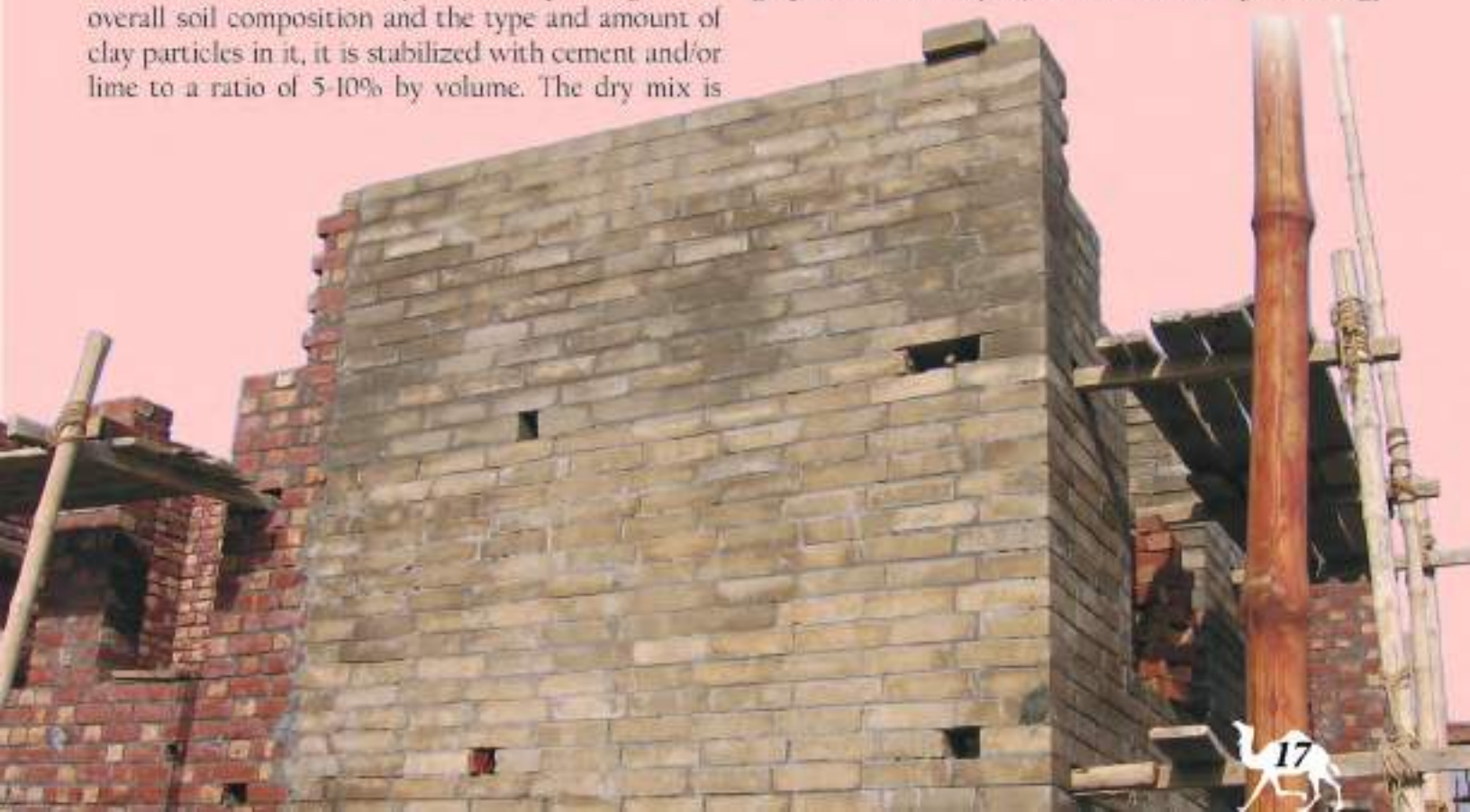
In Oct 2007 we considered building our house in Lahore where we had moved a couple of months earlier and it appeared that we were going to stay put for the foreseeable future.

I had always admired houses made of soil in its most natural form. Rammed earth, Wattle and daub, Adobe, Cob and CSEB seemed to me to belong to their surroundings as fired brick didn't. Urban and climatic constraints however rule many of these techniques out, except Rammed earth and CSEB.

Having worked with CSEB many years earlier in my days with the Aga Khan Network, I decided to give this medium a try once again. CSEB are compacted soil blocks produced in a specially designed manual press. The press is known as Cinva Ram and was first used in South America about 60 years ago. The basic component of these blocks is soil to which some amount of sand is added for its inert qualities. Depending on the overall soil composition and the type and amount of clay particles in it, it is stabilized with cement and/or lime to a ratio of 5-10% by volume. The dry mix is gently sprinkled with a little water and mixed with a fork. The water should be just enough to make a lump as you squeeze it in your hand. The process of compaction and stabilization together ensures that the block gains sufficient strength after proper curing and makes it equivalent to a kiln produced brick.

One could see endless examples of this medium from places in southwestern US like New Mexico etc. Closer to home in India too, with the Auroville Institute in the state of Tami Nadu, India, taking the technique various notches up. Contemporary examples in our immediate urban environment however, are hard to come by. My brief search for the same in Lahore was predictably unsuccessful, but I decided to go ahead nonetheless.

Some research later, which included the tests of soil samples from the site (X-Ray Diffrected and Petrographic Modal analysis) at the New Campus Geology





deptt, the hunt for a source of hydrated lime, locating the fellow in Karachi who had made the Block Press for us earlier, discussions with Auroville regarding the best block size for a small project and overall composition based on the type of soil I had available, and finally after consultation with the engineers, we designed a load bearing house in CSEB.

Our Block size was going to be 12"x9"x3.5" and the composition was to be 1:3:6, where soil was 6, ordinary sand (not the more expensive sharp sand) was 3 and cement and lime was 1(half and half).

Now started the tough part, finding and retaining a team who would make the blocks and a contractor who would be willing to re-train his labour to build with a material they were unfamiliar with. There were countless questions but I was lucky to find a group who were willing to take chances and get the answers as we went along. A nasty surprise was in store early on though. The speed with which we had anticipated to work was too ambitious. Along with the press we had made a huge pulverizer to break down big lumps of clay but it never worked. We had no choice but to manually sieve all the soil we wanted, the day before we would want to produce, and the production of blocks did not exceed 120 blocks a day. By a rough estimate I would need at least 50000 blocks (CSEB being equal to about 3 bricks). That would take me at least a year of non-stop production. I had limited time but didn't want to give up what I had learnt so far. So I compromised and settled for a single room with three exposed walls made with these blocks, some accent walls in the house and the entire boundary wall. We made about 5000 blocks in all. Wasted some, randomly tested some and built with the rest.

For trial only we added kairi and even chopped jute to some blocks, with excellent results. But in the interest of time and an ease of execution, stuck to the initial mix for the most part.

The test results in the beginning at 14-28 days of curing would not exceed 550- 600 psi. The addition of hydrated lime in the mix held the promise of an increase in strength as the months passed. Sure enough when we tested the block (at PITAC) many months later it had gone up to an average of 1100 psi.

The reason some homeowners around the world choose to construct primarily with soil is not only for the way it looks but also for many other advantages:

- CSEB is completely sun and air dried, unlike the brick industry which guzzles endless amounts of fuel and adds to environmental pollution.
- It uses up all the soil that you dig up for the basement, much of which would be wasted in a conventional house. Essentially then, the basic material is free of cost and right under your feet!
- It is socially far more responsible than bricks as almost all the cost associated with the production (except for the initial one time capital investment and the nominal amounts of cement and lime) is handed to the labour. With my inefficient press and low production rate I was still spending less than I would have on bricks. To briefly compare the cost to that of a brick: a day's production yielded 120 blocks (a better press can yield upto 400) , cost me Rs 1000 in labour and about 500 in material, including cement, lime and sand. Each block therefore was Rs 12.5. Equating it to the cost of brick 12.5/3= Rs 4.1. A good brick at that time was between Rs 4.5 to Rs 5. This ensures a





modest saving of at least Rs 75,000 in the cost of bricks only for a medium sized house of covered area between 5000 to 6000 sft. The more substantial saving follows however when laying the blocks and, during plaster. Its bigger size has fewer joints and hence uses less mortar. Plaster work is easier and more even on both sides of the wall as the neat and crisp edges ensure there is no wrong side of the wall.

- Provided there is a bit of space, to build and store close to the site, the transport cost associated with carting bricks to the site is eliminated.
- The highly compacted CSEB is thermally more efficient than brick, effecting temperature transfer at a much slower rate. Rate of water absorption of CSEB also being less than that of brick, an unplastered CSEB wall lets rain water run off without getting soaked itself.
- The addition of lime in the blocks (and in all mortar and plaster work, sub floors etc.) provides a healthier indoor environment as lime continuously absorbs CO_2 from the air to change $Ca(OH)_2$ back to limestone ($CaCO_3$).

With a bit more R & D, a more efficient press than the one I had used could be developed, the cement and lime mix that I used could be completely substituted with lime. Lime being much cheaper than cement and having qualities which make it superior to cement on many counts. For instance it gains strength over time (owing to an inherent process called the lime cycle), self heals hairline cracks, repels insects due to its alkalinity , and has an embodied energy (the energy employed in its production) which is much less than that of cement.

We have lived in this house for almost 6 years now. Like most new houses we have had our share of teething problems but none of them relate to our custom built blocks. My only regret is had i started a year earlier I would have built completely with stabilized soil.

Nabeela Nazir
The writer is an Architect and Product Developer

SADEQUAIN AND I

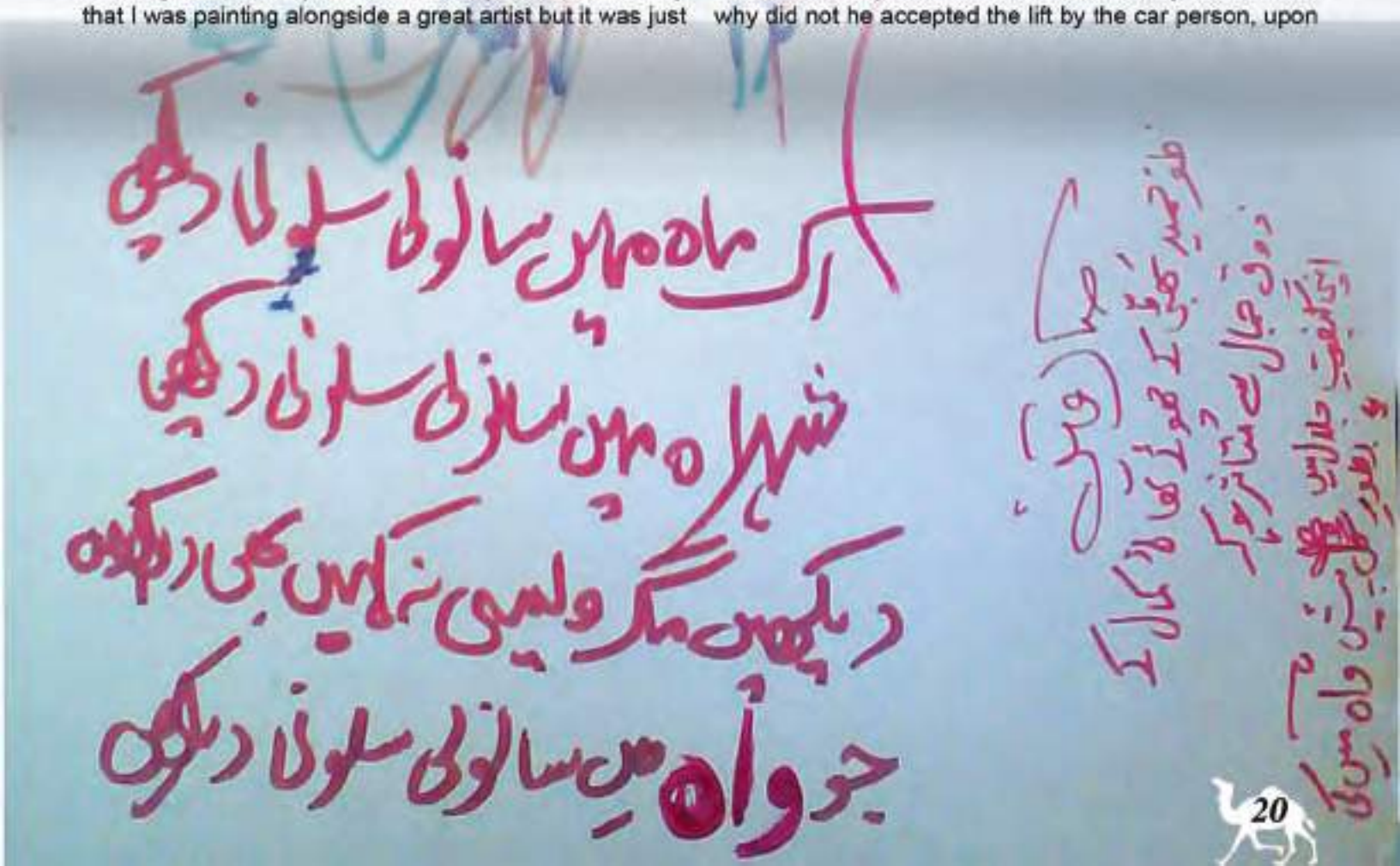
Born in June, 1930 at Amroha (now in India) and died on February 10, 1987, Sadequain was one of the few artists who rose to a level people always wish for. A person of many artistic talents such as Painter, Calligrapher, Poet and above all a real gentleman and philanthropist, Sadequain was above all his fellow artists, known and acknowledged by not only the Government of Pakistan but his talent was recognized and appreciated by other countries of the world.

During his lifetime he was awarded Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, President's Medal of Honour and Sitara-e-Imtiaz by the Government of Pakistan and was also awarded Cultural Aaward by Australian Government and Biennale de Paris by the Government of France. Most of the work that brought fame to Sadequain was because of the huge murals he painted at the, Power House of Mangla Dam, Jinnah Hospital-Karachi, Punjab University Library-Lahore, Lahore Museum, National Bank of Pakistan-Lahore, Sports Complex-Islamabad and his last mural at Frere Hal an honour to work with Sadequain while he was in Lahore in the mid seventies.

My first encounter with Sadequain in person for the first time was when I saw him standing on a scaffolding some 9 feet off the ground working on a mural (16x140 ft..) and I was impressed at the very same instant with this man. The next seven years passed by as I worked with Sadequain at a speed that I still cannot comprehend.

Working with Sadequain was an experience, not only that I was painting alongside a great artist but it was just like sitting under a big shady tree where people from all walks of life come, sit, rest, enjoy and leave. Mostly during the day time we were painting but as the day progressed people started coming in, firstly his admirers, then writers, poets, artists and this went on far into the night when his humble abode at he backside of Open air Theatre-Laurence Garden, Lahore transfor med into a '*Mushaira*' with different poets reciting their poetry and Sadequain also taking full part with his quartets (Ruba'eyat), while I was enjoying listening and carrying on with what I was good at (painting) but sometimes nudged by Sadequian by "*Bhatti Sahab painting chorley, ye bhi kaam ki chees hai isey bhi suniye*". It was because of Sadequain that I had the honour of meeting and knowing some big names in Urdu literature like, Munnoo Bhai, Munir Niazi, and Sajjad Haider.

