

Dolls, Toys and More

Edited by S A J Shirazi



A Self-Help Project In The Rural Area Of Punjab 1991-2011

Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama (NGO)



Dolls of the World

Dolls have always been there.

Proof of this is found in the excavations in South America, the Subcontinent, Japan, Italy, Greece, and other sites all over the world. Made out of a number of materials like wood, wax, clay, cloth etc., they were not only a toy but used also as religious symbols and cult items for example as miniaturized images of persons. Even today they are used by many people as fetish. Today, the experts are not sure what was the first purpose of the dolls; as a toy, out of which the cult figure developed or the cult figure which became a toy. Over and above their value as toys with educational value, dolls are realistic documentation of past and present times and therefore important source of our knowledge about the games, life, living and work conditions and economy. They are important cultural carriers. Dr Senta Siller established different projects in Pakistan, Cameroun, Colombia, etc., in which small but long-term progress was made towards development of rural areas, help towards self-sustained development, discouragement of urbanization by way of income generating projects in the rural areas through production of certain types of handicraft items. Dolls are manufactured here lovingly and clothed in traditional dresses and accessories. Fabric design and types of clothing are revived and take an important place in daily life.

Poupées du monde

Les poupées ont toujours existé.

La preuve en est qu'elles ont été découvertes dans des fouilles en Amérique du Sud, dans le Sous-continent, au Japon, en Italie, en Grèce, et sur d'autres sites partout dans le monde. Faites de matériaux très divers tels que le bois, la cire, l'argile, le tissu, etc., elles n'étaient pas seulement un jouet mais étaient aussi utilisées comme des symboles religieux et des objets de cultes : par exemple comme des représentations miniatures de personnes. Encore de nos jours, elles sont utilisées par de nombreuses personnes comme des fétiches. Aujourd'hui, les experts ne sont pas certains de l'usage premier des poupées : un jouet duquel furent développés des objets de cultes ou une figure de culte qui est devenue un jouet. Au-delà de leur signification comme jouet avec une fonction éducative, les poupées sont des documents concrets des époques passées et présentes, et sont donc des sources substantielles de connaissance sur les jeux, la vie, les conditions de travail et de vie et l'économie des temps passés. Ce sont alors d'importants vecteurs culturels. Le Docteur Senta Siller a établi différents projets au Pakistan, au Cameroun, en Colombie, etc., dans lesquels des programmes légers mais à long-terme ont été mis en place pour le développement des zones rurales, durable et autonome, et le découragement de l'urbanisation par des projets permettant de générer des revenus dans les zones rurales, à travers la production de certains types d'objets artisanaux. Les poupées sont ici fabriquées soigneusement et revêtues d'habits et d'accessoires traditionnels. La conception du design et des différents types de vêtements sont renouvelés et prennent désormais une place importante dans la vie quotidienne.

Muñecas del Mundo

Siempre ha habido muñecas.

Esto lo comprueban los hallazgos pertinentes en América del Sur, en el subcontinente, en el Japón, Italia, Grecia y otros sitios de encuentro en el mundo entero. Configurados de materiales muy diversos, tales como madera, cera, arcilla, tela, no sólo han servidos de juguete, sino que con frecuencia han sido utilizados como símbolos de sacrificio y como objetos de culto, en la forma de imagenes humanas miniaturizadas. También hoy en día, diferentes pueblos los siguen usando como fetiche, siendo que de allí ha ido desarrollándose la figura cultural, o bien el juguete desarrollado con base en la figura cultural. Más allá de su importancia como juguetes con valor pedagógico, los muñecos con documentos realistas de los tiempos pasados y también del mundo contemporáneo, y con ello una fuente importante para nuestro saber sobre el juego, la vida, la vivienda, el trabajo y la economía - por lo tanto, son importantes representantes de la cultura! La Dra. Senta Sille ha venido iniciando diferentes proyectos en Pakistán, Camerún, Colombia, entre otros, en los cuales, por medio de la creación de productos artesanales de índole muy especial, se va creando una vía de los pasos pequeños pero sostenibles dentro del desarrollo en las zonas rurales, ayuda para la autoayuda, frenando el éxodo rural por medio de medidas que proveen ingresos para la población campesina, y que contribuyen a la conformación de un segundo pilar para la economía casera. Aquí se van produciendo muñecas con base en trabajos manuales realizados amorosamente con todo el esmero y primor, y son vestidas con trajes originales con sus diferentes accesorios correspondientes. Con ello, las muestras de tela y los tipos de vestimenta son reactivados ocupando de nuevo un lugar importante en la vida cotidiana.

Puppen der Welt

Puppen hat es schon immer gegeben.

Beweise dafuer liefern eindeutige Graeberfunde in Suedamerika, dem Subkontinent, Japan, Italien, Griechenland und andere Fundorte auf der ganzen Welt. Aus vielerlei Materialien wie Holz, Wachs, Ton, Stoff, waren sie nicht nur Spielzeug, sondern wurden oft auch als Opfersymbole und Kultgegenstaende verwendet, u.z. in Form von miniaturisierten Menschenabbildungen. Auch heute noch werden sie bei verschiedenen Voelkern noch als Fetiche benutzt, wodurch sich die Kultfigur entwickelt hat, oder das aus der Kultfigur entwickelte Spielzeug. Ueber die Rolle als Spielzeug mit paedagogischem Stellenwert hinaus sind Puppen realistische Dokumente der vergangenen und aktuellen Zeit und somit eine wichtige Quelle fuer unser Wissen ueber das Spielen, Leben, Wohnen, Arbeiten und Wirtschaften,- sie sind somit wichtiger Kulturtraeger! Dr Senta Siller begruendete verschiedene Projekte in Pakistan, Kamerun, Kolumbien, u.a., in denen durch die Anfertigung von kunsthandwerklichen Produkten der ganz besonderen Art, ein Weg der kleinen, aber nachhaltigen Schritte in der Entwicklung im laendlichen Raum, Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, die Eindammung der Landflucht durch einkommenschaffende Massnahmen fuer die Landbevoelkerung, als zweites Standbein geschaffen wird. Puppen werden hier in liebevoller Handarbeit hergestellt und in originalen Trachten mit verschiedenen Accessoires bekleidet. Stoffmuster und Arten des Kleides finden dadurch eine Wiederbelebung und einen wichtigen Platz im Alltag.



S A J Shirazi is a Lahore based writer. His writing on diverse subjects appear in Pakistan Today, Dawn, the News, Nation, Spider, Boots n All and other a list publications. Shirazi holds an MPA (University of the Punjab) and Linguistics (Russian Language from National University of Modern Languages) degrees and is working at one of the leading universities. He has authored two books (Izhar, Ret Pe Tehreer) and translated Din Mein Charagh by Abbas Khan into Light Within.

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Senta Siller is the initiator of the project, which has become famous even outside Pakistan under the title "Dolls of the World" and overseas the work of similar daughter projects in other countries.

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PREWORD

The current edition consists of 3 parts in which the salient features of the project are described.

After an Introduction by Khalid Javaid follows the Part 1 with a collection of articles by SAJ Shirazi, as well as a collection of posters about different parts of the project (see also organizational chart and the given statistic), arranged and organized by Norbert Pintsch. The back page is kept free for eventual remarks and notes.

The Part 2 is made up of three short stories by Ulrike Vestring, the wife of a former ambassador of Germany to Pakistan.

Part 3 is made up of an article about dolls and toys in Pakistan by Senta Siller, the original of which is located and can be consulted in the library of the Lok Virsa Museum, Islamabad.

FOREWORD

Pakistan's folk culture is a living tradition practiced by a dominant majority of its people. Pakistanis, therefore do not have to go looking for folklore, it is all over. In fact, it is so common place that an average rural Pakistani may have no awareness whatsoever of his folkloric culture and the richness of his folk heritage, just like a fish in water.