Such a great man but so down to earth was he that once he had to go to Alhamra Art Council for some meeting and the person who promised to pick and drop him from Laurence Garden where he was staying / working did not show up. After waiting for him for some time Sadequain decided to take a walk and as he was walking a gardener offered him a lift on his bicycle which he gladly accepted and hopped on to the carrier of his bicycle. On the way someone with a car saw Sadequain going on a bicycle and offered him a lift in his car which Sadequain declined by saying that he was OK with his present ride. Later in the day when he told me the story I asked him why did not he accepted the lift by the car person, upon



which he said that he did not want to offend the gardener.

"Cycle ki swari ka bhi apna maza hai", he added.

I can never forget one interesting instant when Sadequain really did show how he felt about other people around him ignoring as to what type, sort, or social cadre they belonged. For him they belonged to his 'qabeela' and thus were all equal despite their religion, ethnic group ore whatever. I remember, it was one of those days when sugar was scarce in Lahore and we were working on a mural for The National Bank of Pakistan, when three officers of Pakistan Air Force came over and requested him to make something that was to be given to the president of Libya, Col.. M.. Qaddafi as souvenir form Pakistan. Sadequain agreed as he always did in such occasions and told them to come after two or three days. They came after three days and were given a calligraphy on a goat skin. The gentlemen from Air Force were very much pleased and then very humbly asked as to how much they were supposed to pay him for the calligraphy. Sadequain said in his usual manner,"koi jet shet dilwa saktey ho". We all had a good laugh on this one but later they insisted to do something in return upon which Sadequain said that there was shortage of sugar and if they could arrange some (imagine some sugar in return for his calligraphy). The next day those officers were back with 60 kg bag of sugar. Sadequain was very much pleased and asked them to have a cup of tea with him now that *the sugar was available*. While the tea was made he asked his servant to call all those who were complaining about the scarcity of sugar and soon enough there was a long que of servants, maids, chaukidars, carpenters, electricians in the hall where we all were sitting. Within minutes the 60 kg sugar was distributed amongst all and while the distribution was going on the voice of Sadequain echoed,"bhai mehmanon key liye kuch bacha lena, or haan yeh cheeni ke borin sumbhal lena is par kutch khattati ki jae gi".

During my working experience with Sadequain I never heard him cursing, getting angry with someone or talking against any other artist which is a rare thing. All he had to talk about was art, literature, art history, artists and their good work.

One can never find a person like Sadequain who knowingly, was humble, courtious and helpful to people whom he knew were not sincere to him. Once his manager ran away with a cheque of ten thousand rupees (back in seventies it was a big amount) and about fifteen of his paintings and upon knowing Sadequain just chuckled and said, "*such a fool, I would have given him whatever he ran away with if he had the courtesy of asking me instead*".

Once while in Wah Cantt. where he paid a visit just because of the request of my elder brother, Zaffar, he was testing some old markers and suddenly a face emerged from the doodling I asked Sadequain to give that paper to me with his autograph of course upon which he signed that portrait using the name of all of my brothers (Gul, Zaffer, Jamal, Kamal and Jalal) with the name of the place (Wah Cantt.) where he gave me that portrait, showing his command over the language and respect for me.

I consider the time spent with Sadequain as the Golden Era of my life and will always cherish the memories I had with such a great artist, laureate,intelectual,human being and above all a gentleman.

May Allah Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace - Aameen.

Kamal Bhatti
The writer is a Designer and educationist















Glimpse of last exhibition





















ZSN Photography



The plays and ploys of paandaans





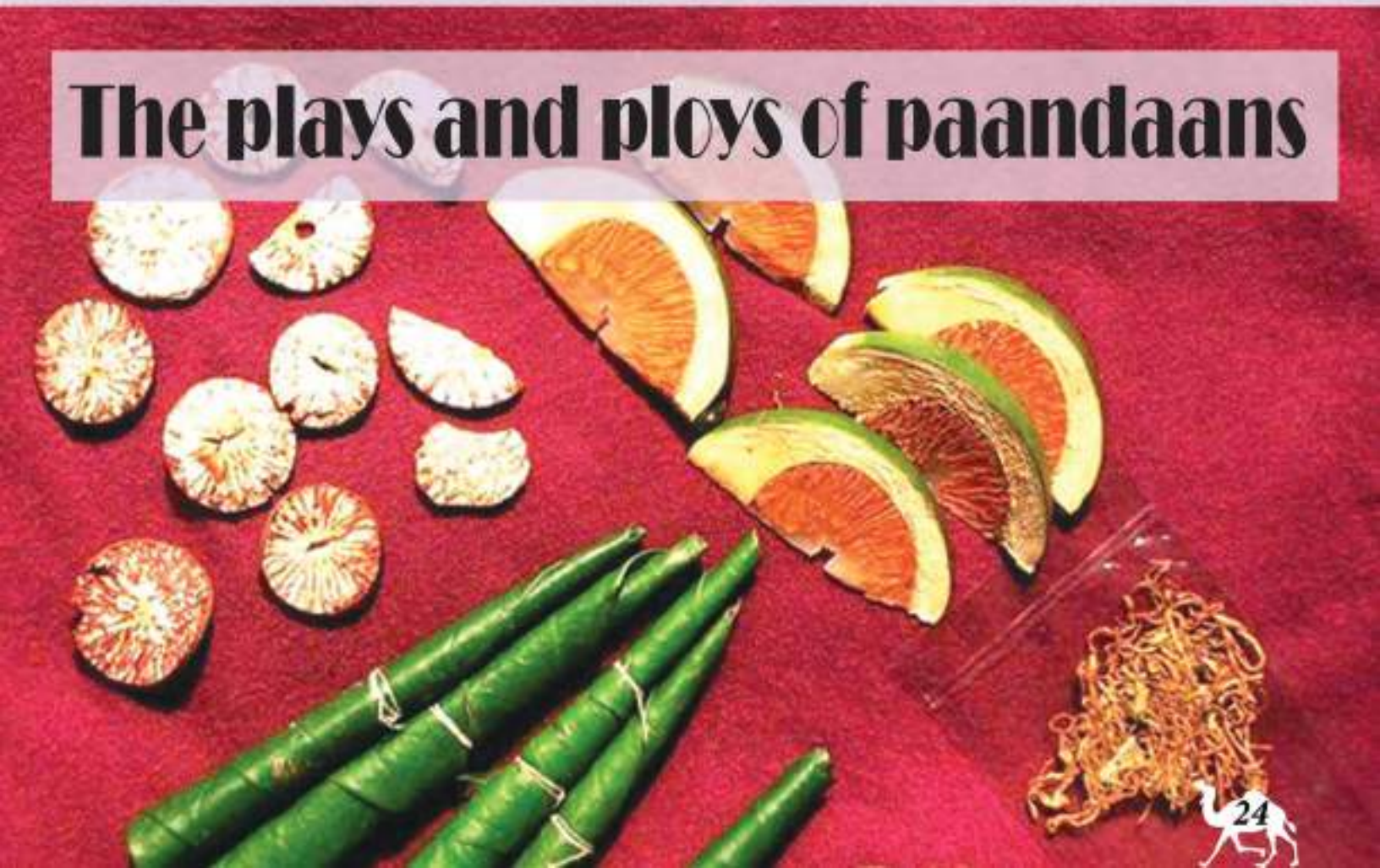
The paandaan, at one level no more than a simple box for holding betel leaves, embodies a bygone era.

Paan is eaten in South Asia. India is the largest consumer and grower of the betel: in Hyderabad and Lucknow, the two nawabi cities, paan-chewing attained a hallowed status. In the absence of the need to earn a living, the nawabs and begums kept themselves busy by maintaining an elaborate lifestyle, in which decorum or how one did something, was just as important as why one did it.

Paan was one of those things that became associated with this Indian Muslim aristocracy: its preparation was an art form in the two seats of learning and culture in British India, i.e. Uttar Pradesh (UP) in the North and Hyderabad Deccan in the South.

From UP and Hyderabad emerged two major types of paandaan: in the North and UP the paandaan was dome-shaped and decorated with gota or golden braid. In the South the Hyderabadi paandaan was a rectangular casket with intricate filigree of gold and silver.

The Mughal emperors indulged in the practice of eating paan, and a paandaan was a ceremonial gift for ambassadors and nobles. At court, the





paandaan was never displayed; a ready-to-eat-paan was prepared in the zenana or women's quarter and served to the courtiers. The nawab begums went to great pains to teach the ladies of the harem and the ladies-in-waiting how to make the perfect paan.

Many rituals grew around the little box that stored the betel leaf and its condiments. The wealthy of Lucknow were extremely sophisticated, and the special condiments used by the lady of the house were of high quality and painstakingly prepared. The ladies of Lucknow were fond of telling themselves that their paans matched the grandeur and highbrow culture of their State.

These begums were ever mindful of the art of coquetry and the needs of their husbands, their conversation, their dress and jewels, their commitment to raising well mannered children, and teaching their daughters how to be good wives, when they went to their husband's home, constituted their pride. This ethos is reflected in the skill, care, and delicacy distilled into making and serving a paan..

The traditional way of storing, making and serving a paan is awe inspiring. The paan leaves were wrapped in a moist red cloth called 'tool' and stored inside the paandaan, which had several containers with lids for storing betel nuts, cardamom, and tobacco leaves; a smaller container in the centre usually contained the qiwaam, which is a mixture of tobacco, saffron and sweet-smelling ingredients. Paan-lovers are fond of saying that if you have not eaten a qiwaami paan you have missed out on one of the best tastes this world has to offer!

On weddings and family occasions paan preparation was a major preoccupation. Kilos of betel nut were cut and browned on a hot plate to make it extra-crisp. The cutting of betel occasioned much discussion, for the size of the betel nut had to be determined as well as what type of sarota or betel cutter would be used. Girls were taught how to cut each betel piece the same size. If a girl cut big pieces she was considered clumsy. Indeed, how one held the sarota and how one cut with it was examined minutely by the elder ladies of the household.

A paandaan was an essential item of a girl's trousseau in UP, Lucknow and Hyderabad. Interestingly, the sarota was excluded from the trousseau paandaan as it was considered a bad omen to carry a cutting instrument (a sarota or a knife or a pair of scissors) to the husband's home! So to make things easier the bride would collect the



sarota on her first visit to her parent's house after the wedding.

When daughters were married off, an allowance for the keeping of the paandaan, or the kharch-e-paandaan, as it was called, was negotiated and put in the nikahnama. The subject of the betel box expense elicited some hard-nosed bargaining on the occasion of a marriage – it was an izzat ka sawal !(The paan allowance of my friend's mother, for example, was settled at 500 rupees in 1936!) The higher the kharch-e-paandaan, the more it added to the prestige of the lady of the house.

A paan was a symbol of hospitality. If one was angry with another, displeasure was shown by not serving him a paan. This gesture was enough to get the message across.

The paandaan forged bonds of caring, togetherness and hospitality. On visits to loved ones homes, ladies would take a paan for each member; preferences ranged – big chunks of betel nut, small pieces of betel nut, ground betel nut, long pieces of betel nut – the variety was endless! Knowing the likes of each family member – he eats this way, he eats that way- was part of the caring bestowed.

Invitations for weddings carried a little pouch containing paan, betel nuts and cardamom; the news of a birth in the family was conveyed with a paan and a clove; and the blessing "May your paandaan never be empty!" was showered on loved ones.

On Eid the children looked forward to collecting their Eidi or pocket money along with a paan made to their taste (children were allowed paans only on special occasions) and a ball of cotton wool sprinkled with attar which they stuck behind their ears before they sallied forth on their round of salaams. The nawab families offered traditional Eid vermicelli and paans wrapped in gold waraq or leaf to the master and lady of the homes they visited.

A paandaan needed a series of accessory utensils. For instance, the washed betel leaves were stored in the nagardaan, a silver box with a cover in the shape of a leaf that was placed next to the paandaan. Then there was the khaasdaan, a dome-shaped receptacle for keeping freshly made paans. And then there was the ugaldaan or spittoon. Abhorred by some, it was a big jug of silver or brass. It was heavy so as not to fall over and spill its contents! After eating a paan with tobacco the first 'peek' or stream of spittle had to be discharged. Servants and maids brought forth the spittoons and were always waiting for a signal from their master or mistress that they needed to spit. The well-bred very carefully placed a hand over their mouths and spat so as not to dirty the sides of the spittoon. Throwing the 'peek' was an art form; it helped you to not disgust people.

How you ate, chewed or spat a paan showed your class. (It is said that Princees Durre Shehwar of Hyderabad Deccan had such a fine skin that when she swallowed her 'peek' one could see it pass through her gullet!).



When traveling, the nawabs carried a dibiya or small box of silver or gold which had a tray for prepared paans and a compartment for the betel nut, with two slots for cardamom seeds and saffron tobacco. The ladies of the house too kept a dibiya and on their visiting rounds a maidservant who walked behind the mistress carried her dibya-box.

A kasna or round bag stored betel nuts and a cutter. When a maid was free the kasna-bag was handed to her. She would busy herself with cutting the betel and then pull the string together to close it when she had other work to attend to.

Finally, a silver dagger-shaped toothpick on a chain was worn as an ornament by many sophisticated paan-eaters.

The kotha or courtesan culture was intertwined with the elite cultures of Delhi, the South and Oudh. Paandaans at the kothas were ornate, polished to perfection, and strategically placed. Upon entering the kotha a gentleman visitor was served a paan. While presenting a paan, eye contact was made by the presentress, and the first level of seduction between herself and the client was established. Sometimes the courtesan in question served this 'prey' paan by placing it with her own hands in the nawab's mouth.

What about the paandaan? Well, the truth is that paans have, like many delicacies of the medieval world, become commodities that are readily available in the markets. Today you buy your paan from a paan-wala at a paan-stall or shop. So while paans are still enjoyed, their once-glorious boxes have become redundant, and are passed on from one family member to another, usually in the form of a relic or memento, something to remind you of your ancestors' way of life.





Amtul Jamil
The writer is contributes articles to Friday Times




Comments for the last Dastkar exhibition held in April 2015
A very happy, successful and culturally rich show. You have socially rewarded in bringing skilled people together at both ends, those who deserve it for their talent and those who can afford it. Hope it will be a permanent feature, making Lahore very attractive.
Humayun Ahsen
5.4.2015
Humayun Ahsen
Principal Pakistan Law College
A great success - Absolutely wonderful to see all the lovely crafts of Pakistan. Keep up the effort
Ayesha Malik
5.4.2015
Ayesha Malik
Justice High court
Dearest Ayesha,
I am so happy to visit your Dastkar Foundation. It is a big success. may God Almighty Bless you & Dastkar forth. Every Time you do better & love you with all my dear's
With Regards.
Your loving Apa Almas Zaka.
6-4-2015
Almas Zaka ur Rehman
Chairperson Zaka ur Rehman group
What a wonderful showcase of art and craft.
Congratulations.
6th April 2015.
Hina Rabani Khar
Former Foreign Minister Pakistan


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The Fragrance that is Ittar



The first users of Ittar in the subcontinent were the Mughals and Nazams of Hyderabad. It is in fact even believed that Queen Noor Jahan discovered the Rose Ittar. A humorous excerpt by Bruce Ware Allen sums up the initial discovery of this timeless Ittar: Noor Jahan had a spat with her husband but once passions had cooled down a bit, she decided to throw a party as a conciliatory gesture. To this end, she ordered several large vats of rosewater prepared with strict orders that anyone who tampered with them would be severely dealt with. However, in the heat of the day, she nodded off. The sun broke down the roses' essential oils and when she awoke, she saw a layer of film on the surface. She assumed someone had thrown fat in the tanks while she was asleep. But, when she tested the stuff herself by rubbing the scum all over her clothing, she immediately ran off to tell her husband about this wonderful discovery.....