Pakistan with its rich and varied heritage has a craft tradition of more than 9,000 years dating back to the Mehrgarh civilization in the Balochistan province which reveals the earliest evidence for pottery production. The Indus valley civilizations of Moenjodaro in Sindh and Harappa in Punjab, 5,000 B.C. indicates impressions of woven cloth production from cotton and wool. The dominant historical influence still to be seen in the form, design and colour of Pakistani handicrafts is essentially Islamic, a fusion of Turkish, Arab, Persian and the indigenous Mughal tradition.

The crafts represent a valuable material heritage, which forms a tangible part of our historical and contemporary culture. Unlike the west, most traditional crafts in Pakistan is neither a profession nor a hobby, but an essential component of the diverse cultural patterns – a product of the ethnic and communal attitudes and practices. As such crafts have meanings and definite social context in traditional society. However, the onslaught of the industrial age is erasing this craft heritage, even in rural areas. But there is a recent trend towards the use of crafts as art objects in urban homes. Historic forms and designs are being revived both by the increasing number of trained craftsmen and by designers for the tourist and export trade.

Pakistan is noted for some of the most beautiful handicrafts of the world. Whether it is the elaborate dress of a bride or a simple household utensil, it is designed and created so artistically that it becomes an object of art. The different regions, towns and cities specialize in their particular handicrafts. This is why there is so much diversity and variety in the crafts of the country.

The indigenous skills of Pakistan have evolved over centuries through communal practice and therefore constitute the most authentic representation of Pakistan's traditional art.

The National Institute of Folk & Traditional Heritage, popularly known as Lok Virsa, is a pioneering national organization at the federal level striving hard since its inception in the year 1974 to collect, document and preserve different forms of Pakistan's traditional culture, folklore, oral traditions, arts and crafts. It has made significant contribution towards providing a platform to the master craftspeople, folk artists and rural musicians for recognition of their talent.

This task is being done in a professional and systematic manner in close association with a vast network of provincial and regional cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations and community-based bodies, who are actively engaged with the practitioners of the traditional culture at the grass root level.

Lok Virsa has been working closely with Thatta Kedona for the last many years. They have undertaken a number of initiatives in the village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka in Punjab for the promotion and preservation of traditional culture including activating the village women and resumption of the tradition of making dolls and ethnological research resulted in creating ethnic dolls dressed up in the traditional costumes of various provinces and minorities. In pursuance of their objectives, they give training to village women to make international quality products, to generate income and thus becoming an effective part of the society. They also collaborate with the Export Promotion Bureau of Pakistan to introduce their products abroad.

Their present publication of Thatta Kedona will also go a long way in maintaining the traditional culture and creating on its basis a foundation for good quality artisanship. We wish them success in their endeavours.