Attar popularly known as Ittar comes from the Persian word "Atr" meaning fragrance. Ittar making dates back 5000 years to the Indus Valley Civilization where archeologists found Terra Cotta perfume jars and copper essential oil distillation stills. The making and selling of Ittar has since then passed down generations as family businesses. Ittar was usually given as gifts in beautiful glass bottles or "ittardans". These natural perfumes are highly concentrated and therefore are usually offered for sale in small quantities. A small drop is enough to be used as fragrance for the whole body.

The art of making them is a laborious process. A true Ittar is natural perfume oil free of alcohol and chemicals. It is extracted from flowers and herbs and even clay by two different methods of hydro steam distillation. It takes 45 days to extract and at least two years to mature into a powerful fragrance. Flowers used to make Attar, such as Jasmine and Rose are picked before sunrise and processed immediately to give the freshest and strongest fragrance. The flowers go through the process of boiling at just the right temperature to extract its crude form which is then refined and blended. This art of blending has been











passed on and perfected though generations. The perfumers do not hold any degree in chemistry but specialize in well trained noses!

Ittars are extracted from different parts of the plant: leaves (hina), flowers (kewra), roots (khas), wood (oud and sandal), soil (gill) and spices (amber, turmeric, saffron, kasturi). Sandalwood oil is used as a base or fixture for fragile scents that would otherwise lose their delicate floral notes too quickly. The scents of the distilled botanicals become one with the sandalwood oil creating a unique rich blend which becomes better with age. Sadly sandalwood oil has become too expensive forcing perfumers to use synthetic oils and authentic Ittars are sometimes difficult to acquire.

Nonetheless, Ittars are popular and remain in high demand in the Muslim world because some Ittars such as Muskh were a favorite of the Holy Prophet and some are mentioned in the Quran such as Oud. As Ittars do not contain any alcohol or chemical, Muslims are more inclined to use them. Ittars apart from being perfumes are also used in various religious ceremonies. Ittar dipped flowers are distributed among those attending a "milad" for example. Sufi worshippers use them during meditation circles and dances.

Perfumers say Ittars are worn according to season; Khus, Motia and Jasmine in summers; Gill in Monsoon; Hina, Amber and Shamama in winter; Gulab all year round. Each Ittar has its signature fragrance along with its unique medicinal and therapeutic uses; Saffron Ittar is a master blend of distilled saffron in a base of pure Sandalwood oil. It is rare, precious and renowned for bringing good fortune. The baked earth Ittars or Gill are unusual treats, which evoke a sense of comfort and free the heart from fear and worry. These gentle, age old fragrances continue to delight and are now available across the world in the most frequented and high end shopping areas for people who enjoy wearing them and understand their worth.

Sadia Haider
The writer is a House wife

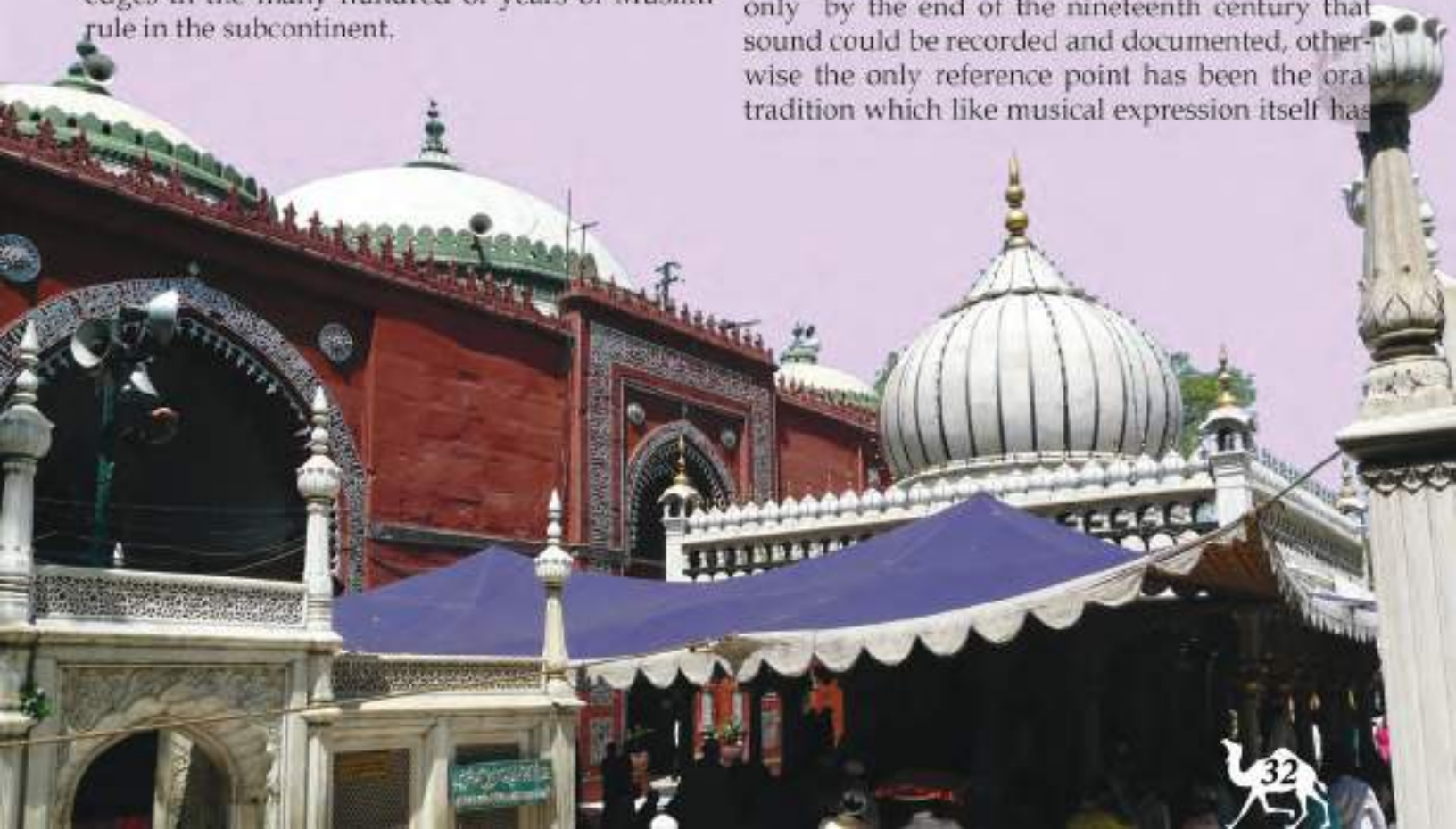
Amir khusro

As one of the benchmarks of greatness Amir Khusro exists as much in fiction as in reality. Much is attributed to him, the profile of the person who has existed in history is glorified with Khusro simultaneously has been addressed as a poet, a scholar, a soldier, a sufi, a courtier and above all a musician. He was considered to at home in the court of the high and mighty and just as comfortable in the bazaar, rattling off extempore verses on request. He wrote in Persian , the language of the erudite and also in the local dialects. He was full of respectful attention in the presence of Nizam uddin Aulia , while regaining in stature with the change of every monarch at the Delhi Darbar. He had the great facility to adjust, adapt and redefine his relationship with the patron,. His genealogical make up of a Turkish father and a Indian mother too testified to the coming together of the main cultural streams that went into the constitution of the social, intellectual and emotional structures of the person in the second millennia of the post Christian era in the Indian sub continent. Amir Khusro in retrospect is the symbol of the Indo Muslim culture that took shape as its contours were chiseled into definite edges in the many hundred of years of Muslim rule in the subcontinent.



Much in the life of Amir Khusro is documented and escapes undue and scathing investigation of the scholars and researchers. Much that was ordinarily documented in material or tangible form has been the preserve of literature and the practices at the shrine and the court. His prose and poetical works have fortunately survived the ravages of history and have come down centuries to be quoted and referred to in the constant reaffirmation of cultural practices.

What could not be documented in tangible terms was his contribution to music. Being an intangible form of expression music could only exist in time and not in space, meaning that as long as it lasted it was tangible but the moment it ceased to be sung, played or heard it ceased to exist. It was only by the end of the nineteenth century that sound could be recorded and documented, otherwise the only reference point has been the oral tradition which like musical expression itself has



traveled down "sena ba sena" . from one generation to the next, through a countless succession with no outside reference other than what has been heard and reproduced to the best of an individuals ability.

Since music existed in time its history also existed in time. The oral tradition like music itself also contained its history, its analysis, its criticism and if someone documented that in words, it was only the reproduction of what one had heard from a known or a reliable source. This has been the limitation of music history and its documentation because no matter how invaluable the oral sources are they are considered in this age of scientific research as unsteady or not reliable to the degree that a documented source is.

Traditionally the oral sources were considered to be higher placed than the written ones. It was believed that poetry and above all higher knowledge was revealed or disclosed, the humans only serving as a medium or an instrument of dissemination. All this was supposed to be transmitted in an unalloyed uncorrupted form to the people at large, the thinking, meditation or deliberation was considered to be human intervention or human creation that hindered the flow of pure divine form or message being communicated in an unadulterated form. Oral rendering was spontaneous and hence pure, writing was thought out and reworked, therefore adulterated or carried human intervention which had to be placed at a lower pedestal. Music too was considered to be the voice of the gods and the musicians performed best when left to the mercy of their inspiration.

Khusro is attributed with the creation of musical forms like kheyal, qawwali, qalbana, manqabat, tirvat, tarana, creation of many raags and then the invention of various instruments like the sitar and tabla. The supposition may not withstand strict investigation and scrutiny as has been pointed out by some of the most respected scholars and musicologists but the fact that it is held like an article of faith by the practicing musicians has its own intrinsic worth and value.

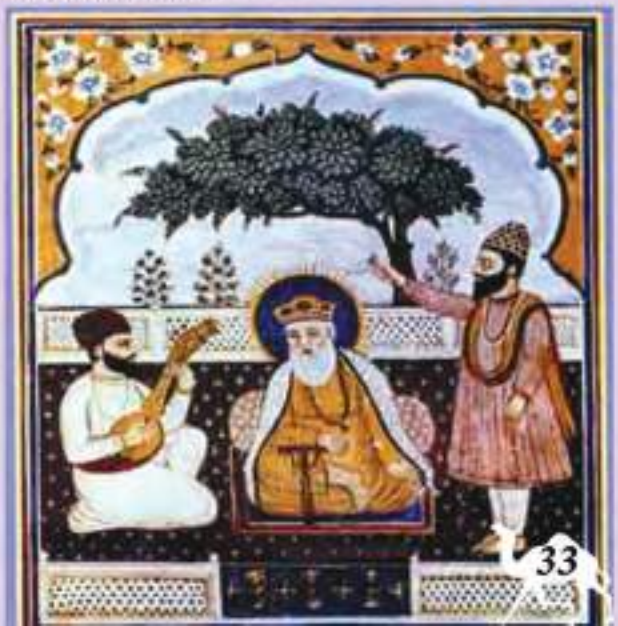
There may be some truth in the his contribution, let us say in some rudimentary form or in its incipient stages, and not in its finished form or when the form really flowered but then all this is in the realm of the possible because of the lack of documentary evidence.

Most practical musicians swear by his name and hold him as the most important figure in the last thousand years in the history of music and he still provides the inspiration, the drive and desire to s continue with their artistic pursuit. He gives them the justification for their creative expression, especially in the performing arts, when the performing arts have been under great pressure of discrimination and denunciation from the powerful orthodox quarters.

It is said that he too instituted sama sessions at the shrine of Nizauddin Aulia and prepared shagirds to render the kalam of the sufia once it was preceded by the verses from the holy quran or hadith. As the form evolved it must have taken many twists and turns, seeing good and then bad, but survived all these centuries with the practicing qawwals chanting his name as a spiritual guide and benefactor.

Sarwat Ali
The writer is a Professor at Musicology Department of NCA and a Journalist





NAQASHI in Islamic Art

Surface ornamentation is a hallmark of Islamic art. Islam being a way of life rather than ritualistic in nature required a vocabulary of artistic elements which would not be in conflict with the very clear and fundamental faith in One God.

Just as Islam embodies a way of life and serves as a cohesive force to unify people of diverse ethnicities and cultures, Islamic art produced by Muslim artists and for Muslim patrons has retained its intrinsic and unique identity through history. Mesmerizing, continuous geometrical patterns , complex , dense and intertwining stylized vegetal motifs known as Arabesque, glorious , delicately proportional calligraphy along with the occasional animal figured representation, forms the basis of Islamic art.

Islam being a relatively new religion as opposed to other religions of the world had a huge pre-existing repertoire of artistic tradition. The lands newly conquered by the Muslim armies from Mesopotamia to Persia and from Byzantine to Andalusia, had their own artistic tradition and techniques which the artists had mastered over centuries. The arts and architecture of conquered lands underwent modifications to make them suitable to the precepts of the rapidly growing religion. Two most important examples of this transformation are the mosque of Damascus in the Umayyad period and the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul during the Ottoman period, which were both magnificent Byzantine churches and served as prototypes for the later mosque architecture.









Although Islamic art in its formative years drew its narrative from the Pre-Islamic artistic elements, yet from the very beginning its evolution was the result of the process of selection and rejection of artistic traditions conforming it to the Islamic tenets. This process enawed the artist to abandon/deviate from his generations old artistic connections, opening up endless possibilities of crafting new idioms, reflecting the mystical and esoteric characteristics of Islamic art, thus setting it apart from all the other artistic traditions of the world.

From 10th Century onward the Islamic world shared a common aesthetic language with two principle components, predilection for surface decoration so as to transform the decorative and structural design into one cohesive whole, and secondly the infinite stem, leaf, scroll and blossom (arabesque) pattern along with the repetitive, complex geometric design, both symbolizing the infinite and ephemeral/ versus the transient earthly existence.

Motifs thus formed can be applied to any given surface from folios of manuscripts to entire wall surfaces, hills of swords and carpets to huge domes of mosque. All are regarded in the same way, differing in form but not in quality. The ornamentation of surfaces of any kind in any medium with the infinite pattern serves the same purpose, to transform the structural design of the object rather it be monumental architecture, a miniature painting or a bowl. This ornamentation transcends the outward appearance of the work of art drawing it into the spiritual realm of infinite and continuous being.







Surfaces are embellished with faience tiles, adorned with jewel like brilliance of Naqashi and intricate stucco ornamentation. Bands of epigraphic calligraphy form borders of basis of domes and line the walls. Same calligraphic hands line the brims of huge cisterns and plates. Although a great many fundamental forms and concepts remained more or less unchanged throughout Islamic art, the variety of individual forms is astonishing and exceptional. Every Islamic region in every period created forms of art that had no parallel with another. The deep rooted and enduring common theme of Islamic art, carried from one period to another traversing, continents, is a remarkable feat of Islamic art.

I had long desired to be able to recreate the decorative splendor of Islamic art that I have discussed here to fore. As the royal patronage of monumental art diminished in the sub-continent, the work produced, lost splendor and was of much lesser quality. The art of decorating surfaces disappeared under the heavy and dense, oppressing clouds of colonialism. There were no more expanses of walls, curvatures of arches and vaults, spheres of domes and tall, proud minarets waiting for the artist to turn them into magical entities, to be viewed in awe as remnant of his unbridled creativity for times to come.

Beaten and neglected, frustrated and desperate, he scrambled for work compromising his aesthetics and personal dignity. Scriptoriums were empty; instead small individual ateliers were producing cheap copies of masterpieces. No more was he going to work with brilliant pigments made of precious and semi-precious stones and gold leaf, painting Emperors and their courts in royal regalia or princesses languishing in beautiful belvederes amid peacocks. The age of glorious Islamic ornamentation had ended and with it his livelihood. When the struggle for bread which underlies most men's lives becomes a controlling force then life grows bitter and hard to bear. Such is the state of our artists and craftsmen.

It was in these circumstances that "Daachi" was formed, with its formation, the task ahead required for us to identify and work towards reviving the neglected arts and crafts of our country. Naqashi or Khatimkari being one of them. It's the art of painting surfaces which from manuscript illuminations and monumental art had now been confined to objects made of camel skin in Sindh and southern Punjab, the cradles of sufi shekhs

My aspiration to rekindle the creativity of the artist by introducing him to vestiges of his past glory, led to reintroduce him to intricacies of his art. He learned the intricacies of the art, the meticulous rendering of shapes and patterns, perfect repeat of motives, color palette and proportion of Islamic art.

I draw inspiration for my work from the magnificent and awe inspiring masterpieces of the golden ages of different Islamic dynasties. From the Umayyad to the Ottomans relying on the principle of unity of style of Islamic art that transcends time and territories to produce paradisiac pieces of art.

Fauzia Azim

The writer is a Designer and CEO of Telisman



Artist: Arsalan Sheikh, Nagina Meena — From the Shrine of Daud Bandgi Kirmani



Artist: Asia — From the Shrine of Daud Bandgi Kirmani



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Family outing at Jehangir's tomb



In November 2014 we went for a family outing. My husband, Naeem, and I were accompanied by my daughter Sadia and her husband Konstantin who were here for a visit from Germany. It was a Sunday; not really a good day to visit the monuments of Lahore, since all public parks and open spaces are overcrowded with families and young people enjoying their weekend.

We chose Jahangir's tomb, the tomb of one of the Mughal kings. Located in Shahdara on the north side of the river Ravi, this tomb was once situated in the country side. Now the town Shahdara has engulfed the tomb from almost all sides. To reach it you drive over the railway line on a narrow broken road through a rundown bazaar. Between the houses on some empty plots you see buffaloes bathing in the mud. I hadn't visited the tomb for some years. It used to be one of our favorite picnic spots. Now visits only take place to show around guests from abroad, a job which my daughter Sadia has taken over for quite some time.

My memories of Jahangir's tomb were of a grand structure in a majestic old park, deserted and unkempt but nevertheless transporting you back into old times. What I found now shocked me.





Living in a quiet neighborhood with a lot of greenery and animals (a very privileged living indeed) I was now confronted with the overpopulation that had taken place in this region in recent years. There are simply too many people trying to survive in this city and its suburbs. Already at the entrance we were welcomed by masses of racing motorcycles, children, grownups, beggars; all trying to enter through the main gate. Once in the compound of the tomb we saw the wide sprawling lawns with big old trees packed with people. It did not look like a Mughal garden, rather like a giant playground. Youths playing cricket, families picnicking or parading around.

We made our way to the main building of the tomb, climbing onto the roof and from there further up to the top of the minaret. The view was stunning and we spent quite some time enjoying it. Back in the grounds we selected a relatively peaceful place behind the tomb. We settled down and started enjoying being part of the Sunday picnic ritual.

Konstantin had brought his water colors with him and began to paint. Since both Konstantin and I were very apparently not from Pakistan we attracted a lot of curiosity. We were interviewed by kids and their mothers numerous times. There were, however, two questions that kept repeating themselves. First; 'where are you from?' and second; 'Are you Muslim?' We tried to engage in a dialogue. 'What are you studying? What are your hobbies?' The contact stayed very much on the surface. There was an invisible division between 'us' and 'them'.

After lunch, Konstantin started a painting, trying to capture the park's landscape. Again we were surrounded by people, mainly kids. Groups came and went. One boy, about ten years old, was particularly interested. He had settled down, sitting next to Konstantin and observed his every move. He seemed to be in a trance, completely absorbed, his facial expression serious, focused on trying to understand the creative process playing out in front of him.He looked at the paper then at the object; a group of trees in the distance. Saw how they took shape, how color and texture was added by the skillful hand of Konstantin.



How his observing eye translated the reality and captured it on the paper; a new creation, a personal interpretation of this reality in front of him.

The little boy must have sat with us for over an hour. I am sure he must have lost
track of time. When the painting neared its completion we started asking him about his life and family. His name was Rizwan. He said he was one of six siblings. We asked what his father was doing. He said he worked in a shop. We asked for his father's name. Janoo, he said. No, the real name we wanted to know, since Janoo is only a nick name (it means 'my life') which even my daughter uses sometimes when addressing her husband, affectionately .Rizwan said he didn't know any other name. His mother always called him Janoo. Rizwan had never been to school, neither had his bothers or sisters. He could not read nor write. Yet there was this fascination of witnessing a
painting come into being.

Suddenly an idea struck me. Konstantin had brought a new sketch book along which we offered to Rizwan along with a pen. My husband explained to him that he could try to sketch or draw himself. He told him that with practice he could also learn. What happened next I will never forget. I saw panic on Rizwan's face. He couldn't touch the sketch book which was held out to him. He couldn't take the pen! He was afraid. We tried to find out what scared him. Maybe he was worried that people might think he had stolen the sketch book. We wrote a donation note on the front page, so people would know it was a gift. But no, this was not what scared him.

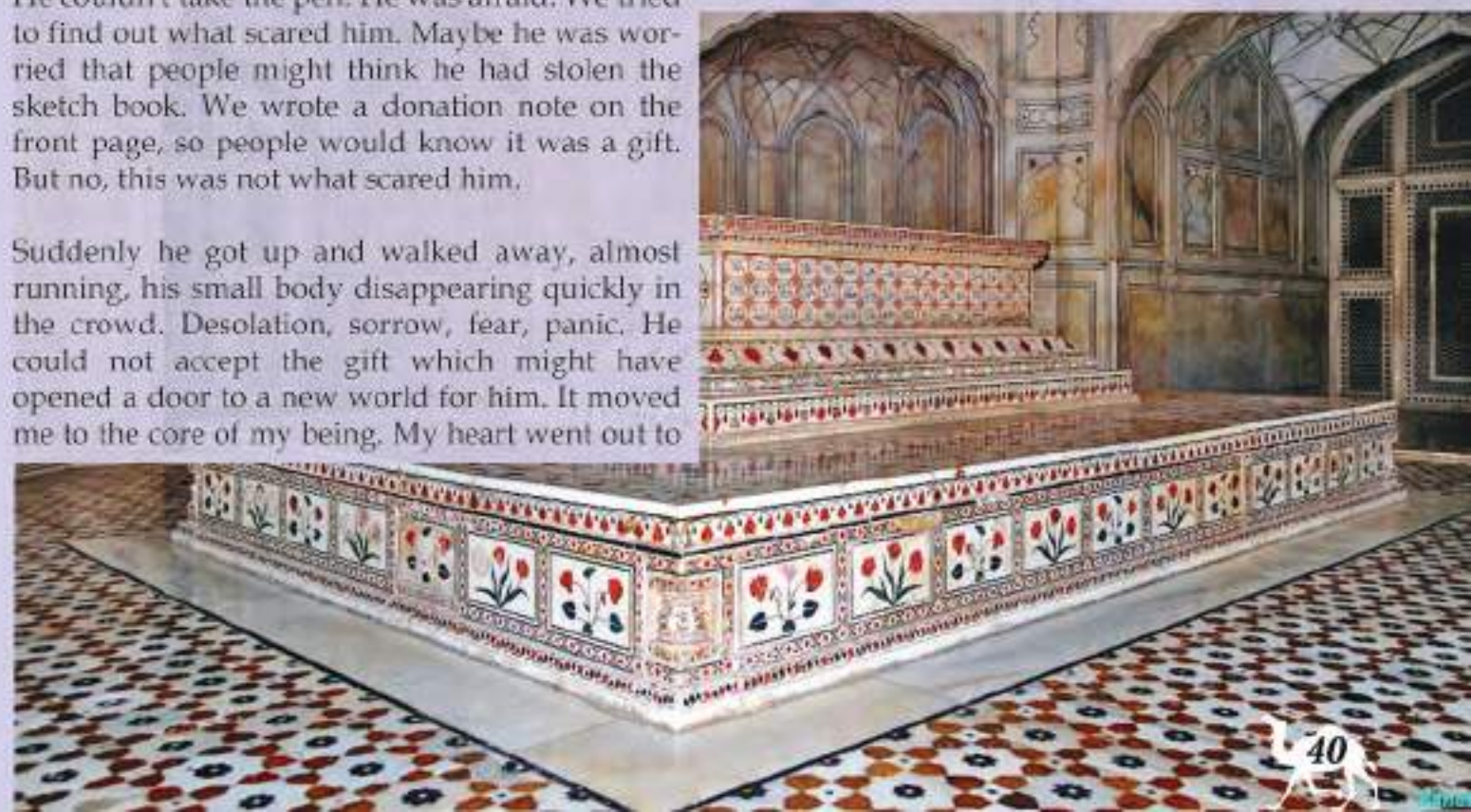
Suddenly he got up and walked away, almost running, his small body disappearing quickly in the crowd. Desolation, sorrow, fear, panic. He could not accept the gift which might have opened a door to a new world for him. It moved me to the core of my being. My heart went out to him. My God! How I wished he would have taken the book and the pen! What a marvelous gift! To be able to express your feelings and getting in touch with your inner world and let it communicate with the outer. But there was something else.

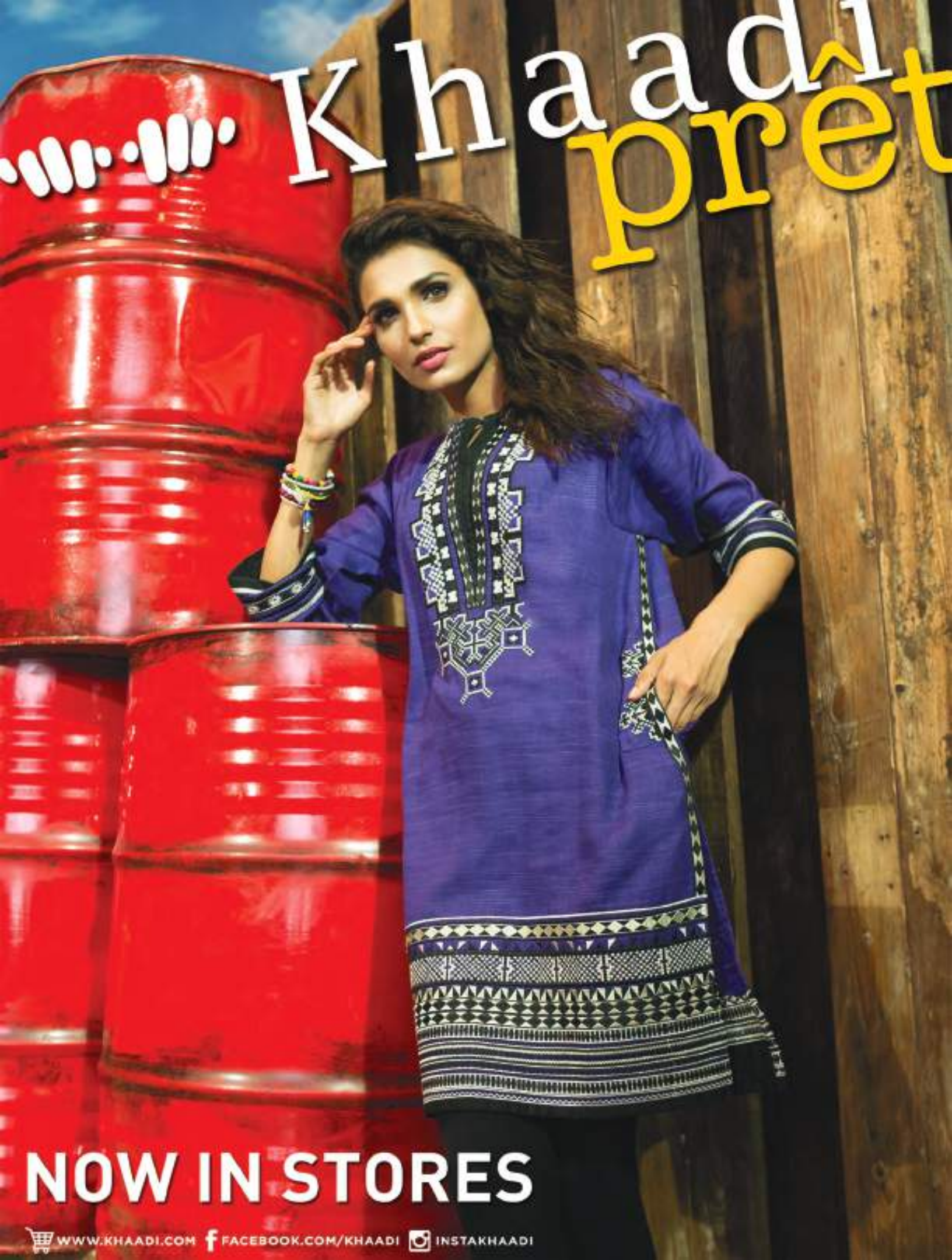
Shortly after, Konstantin sent me a painting of Jahangir's tomb. Again, it was in painted in water colors. There in the archway, sitting, looking out over the garden was Rizwan. Unmistakably, it was him! You could only see his back but Konstantin had captured his posture perfectly! When I looked at the painting, memories flooded through me. And suddenly, there it was; the insight!

I was able to understand his fear now because I realized that sometimes I too have the same fear, the fear that says "oh no, this is not for me. It is too big, I am too small. I can't touch it." And so Rizwan became my teacher. Without knowing it he taught me that we should explore and learn with the tools we receive and to be grateful to be given these tools.

Thank you, Allah, for sending Rizwan into our lives. A small boy with a big message!
I pray for him. May he open up to the gifts presented to him by his Creator? Aameen.

Sonya Bajwa
The writer is a Designer, Artist and a Scholar of Sufism




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INVISIBLE CITIES

From My City to Mega City: Why does it Matter?

The city, as much as it exists in 'real' space, is a formation in our minds. Public space then, is an emotional construct in the mind's eye, laden with 'meaning' and association attributed to it largely by the observer. Just as our spaces and places shape us, so it is that we create and recreate ourselves through them. Is there then such a thing as good space and bad space? Emotion-friendly, human-friendly space that enhances our well-being, and unkind, human-unfriendly space? The following discussion is not a technician's take on the city. This is a position that speaks of the deeply personal, deeply rooted layer of the ingredients that make a city 'ours'.

Space carries with it 'notion' or 'significance'- explored thoroughly in the theory of semiotics. While the home is the 'womb' or the microcosm, the city at large is the individual's imagination of the 'world'- the macrocosm. The 'home' is the cradle forth development of our personality and the first layers of our self- esteem. The world outside the home on the other hand- establishes our sense of who we are and where we stand within society. Our sense of what is ours in the world is intrinsically linked to the minute details of our relationships with the spaces we inhabit and traverse - the neighbourhood, the journey to school or to work, the park where we let go and connect to a larger community of potential strangers. It is the subliminal messages in the environment that form our system of values, our impressions about the world around us, and in the larger mosaic- our notions about trust, love, and humanity.

The mohallah where no one is left to fend for themselves is a home outside home. We see the chacha on the cycle passing by, the chanaywala, the ice cream wala with children flocking all around, the baba ji looking out for everyone, where every elderly lady is a khala, against the voice of children playing pakranpakrai in childhood's unrhymed un-worded harmony and the small corner 'store' where the shopkeeper knows every child, above and below counter height. It is in such 'places' that we are nurtured, and our perceptual maps of the world are formed. And it is here that because of all the parts that add up to the whole, we begin to believe the city is 'ours'; ours to tread, ours to love. The psychological boundaries of the 'home' then begin to extend beyond the physical boundaries of home. And we begin to own, and belong, to the 'place'.

This brings to the fore the next question- what are these psychological notions actually built upon? Here, intimacy and 'smallness' as spatial hence experiential qualities are fundamental. While 'big'- the heavy traffic road with cars whizzing by, the flyover, the iron walls around the gated community, the invasive check post- is loud and omnipotent. 'Smallness' is intimate; it is in close proximity; it is accessible. Smallness is not merely size. Smallness more often than not, comes with a sensory-laden imprint of all that is secure, within safe reach, comfortable, and 'accepting' of us.

We therefore experience space not through an 'absolute' truth, but as a 'reality' offered to us via subtle messages where place and people coincide







and act as the 'signifiers' of various notions. The chai khanais ,a sanctuary to relieve burdens, Data Darbaris as much mine as it is anyone else's, the naikidukaanis where nothing is too taboo to be discussed, the kind shade tree of the bagh shelters, the safe pedestrian crossing reassures our trust in the city, the wide pavement where a myriad of activities melt harmoniously into each other embraces us. These are the great gifts of a city that loves and is loved in return. They are monuments to our humanity; they tell us that everyone matters. They are the very vessels that carry us forward from struggle to solace.

And then there is personal 'autonomy' in our people-space interactions. In the genius of Jane Jacobs, 'There is a quality even meaner than outright ugliness or disorder, and this meaner quality is the dishonest mask of pretended order, achieved by ignoring or suppressing the real order that is struggling to exist'. Often in the pretty, Orderly Street devoid of these overlapping signs of life bouncing into and off of each other, is a barren wilderness. Where people are held together by order and a pretty picture, but are not allowed to be what their hearts beckon them to be- intuition-driven, spontaneous creatures of love, life and belonging.

A healthy degree of citizen's autonomy, gives us that essential 'sense of ownership'. This is different from merely owning a space on paper. The plaque reading 'Sponsored by Al-Falah Bank' at Liberty roundabout takes this sense of ownership away from us. It makes us feel that the space is someone else's- that we are in fact encroachers. A major city road carrying the brand name 'Jam-e-Shirin' boulevard does the same. It turns a road- the purest kind of public-owned space, into someone else's property; and it signifies a value system where you are as good as what you can afford. Lahore's railway station, on the other hand, because of the kinetic mix of activities thriving in its open spaces still feels closer to that sense of 'home', or what is still somewhat 'ours'.



Even if good, bad, rich poor, ugly, pretty and in any shape and size, you are acceptable.

The 'mega' in our mega-cities today- is a new unit of measuring, perceiving, and developing the city. But mega is huge, detached, and distant. And as a model of development it is making the city into that 'mean' place which barks at us like a hostile dog, intimidating, needing to be pacified. Does the mega-city concept then require that a city with a population of ten million such as Lahore- merely because of its size- has no option but to be addressed through 'mega' projects, and 'mega' thinking- like we are made to believe? The answer is no.

Intimacy and personalisation in any agglomeration are not directly proportionate to its spread or the size of its population. And this is where design comes in. Lahore's metro bus network, while it fulfils a transport need in the most clinical terms, could have borrowed cues from more experience-sensitive design; where the city's greatest vistas would not be blocked by the alignment of the elevated structures; where the iron clad artery would not slice the city into more edges. The perfectly manicured Sheba park of DHA shouts 'stay out' to more people than it welcomes in. Chararpind, the village walled-in by DHA with the armed guard at each entry, shouts 'guilty until proven innocent' to its residents. The Azadi chowk web of flyovers and bridges could have respected the scale of its esteemed surroundings, such as the Badshahi mosque, the Minar e Pakistan, and the life-breath of activities that took place in Manto Park. Hazoori Bagh need not have been closed off with barbed wire, to the very act that keeps Lahore alive and breathing: poetry, story-telling, and the pulse of its people. The examples are endless.

Great urban design will be exactly the opposite of the narrow window that the term suggests. It will see the hardware of 'design' as only one component of the whole. In a truly great formula, design exists not for its own sake, but for the love of people, of the multiple creative appropriations of that one 'place', and of the colourful spectrum of activities, thoughts, and dialogue that any space is a platform for. Great urban design will see design as a tool for the ontological richness that forms a lasting impression; that which rings a chord within the deepest crevices of our beings, and makes us fall in love all over again with the city we long to call ours.

Rabia Ezdi
The writer is an Architect, and Assistant Professor at NCA's Department of Architecture

















Suhail Ahmed at Daachi





Modernism to Tradition

After studying and working in London for seven years and teaching in Ghana for two, I returned to Lahore in 1966 as head of department of architecture at the NCA. Guided by the philosophy of the Modern Movement, I had been seeking an architecture relevant and responsive to regional climate, economy, available technologies and materials. Around 1980 I realized I knew nothing about my own architectural heritage. I began to re-educate myself and discovered not only an entirely different basis for and approach to architecture but a radically different worldview, which changed my life.

My concerns with the tectonics of building have not changed. I continue to search for materials, structural forms and techniques relevant and appropriate to our physical and economic realities. Brick and lime are cheaper, longer lasting, better looking and cool. I prefer labor intensive techniques because labor accounts for 25% of building costs, compared with 75% for materials in our economy. Traditional materials and techniques are ecologically and are economically sustainable.

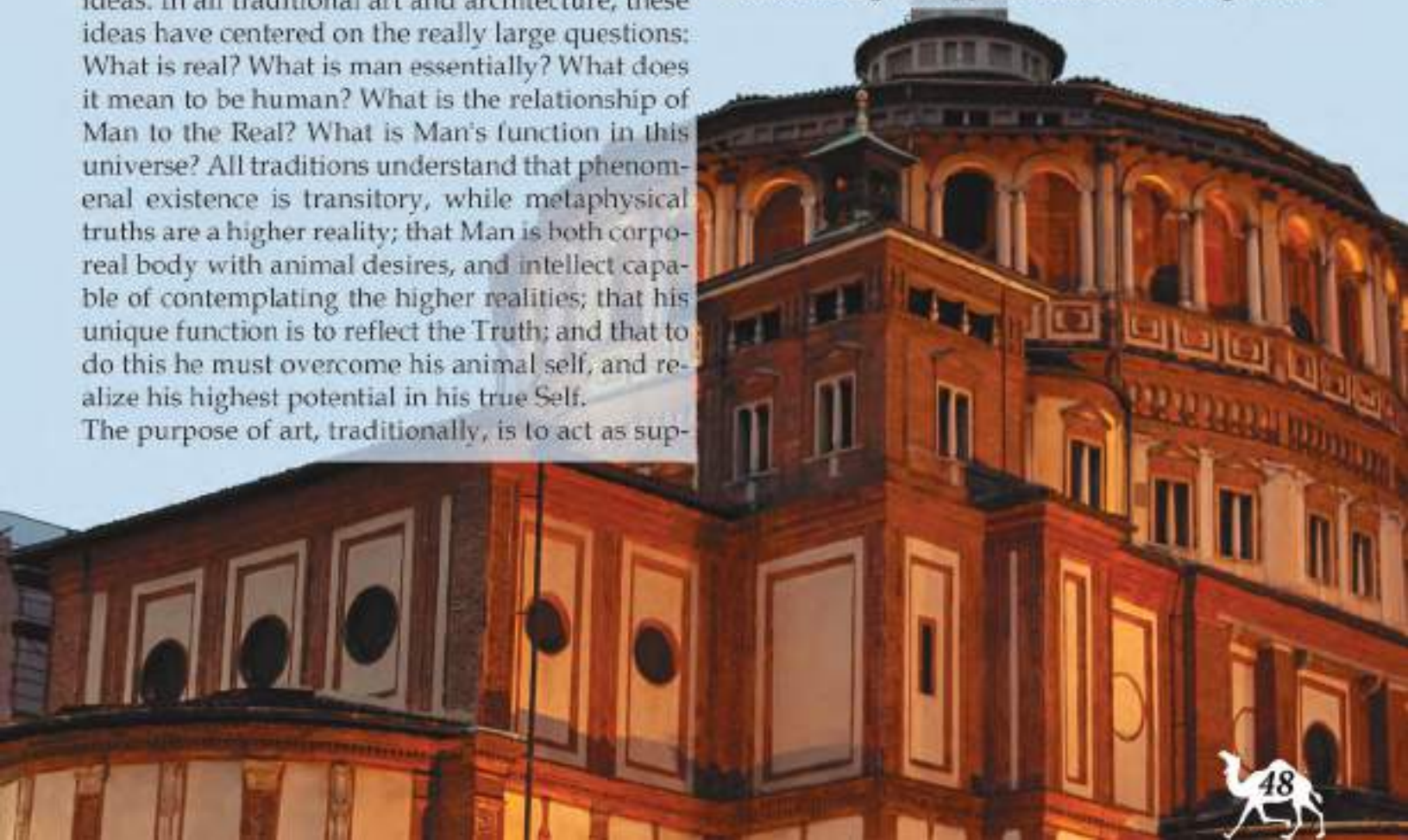
Architecture is a vehicle for communication of ideas. In all traditional art and architecture, these ideas have centered on the really large questions: What is real? What is man essentially? What does it mean to be human? What is the relationship of Man to the Real? What is Man's function in this universe? All traditions understand that phenomenal existence is transitory, while metaphysical truths are a higher reality; that Man is both corporeal body with animal desires, and intellect capable of contemplating the higher realities; that his unique function is to reflect the Truth; and that to do this he must overcome his animal self, and realize his highest potential in his true Self.

The purpose of art, traditionally, is to act as support in man's spiritual quest or journey, by reminding man of his role and function in this life, by pointing to his true goal and by illuport in man's spiritual quest or journey, by reminding man of his role and function in this life, by pointing to his true goal and by illuminating the way to that goal.

Modernism

By modernism I understand a world view in which matter is the primary reality and in which development is equated with economic growth. The core of this model is the modernity project with its roots in the European Renaissance. From Galileo and Descartes, through Adam Smith and Marshall, it has emerged as the dominant development paradigm, and has attained global currency in our time.

The modernist development paradigm sees man as a rational animal capable of knowing the physical universe. Knowing the physical universe is the subject of modern science, whose methods are empiricism and reductionism. In this world view, knowledge endows man with the power to control and to dominate nature, that is the means to acquisition of wealth, of fulfilling every human need, leading to happiness and well-being. In this



world view, nature and one's fellow humans are seen as resources to be exploited for material gain, and progress and development is measured in terms of quantity: units of production and consumption of energy, wealth, commodities etc.
The promised goal of the modernist paradigm is not an abstract metaphysical heaven, but a tangible, "real", material paradise, here on earth. Indeed the achievements of modern science and technology are impressive. But so also is the plunder and waste, the degradation of our humanity and our environment that has followed in its wake. But we are so dazzled by the brilliance of these marvels and wonders that we fail to see the darkness that surrounds them. We write off the collateral damage as the price of progress and development.

Traditional Perspective

By tradition I understand a world view rooted in the metaphysical and idealist philosophy. Traditionally the term "art" is applied to making or doing anything that meets the dual criteria of utility and beauty. Utility relates to quantity and the practical and physical aspects of material and form. But beauty relates to quality, and is traditionally understood as a quality of the Divine. In the traditional cosmology everything in the created universe, is a manifestation of the Divine whose attributes and qualities are reflected first as archetypes on the plane of the Spirit or the ideal plane, then as pure forms on the imaginal plane, and finally as natural and man-made objects and acts on the earthly plane. However, some objects and acts are more "transparent", that is, the ideal forms are more readily recognized in them than in others which are more "opaque". Qualities such as proportion, harmony, balance, symmetry etc. are more readily recognized in mathematical relationships, in music and other works of art. Similarly, a human form, a tree or a sunset, may strike us as "perfect" because it corresponds with our idea of a "perfect" man, or woman or tree etc. Indeed every earthly object, artifice or act, takes on a symbolic meaning to the extent that it reflects its heavenly archetype .



The "perfected Man" / Insan e Kamil, is a mirror that reflects all of the qualities, that is, absolute Being; This is his essential nature, his true self, and the potential within every human. But we are veiled from the knowledge of the Real by the phenomenal world, and we are veiled from our true Self by our animal desires . To realize his potential man must recover his primordial nature which he lost at the fall. It is only then that access to the Spirit, the Eye of the Heart becomes possible. He must undertake an inward journey from the body, through the soul to the heart. The "heart" is the seat of the Spirit. Only when the "eye of the heart" is opened can it contemplate "the Real" and attain enlightenment.





Traditional man measured human "development" in terms of the "progress" made on this journey towards "enlightenment". The role of art, in traditional societies, has been to act as support in this spiritual quest or journey.

The artist or craftsman cannot presume to be "original" or to "create" beauty. Beauty already exists as an objective reality. He can only aspire to reflect it in his work. But how can he reflect a heavenly archetype that by definition lies beyond this sensible world, the phenomenal world of matter, space and time?

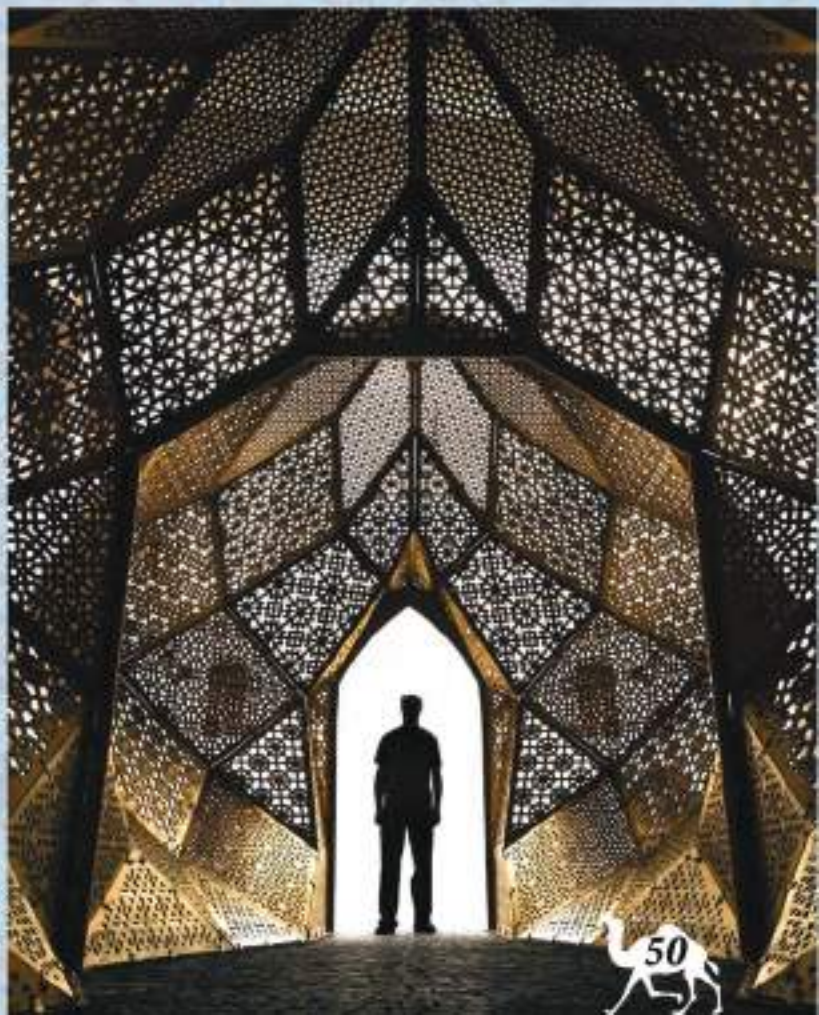
To begin with, every artist or craftsman acquires his art or craft skill from a recognized master. The master in turn, invariably traces the source of his art through a chain of masters, to a divinely inspired source - who was both skilled in his art and spiritually enlightened. But none of these sources claim to be the originators or creators of the art in question, only to have been the vehicles or recipients of these gifts from the Divine Spirit. This is why the classical forms in every tradition are held in such veneration and esteem. They are copied as a means of perfecting the student's skills, but also as a means of purifying the spirit or acquiring a special blessing. They are used by professionals as exemplars for their own work.

These ideal forms may be either purely architectonic or symbolic, and include decorative forms such as floral and geometric designs in which the meanings are implicit, and calligraphy whose message is explicit.

Architectonic devices include materials; structure; space; light; and movement, whereas symbolic elements include forms that represent an idea or concept other than the building itself. Thus materials can be heavy or light, dense and opaque or translucent, etc, in terms of the non-physical responses they evoke within us. Similarly, structure can be tensile or compressive, dynamic or in repose; poised in delicate balance or in a state of equilibrium. The qualities of space - expansive, constrictive; oppressive, liberating, concealing or revealing - can be reinforced by the play of light and animated by our own movement.

Architectonic forms, charged with symbolic meaning in Islamic Architecture, include the nine-square hasht behisht plan as a mandala, or cosmic diagram; the dome representing the heavenly or spiritual plane or dimension; the mihrab, symbolising the soul or spiritual center, the heart ; the minar which is literally a beacon of light; gates, the gates of God's mercy, the entrance to paradise; burooj, or lofty towers, a reference to the lofty pavilions of Paradise; not to mention the chaharbagh garden corresponding to the Qur'anic description of Paradise.

Kamil Khan Mumtaz
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PUPPETRY OF PAKISTAN



Puppets and the art of Puppetry is entertainment at its best and delights audiences across the world particularly children. Puppetry theatre is used to convey messages by telling it through a story. Usually, Puppetry focuses on stories like kings and queens, prince and princesses but any other story can also be told in puppetry. Puppets work like human actors and it is the class and the talent of the artists who perform behind the puppets.

Puppetry is said to be the most ancient form of entertainment across the globe. Locally, within Pakistan, puppetry is known as 'Putli Tamasha'. In addition to entertaining people, puppetry relays meaningful messages particularly in the rural areas of Pakistan where it has a strong impact.



Puppet making is done with materials like straw, cotton, rags, sponge, wood, leather and cloth pieces, etc. Its making is done depending on the required effects and the amount of its usage. There exists a number of varieties in puppets such as finger puppet, hand or glove puppet, sock puppet, rod puppet, marionette or string puppet, shadow puppet and human puppet. The most popular puppets in Pakistan are human puppets where string, hand, and rod puppets are used and have become favorites in the country.

In this art form, the puppeteer has the option to either be visible to the public or be hidden. The oldest form of this art in Pakistan is the one performed with string by the puppeteers who make a makeshift stage in the rural areas with propped up beds. While performing, the puppeteer puts a reed whistle between the teeth to create the chirping sounds for the puppets.

In Pakistan, Rafi Peer Theater has specialized in the art of doing puppetry and have given it credence along with other arts in Pakistan. Farooq Qaiser, who created the characters like Uncle Sargam and Masi Mosibtay in the show Kaliyan, is another innovative pioneer in the art of puppetry. Thus, Puppetry or "putli tamasha" was always an integral part of everyone's childhood memories in Pakistan. However, with the rapid decline of traditional art forms in Pakistan, the art of puppetry may soon die out. Nevertheless, in 1985, actors Samina Ahmed, Shoaib Hashmi, Salman Shahid and artist Salima Hashmi to keep puppetry alive in the country set into motion a series of puppet shows at the Alhamra Arts Council in Lahore. Today, art students from National College of arts (NCA Puppeteers) society have taken up the mantle to allow audiences to continue indulging in some new techniques like black light theater and Shadow lights.

Puppets deserve a bigger role in mainstream theatre. "The purpose is to keep the folktales alive. The younger generation should know about their roots and literary tradition," says Faisal Malik, artistic director for Thespianz Theatre. According to Malik, there is a false perception that puppet shows are only for children. Various shows like Heer Ranjha and Umar Marvi mainly





ater to adults, he says. Puppetry encourages both children and adults to be creative and makes people more empathetic towards a variety of situations. He explains, "The sole aim of our team is to attract audiences to watch theatre and be amused by the oldest form of puppetry."

Yamina Peerzada, a graduate of the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London with a Masters in acting 2015, is following in the footsteps of her late uncle Faizan Peerzada and father Sadan Peerzada, co-founders of the Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop (RPTW), to promote the art and contemporize it by conducting hands-on puppet-making workshops in schools across Pakistan. "We want to introduce the art of puppetry to children at a young age to make them experience the joy and pride puppeteers experience during their performances," says Yamina, who is also part of the puppet show The Border, a Danish-Pakistani collaboration. "Children make their own puppets and give life to inanimate objects. The interesting thing is that even shy students shun the fear of being judged and happily participate."

When the RPTW was launched in 1974, there were only two puppet theatres functioning on a daily basis in Karachi. But today the initiative has produced over 40 live puppet productions and four 13 part television puppet series for children, including Sim Sim Hamara. It also houses a puppet museum in its cultural complex. The multi-storeyed museum established in 2006 hosts puppets from 50 countries and facilitates the International Puppet Residency Program for youth and children. "Our aim is to develop college level independent puppet groups to popularize the art," says Yamina.

> **" We want to introduce the art of puppetry to children at a young age to make them experience the joy and pride puppeteers experience during their performances**
> Puppeteer Yamina Peerzada

Although there is no dearth of talent in the art of puppetry, the profession continues to suffer in Pakistan. "During the production of Sim Sim Hamara, I saw a lot of potential in people, but many eventually move on to other things due to monetary reasons," says Yamina. Since puppetry is associated purely with entertainment and has not been utilized effectively in advertisements, it is not considered a lucrative profession. Additionally, for the art to flourish it is important to appreciate and applaud puppeteers. Attracting a younger audience has become difficult though as parents are reluctant to let their children watch shows in public places. "We cannot invite foreign puppeteers and hold festivals with fanfare, hence we are restricted," shares Tasneem Peerzada of Rafi Peer Theatre. So unless people wholeheartedly embrace puppetry it will be pushed off to the peripheries of art.



Rameez Khan
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جھوٹ



اسلام میں اگرچہ عبادات کا بہت مقام ہے۔ بحیثیت مسلمان اللہ کی طرف سے فرض کی گئیں ان عبادات کو ادا کرنا لازم ہے اور ان کی ادائیگی سے انکار کسی طور بھی ممکن نہیں۔ اسلام ایک مکمل ضابطہ حیات ہے۔ انسانی زندگی میں دین اور دنیا دونوں لازم وملزوم ہیں۔ اسلام نہ صرف عبادت کا ہی درس دیتا ہے اور نہ ہی محض زندگی کا محور صرف اور صرف دنیا کو ہی قرار دیتا ہے۔

اسلام معاشرے میں رہن سہن کا طریقۂ کار بھی سکھاتا ہے اور معاشرے میں معتبر رہنے کے لئے اچھے اخلاق کی تعلیم بھی دیتا ہے۔ اخلاقیات کا وزن نامہ اعمال میں سب سے زیادہ ہو گا اور بہتر اخلاق والا اللہ رب العزت کی نظر میں بہت بلند درجہ رکھتا ہے۔ دل میں ایمان کی کیا کیفیت ہے۔ اس کو ظاہری طور پر جانچنے کا معیار ہمارا اخلاق ہی ہوتا ہے۔



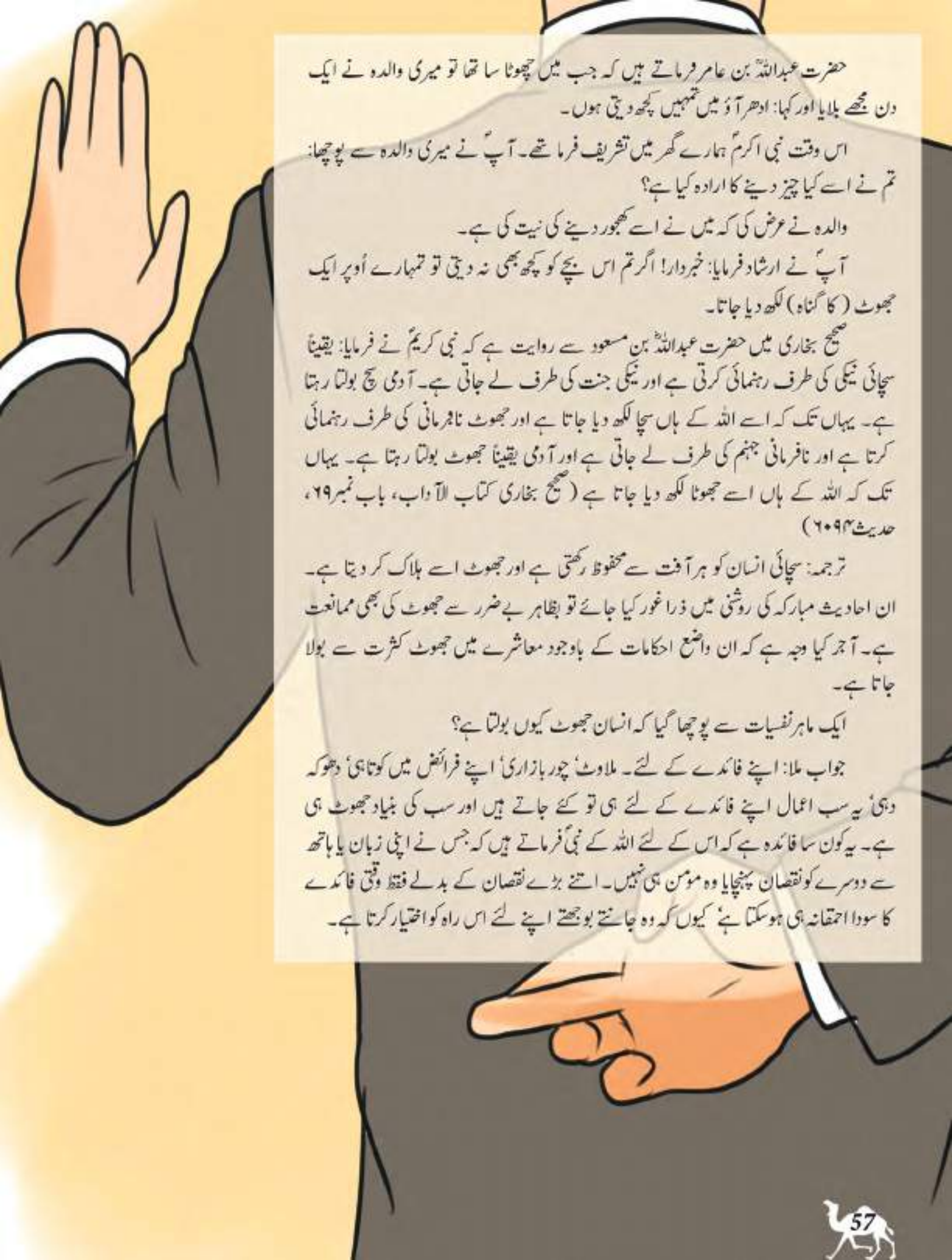
اخلاقیات میں بہت سے عوامل شامل ہیں۔ ان میں سب سے اہم اور بڑا عمل سچائی کا ہے۔ سچائی کی ضد جھوٹ ہے۔ لفظ جھوٹ لکھنے اور بولنے میں تو اک چھوٹا سا حرف ہے۔ مگر عملی طور پر اس کے اثرات معاشرے پر بہت گہرے ہوتے ہیں۔ اخلاق کی تباہی کی سب سے بڑی وجہ بھی جھوٹ ہی ہے۔ کم وبیش ہر برائی کا آغاز جھوٹ سے ہی ہوتا ہے۔





جھوٹ ہے کیا..... ''علم اور زبان کا فرق جھوٹ ہے''۔

جھوٹ ان اعمال میں شامل ہے جو دوسروں کے لئے نقصان اور تکلیف کا باعث بنتا ہے۔ بلکہ بولنے والے کے لئے ہلاکت کا باعث بنتا ہے۔ جو اس کے وہم وگمان میں بھی نہیں ہوتا۔ یا پھر وہ اس پر ایمان کامل نہیں رکھتا' کیونکہ اس کے لئے اللہ کے حبیب نبی رحمت نے



حضرت عبداللہؓ بن عامر فرماتے ہیں کہ جب میں چھوٹا سا تھا تو میری والدہ نے ایک دن مجھے بلایا اور کہا: ادھر آؤ میں تمہیں کچھ دیتی ہوں۔

اس وقت نبی اکرمؐ ہمارے گھر میں تشریف فرما تھے۔ آپؐ نے میری والدہ سے پوچھا: تم نے اسے کیا چیز دینے کا ارادہ کیا ہے؟

والدہ نے عرض کی کہ میں نے اسے کھجور دینے کی نیت کی ہے۔

آپؐ نے ارشاد فرمایا: خبردار! اگر تم اس بچے کو کچھ بھی نہ دیتی تو تمہارے اُوپر ایک جھوٹ (کا گناہ) لکھ دیا جاتا۔

صحیح بخاری میں حضرت عبداللہؓ بن مسعود سے روایت ہے کہ نبی کریمؐ نے فرمایا: یقیناً سچائی نیکی کی طرف رہنمائی کرتی ہے اور نیکی جنت کی طرف لے جاتی ہے۔ آدمی سچ بولتا رہتا ہے۔ یہاں تک کہ اسے اللہ کے ہاں سچا لکھ دیا جاتا ہے اور جھوٹ نافرمانی کی طرف رہنمائی کرتا ہے اور نافرمانی جہنم کی طرف لے جاتی ہے اور آدمی یقیناً جھوٹ بولتا رہتا ہے۔ یہاں تک کہ اللہ کے ہاں اسے جھوٹا لکھ دیا جاتا ہے (صحیح بخاری کتاب الآداب، باب نمبر۶۹، حدیث۶۰۹۴)

ترجمہ: سچائی انسان کو ہر آفت سے محفوظ رکھتی ہے اور جھوٹ اسے ہلاک کر دیتا ہے۔

ان احادیث مبارکہ کی روشنی میں ذرا غور کیا جائے تو بظاہر بے ضرر سے جھوٹ کی بھی ممانعت ہے۔ آجر کیا وجہ ہے کہ ان واضع احکامات کے باوجود معاشرے میں جھوٹ کثرت سے بولا جاتا ہے۔

ایک ماہر نفسیات سے پوچھا گیا کہ انسان جھوٹ کیوں بولتا ہے؟

جواب ملا: اپنے فائدے کے لئے۔ ملاوٹ، چور بازاری، اپنے فرائض میں کوتاہی، دھوکہ دہی، یہ سب اعمال اپنے فائدے کے لئے ہی تو کئے جاتے ہیں اور سب کی بنیاد جھوٹ ہی ہے۔ یہ کون سا فائدہ ہے کہ اس کے لئے اللہ کے نبیؐ فرماتے ہیں کہ جس نے اپنی زبان یا ہاتھ سے دوسرے کو نقصان پہنچایا وہ مومن ہی نہیں۔ اتنے بڑے نقصان کے بدلے فقط وقتی فائدے کا سودا احمقانہ ہی ہوسکتا ہے، کیوں کہ وہ جانتے بوجھتے اپنے لئے اس راہ کو اختیار کرتا ہے۔







انفرادی طور پر وہ اعمال جو دینی تقاضوں کو پورا کرتے ہیں وہ بھی معاشرے میں انسانی رویوں میں شامل ہوتے ہیں۔ نماز برائی سے روکتی ہے۔ روزہ صبر و برداشت کا درس دیتا ہے۔ حج بیت اللہ باہمی میل جول اور برابری کا درس دیتا ہے۔ مگر کیا عام زندگی میں یہ سب اعمال ہمارے رویوں سے بھی ظاہر ہوتے ہیں۔

روایت ہے کہ ایک صحابی حضورؐ کی خدمت میں حاضر ہوئے اور عرض کیا: یارسولؐ اللہ! میرے اندر بہت سی برائیاں ہیں۔ سب کو بیک وقت چھوڑنا میرے بس میں نہیں۔ کوئی ایسا عمل بتائیے کہ میں سب سے بچ سکوں۔

حضورؐ نے ارشاد فرمایا: تم جھوٹ بولنا چھوڑ دو۔

صحابی کہتے ہیں کہ میں تنہائی میں بھی کوئی غلط کام کرنے لگتا تو خیال آتا کہ اگر حضورؐ نے پوچھا تو کیا جواب دوں گا..... کیوں کہ میں نے جھوٹ چھوڑنے کا وعدہ کیا ہے۔ بس اسی طرح فقط جھوٹ چھوڑنے سے میں تمام برائیوں سے بچ گیا۔

ان احادیث مبارکہ کے بعد قرآن مجید فرقان حمید میں اللہ تعالیٰ کے ارشادات کا مطالعہ کیا جائے تو اس ''جھوٹ'' کی سنگینی کا اندازہ ہوتا ہے۔

آیت مبارکہ کا ترجمہ ہے: ''بے شک اللہ راہ نہیں دیتا اُس کو جو جھوٹا اور حق کو نہ ماننے والا ہو۔''

اک دوسری جگہ پر تو اللہ تعالیٰ نے صاف صاف واضع کر دیا کہ

ترجمہ: ''جھوٹوں پر اللہ کی لعنت''۔

ذرا سوچئے! جس پر خود اللہ لعنت کر رہا ہو اس کی کیا دنیا اور کیا آخرت۔ علمائے کرام لعنت کی تفصیل میں لکھتے ہیں کہ لعنت کا ادنیٰ درجہ اللہ کی رحمت سے دوری ہے۔ جب اللہ کی رحمت ہی نہ ملی تو بظاہر فائدے کوئی معنی نہیں رکھتے۔

قرآن مجید میں ارشاد باری تعالیٰ ہے:

''اللہ نے ان کے دلوں اور کانوں پر روک لگا دی ہے۔ اُن کے لئے بڑا شدید عذاب ہوگا'' (سورۃ البقرہ: آیت ۷)۔

حضرت ابوبکرؓ صدیق کا قول ہے: جھوٹ سے بچ جاؤ یہ تو ایمان کو ختم کر دیتا ہے۔

یونس بن عبی بیان کرتے ہیں: ہر عادت انسان سے چھوٹ جاتی ہے لیکن جب جھوٹ عادت بن جائے اور عادت بھی ایسی پختہ جس سے وقتی طور پر اس کے معاشی و معاشرتی حالات بہتر ہوتے نظر آئیں وہ عادت کبھی نہیں چھوڑتا۔





ہمارا بھی کہیں یہی حال تو نہیں کہ اس قدر احکامات کے باوجود اس دلدل میں دھنسے چلے جا رہے ہیں۔ معاشرے میں جھوٹ اس قدر عام ہو گیا ہے کہ ایک شاعر مسعود انور اس کے بارے میں لکھتے ہیں:

سچ تے چوٹھ دی ازل لڑائی
زندگی بھروا روگ
چوٹھ دے کہندے پیر نہ ہوندے
سچ وچارہ اکھیوں انا
گلی گلی وچ وکدا چوٹھ سڑکاں رُلدا سچ
سارا کمال تے بولن والے دا
جو بولے چوٹھ سے لگے سچ

شاعر طنزیہ انداز میں اس برائی کو عام ہونے کی بات کرتے ہیں۔ یہ جھوٹ اس قدر ہو گیا کہ سچ کہنے والا سوچتا ہے۔ کہیں میں ہی تو غلط نہیں۔ یعنی یہ دور دو ہے کہ یہاں نیکی کرنا مشکل اور گناہ کرنا بہت آسانی ہو گیا ہے۔

ہر کوئی برے کام سے رکنے کی بجائے اس کو کرنے کی دلیل یہ دیتا ہے کہ سارے کر رہے ہیں میں نے کر لیا تو کیا ہے۔ میرے اکیلے نہ کرنے سے کیا ہوتا ہے۔ مگر یہ نہیں سوچا جاتا کہ ہر ایک جب دوسرے سے ملے گا تو ہی معاشرہ بنتا ہے۔ اس میں رنگ، نسل، قومیت یا مذہب آڑے نہیں آتا سچائی، نیکی، بھلائی، حسن اخلاق وہ اعمال ہیں جو بلاتفریق کسی سے بھی کرنے ہوں گے۔ ہمیں اپنے اعمال بھی دوسروں میں نمایاں بنا سکتے ہیں۔

Liaquat Ali
The writer is an Associate Architect




















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Facts about PAKISTAN

We all hear and read about how people criticize and insult Pakistan, and unfortunately there are times when we cannot blame most of the reasons due to the increasing violence. But if there's one thing I've been taught, it's never to generalize. The good points of Pakistan have been hidden in this layer of violence. Let's reconsider our potential by reviewing our past/present achievements.

In the last five years, Pakistan's literacy rate has grown by 250%, the largest increase in any country to date.



Pakistan's national anthem tune ranks first in the top three tunes of the world.

Urdu **lyrics**

پاک سرزمین شاد باد کشورِحسین شاد باد
تُو نشانِ عزمِ عالی شان ارضِ پاکستان!
مرکزِ یقین شاد باد
پاک سرزمین کا نظام قوّتِ اُخوّتِ عوام
قوم، ملک، سلطنت پایندہ تابندہ باد!
شاد باد منزلِ مراد
پرچمِ ستارہ و ہلال رہبرِ ترقّی و کمال
ترجمانِ ماضی، شانِ حال جانِ استقبال!
سایۂ خدائے ذوالجلال

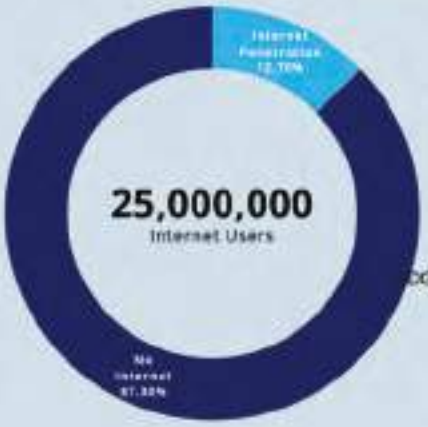
Transliteration (ALA-LC)

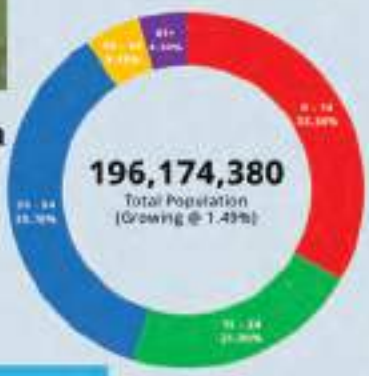
Pāk sarzamīn šād bād
Kešvare hasīn šād bād
To nešāne azme ālīšān,
arze Pākestān!
Markaze yaqīn šād bād
Pāk sarzamīn kā nezām
Qowate axuwate avām
Qoum, molk, saltanat
Pāyande tābande bād!
Šād bād manzele morād
Parcame setārevo helāl
Rahbare taraqqiyo kamāl
Tarjomāne māzišāne hāl,
jāne esteqbāl!
Sāyeye Xodāye zoul(alāl

Translation (poetical)

May the holy land, stay glad;
Beautious realm, stay glad,
Thou, the sign of high resolve—
Land of Pakistan!
Citadel of faith, stay glad.
Order of the holy land,
Power of fraternity of the populace;
Nation, country, and domain;
Ever luminous remain!
The cherished goal, stay glad.
Flag with the star and crescent
Leader of progress and ascent
Dragoman of past, pride of present;
Soul of future!
Shadow of God of grandeur.

Fourth largest broadband internet system of world is in Pakistan







Source: ISPAK, PTA



Source: CIA Fact Book



World's largest deep sea port is Gwadar.



World's 7th largest Pool of Scientists and Engineers.



About 50% of the world's footballs are made in Pakistan.

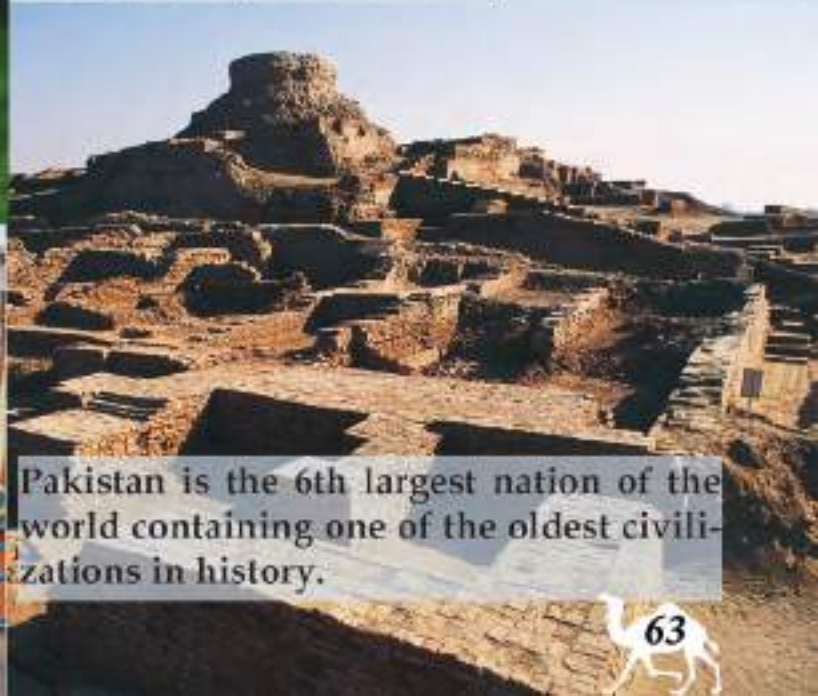


Pakistanis rank 4th on global intelligence survey.

Case studies of students like Ali Moeen Nawazish, who broke a world record by passing 23 A-levels, were quoted in the study.







Pakistan is the 6th largest nation of the world containing one of the oldest civilizations in history.



Karakoram Highway runs through the northern areas connecting Pakistan with China's Xingjiang province is often described as " Eighth Wonder of the World" due to the marvel of civil engineering as it has taken 15 years to complete by the Pakistan Army Engineers in collaboration with China. It's been labeled as " World's highest paved international Road" under world's toughest terrain.









Pakistan is the first Islamic country to attain nuclear power.



Pakistan has the sixth largest military force in the world.

Pakistan is notable for having one of the best trained air-force pilots in the world.



The highest railway station of Asia is in Pakistan.



Asia's Highest Railway Station "Kan Mehtarzai



Asia's Highest Railway Station Kan Mehtarzai that is located 2240 meters above sea level near Quetta.

Pakistan has world's youngest civil judge, Muhammad Illyas.

Muhammad Ilyas passed the examination enabling him to become a Civil Judge in July 1952 at the age of 20 years 9 months, although formalities such as medicals meant that it was not until eight months later that he started work as a Civil Judge in Lahore, Pakistan.



World's largest milk processing plant with Nestle





Edhi is running the World's largest Ambulance network.

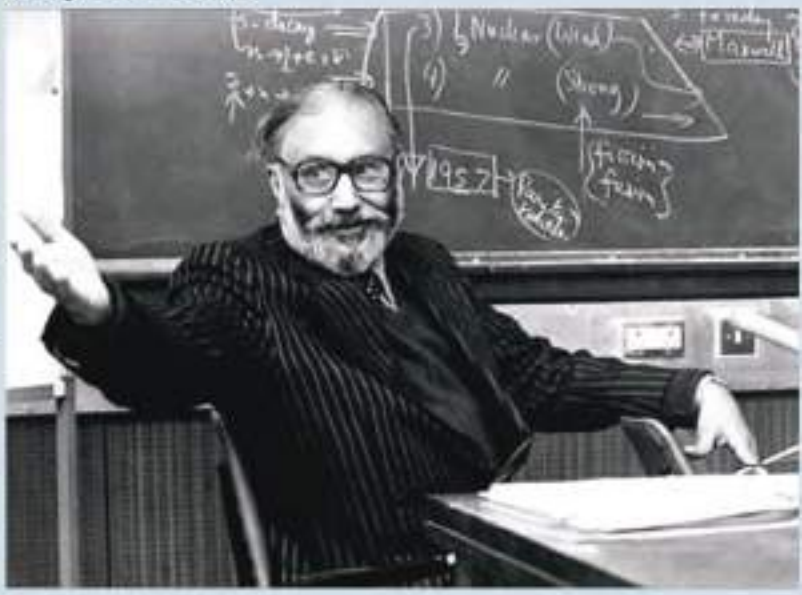


World's youngest certified Microsoft Experts Arfa Kareem (Late) and Babar Iqbal are from Pakistan.

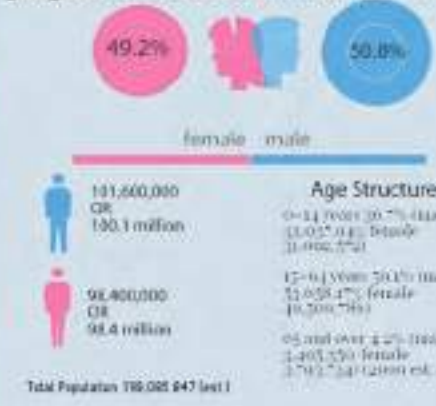




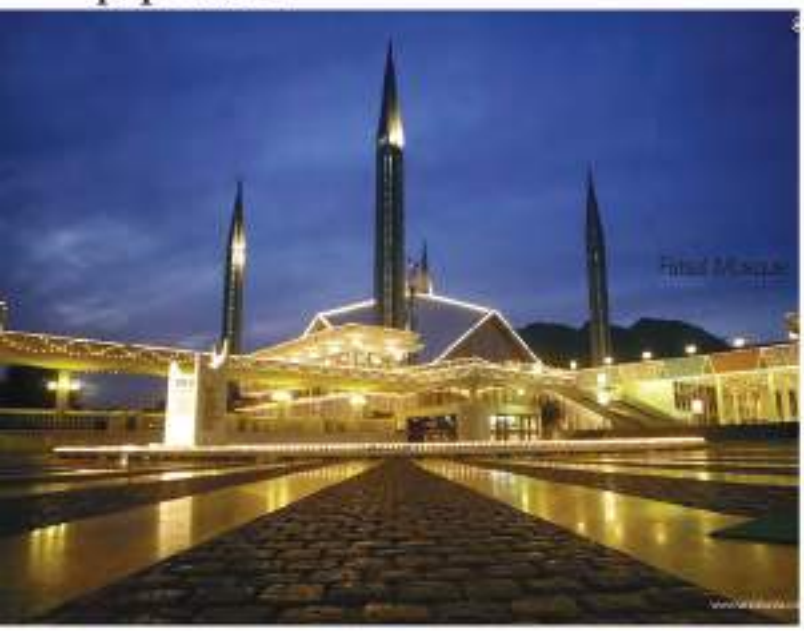
Dr. Abdus Salam – Nobel prize winner (Physics 1979).



Pakistan has sixth largest population in the world.



The Shah Faisal Mosque in Islamabad can accommodate almost 100,000 worshipers. Completed in 1976, it could at that time probably hold the city's entire population.





Second Largest Salt Mine in the World



Ustaad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, hailed as the most important Qawwali singer of the 20th century and received many awards around the globe such as The "Legends" award at the UK Asian Music Awards (2005).



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Fine dining a la Bohras



"Just make your kaccha keema ni cutlass (not cutlets), cream tikka, fried chicken, biryani and order some malai na khaja, as well," said a friend, well versed with Bohra food, as we sit down to decide on a menu for dinner at my place.

Within the community, Bohras laughingly call themselves "jaman pasand, aman pasand" (peace and food loving). There cannot be a more fitting description, especially in the strife-torn city like Karachi, where a majority of Bohras reside. Food forms an integral part of our culture and everything revolves around it.

As with everything, outside influences have also made inroads into the Bohra cuisine but there are traditions that have remained untouched and passed through generations.

While many Bohra homes may have given up eating from the thaal (a large stainless silver tray on which food is served, usually served course wise), food is still served on it in the Jamaat Khana. For those who cannot sit on the floor, the thaal is placed on a table with chairs around it for them to sit.

Breaking bread

Eating from the thaal at home usually means the family eats together. But this is becoming increasingly difficult in a changed urban lifestyle. In a nuclear household where both spouses are working and where children get off from school or college at different times and usually running from tuitions or sport, eating Bohra style is not possible. And even if grandparents are living in the same house, more often than not, they are unable to sit comfortably on the floor.

Meal with rituals

But for those who still do, the meal starts with washing your hands (if it's a formal gathering, someone will go around the thaal and offer to wash your hands in a basinet and a vessel filled with lukewarm water and a towel) and sitting around a square table cloth (though it can be round and in Gujrati -- the community's lingua franca -- it's called a safra) with a round metal stand (called the kundli) in the middle. Four plates are placed near the kundli in which to throw bones during the meal and which eventually goes under the thaal.

The huge tray that usually accommodates between 8 to 9 people though smaller sizes are available also) is put on the kundli once everyone has sat around, usually with legs folded sideways or with one leg folded up (this positon takes less space). You never sit cross-legged! It is highly inappropriate and considered quite disrespectful; it also takes up more space.

Before you can actually dig into the food, you have to taste salt, just a few grains. The science behind this act, it's supposedly believed that salt signals your taste buds and your palate to aid in digestion. Some believe

it wards off many diseases. For me it acts as a reminder to say Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim.

If there are elderly or guests, it is more respectful for them to take the first spoonful/or the morsel and the others can begin right after.

At home, these days, this etiquette has all but been discarded as has starting the meal with dessert. People just prefer getting on with the main dish -- usually a meat or chicken curry to eat with rotis. This is put in the centre of thaal and everyone gets individual rotis which they place on their side of the thaal. In most Bohra homes, rotis are palm-sized or slightly big and have been laced with oil. Now with the newer generation getting more health conscious, phulkas, fresh from the tawa, are preferred.

You dip the roti in the curry from your side only and only pick at the meat piece from there only. It is not considered appropriate to fish out a piece from afar. And if there is no meat piece on your side, or not of your choice, well tough luck! Just dunk the roti and eat it plain. Dipping roti into the gravy is an art and it means you do not dip your fingers with it, maybe just the tips.

The side dishes -- daal or vegetables-- are served in smaller bowls or dishes and are replenished as is the main dish. Usually there is salad served in still smaller bowls. Lastly, most meals would be incomplete without at least two varieties of home-made achaars or chunteys. Few Bohras, you will notice, buy these condiments from the market and if they cannot make them at home, there are women who take orders.

The roti is followed by rice. On a regular basis the fare is plain white rice but if it's a special occasion (Bohras just need the slightest of excuse to feast), the rice will be special and depending on that either yogurt (never plain, always seasoned with fresh coriander, roasted cumin and salt although many prefer sweetened yogurt) or soup will be served. Unlike in other cultures, where soup is a starter, in Bohra dining, it is usually served with rice.

Tasting the salt in the end indicates the end of the meal. As always the soiled thaal goes away before people can get up to wash their hands. This time around people prefer to wash with soap. And as they make a beeline for the washbasin, the elderly are given precedence and offered to use it first.

Eating in a Jamaat Khana

Once you've mastered the art of eating from the thaal at home, you can eat in the Jamaat Khana too and is often considered social leveler especially if you have to sit among strangers that can happen during a majlis/congregation and if you are alone.

If it's a festive occasion or a wedding, the food will be nothing short of a feast and served course wise. The meal will start with a dessert, alternate with a savoury dish, usually a fried meaty one, which will be followed by a second meetha and then another savoury. That consumed, the last course will be jaman (which usually means rice). If it is biryani, it be served with yogurt, if it is some other fancy kind then with soup (almond soup is an all time favourite).



But often there will be dal chawal palidu which is rice made with lentil and mutton and these days they even give it a smoked flavour and is accompanied with lentil soup. It is almost always served with mini papdums.

And just when you think you cannot tuck in anymore, will come a bowl of sorbet -- made from whatever fruit is in the season. If not that then lemonade seasoned with kala namak. Lastly, will be the paan that you pop into your mouth after having tasted the salt. The servers will then whisk away the thaal and you are free to get up.

If you are sitting in the Jamaat Khana, you cannot just get up once you are full. You have to wait till everyone has finished. But if you just have to get up, as a formality, you should apologetically seek permission.

Zofreen T. Ebrahim
The writer is a Karachi based freelance journalist.




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Eitidaal in Technology

"It's tragic", I thought. A few weeks ago at hajj, my companion narrated an incident.

Which was surprising and shocking at the same time. A woman was seen playing games on her cell phone while doing tawa'af. When asked why she was doing this, **"What else am I supposed to do when I am bored"**, was her reply.

Similar behavior was seen at the Arafat and Rozaa of our beloved in Madinah. Adults taking selfies and making videos at a time which would probably have been better spent in acts of 'adab' and worship.

But I want to focus on children here. Technology revolution is pervasive now. Having lived through the years, seeing technology gradually taking over our lives, I remember parents commenting about their children. 4-5 year olds easily learnt to navigate and surf on new devices with ease. Unsuspecting, the detrimental effects of this culture change has had far reaching consequences, which we never imagined.

At this time, there is enough data to show that overuse of screen time leads to violent behavior, social isolation, attention deficit and hyperactivity, sexual precociousness, earlier menses, obesity and the list goes on.

Which brings me to something I had mentioned in another article, published in Daichi earlier this year. That is the syndrome of learned helplessness that I see many parents suffering from. Despite knowing and experiencing these hazards up close and personal, well meaning parents are unable to regulate what should be a priority for them.

And then there is porn. A few months ago, my two sons came home after their usual afternoon play session outside. My wife was informed that one of the boys had invited all older boys (8-12 year olds). At his home, he showed them a picture of a naked man and woman doing what we do best in privacy. "I didn't see it Ammi", both of them exclaimed at the same time. A generation ago, there was Playboy in print, but access to it was rare and difficult. Compare that to now.

All this leads to the issue of lying, something that is clearly despised in deen. If you ask a child how much time he or she has spent on electronics, it is very likely that he will lie to you. Not to mention that he may also lie about the chores which had been assigned to him. This is out of the fear that the electronic device will be taken away from him.

Lets pause here for a second and look at something. The term 'addiction' is defined by Merriam-Webster as, "a compulsive need for and use of a habit-forming substance characterized by tolerance and by well-defined physiological symptoms upon withdrawal; broadly: persistent compulsive use of a substance known by the user to be harmful."

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that a significant majority of children and adults may be addicted to the use of electronic devices. To note is the fact that lying becomes an inherent psychological trait to satisfy addiction.

Some other very relevant effects on the personal psyche of children are engraining of consumerism.





This is sometimes in tandem with hyper-sexuality and glorification of vices. (Take a look at the recent movies like "Minions, Despicable me" and characters of X box games such as "Call of Duty: Black-Ops", as cases in example).

Consumerism has to be particularly examined here and one can do so through the concept of obsolescence, which is the process of becoming obsolete. It is of two types: planned and perceived. iOS 8 being replaced by iOS 9, thereby making all apps requiring iOS 9 to function properly, is planned obsolescence by Apple. I phone 6 coming out within a year of I phone 5 with a few upgrades but made superficially to appear newer and better is perceived obsolescence. One is forced to think that he or she is not cool any more since they have the older model of I phone. Using this model, the major corporations categorize the consumers in the following four types:

i. The hedonists (known in Arabic as 'sheh-wa-ni-yyun')
ii. The quick money making males
iii. The liberated female
iv. The aimless teenager

We have to prevent our next generation from becoming any of these categories. Correct use of technology thus becomes key in this day and age.

For this to happen, the connection to the Creator has to be established. And this is the purpose of this entire discourse. Technology and it's inappropriate use has severed this connection in a rather surgical manner. All the consequences mentioned in this piece are mere symptoms, important to know but not the primary cause of concern. That is the absence of Creator in our lives.

Practical strategies to safeguard your children from technology:

1. Limit screen time to 2 hours per day (max)
2. All passwords should be shared with parents
3. No internet chatting
4. Youtube to be watched under supervision only
5. TV and computer in the main lounge
6. Install parental controls on all devices; keep in mind you cant do that on phones
7. Parents should monitor internet traffic
8. Programs like Snapchat should be not be allowed
9. Parents should know their children's friends well enough
10. Communicate with your children so they confide in you. There are many self help books if you want to learn how to do so.
11. Daily circle of 'taleem' in which our Creator, sunnah of His beloved (saw), and values are discussed.

Zulfiqar Mir MD
The writer is a Consultant physician in Geriatrics. He is particularly interested in early development of the child.







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Fazal Rahmaan - Administration

Shaheena Cheema - Finance

Ismat Riaz - Promotion of Ideology

Shaheen Amin Khan - Craftsmen and Artisans Connection

Alima Khan Wali - Museum & Art Gallery

Iram Ansari - Crafts Improvement

Tahira Qadri - Food Court

Wahida Rahmaan - Food Court

Sameera Noorani - Daachi Sabz Daira

Riffat Saadia - Crafts Development

Dr. Gul-e-Rana - Landscaping

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Shahnaz Siddiq - Karachi Chapter

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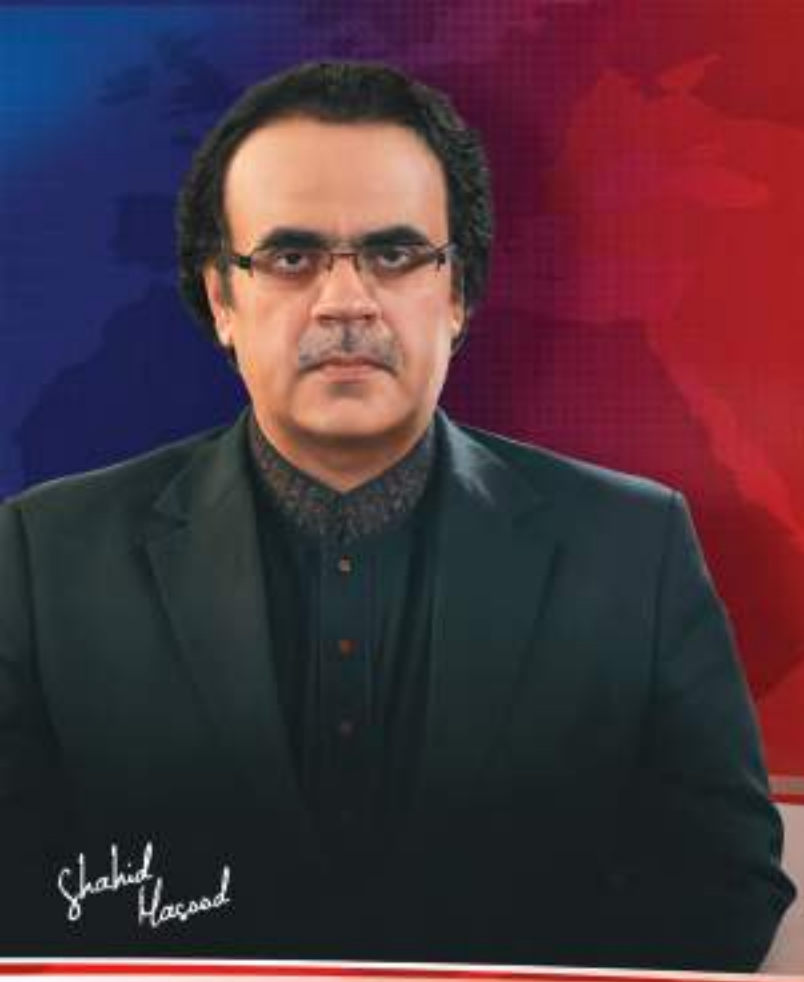
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Glimpse of 2013 exhibition



























Glimpse of 2012 exhibition






















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