Khalid Javaid

Executive Director

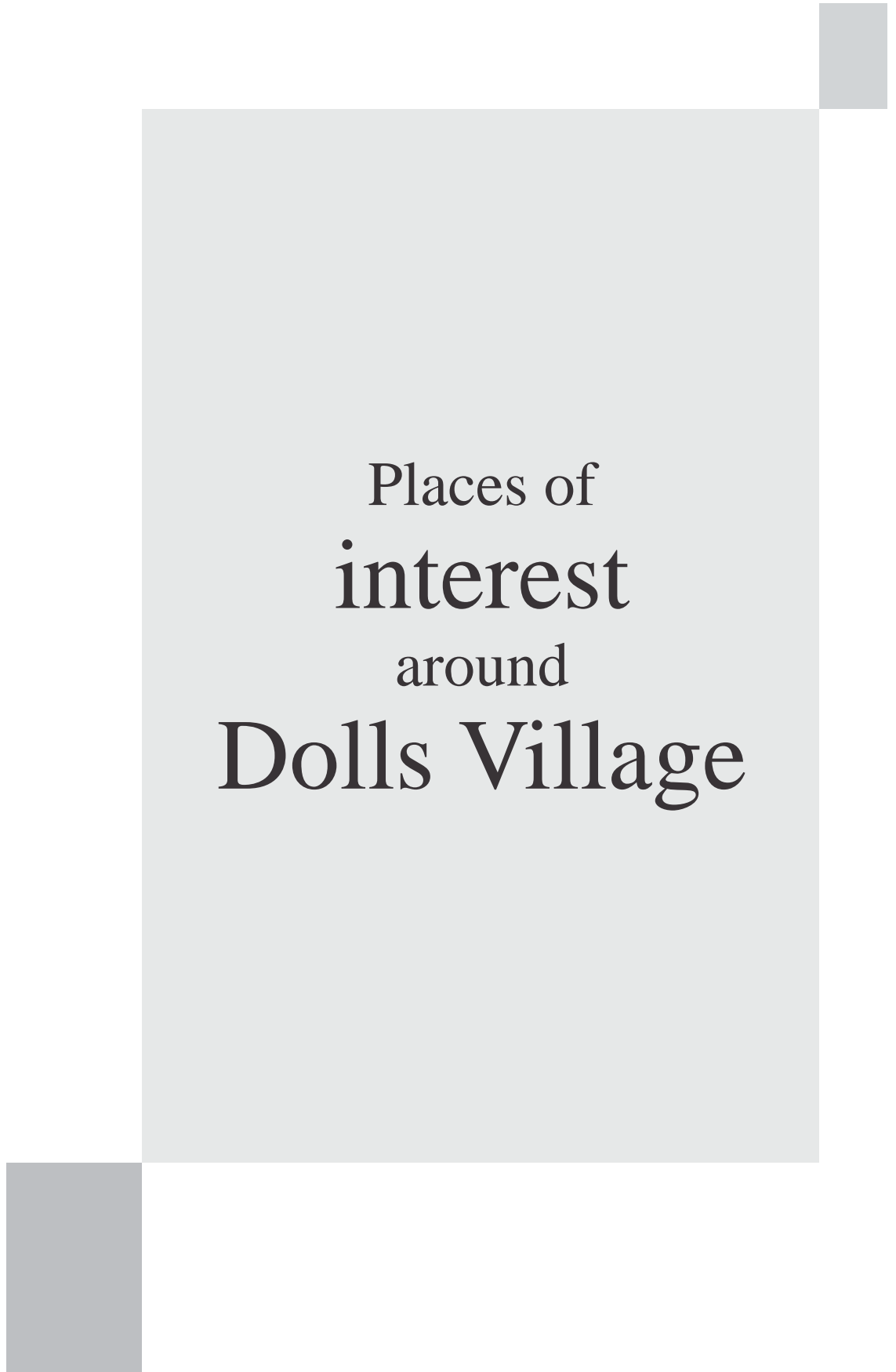
Lok Virsa

PART 1-A

Associated with a self help project for cultural preservation and development in Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka - a remote village of rural Punjab on the bank of River Ravi internationally known as Dolls Village has been a pleasure. I have seen the community changing fast while documenting it.

Thanks to local NGO Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Amma that Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka (TGD) is a unique village that has changed so much over time; quality of life of the people of the village has improved, the women in the village are much more skillful, empowered and enlightened. In addition to the skill training to the women, girls and boys in the village are getting quality education.

The visible change has been made possible due to the tireless and persistent efforts of two senior German volunteers Dr. Senta Siller, Prof. Dr. Norbert Pintsch and so many other volunteers from all over the world who come to the village and worked tirelessly and made TGD a model for anyone who is interested in cultural preservation, income generation for village women and collective uplift of any community. You have to visit the village to see the change and feel the success.



Places of
interest
around
Dolls Village

Down to Dipalpur's beginning

Dipalpur is famous in the history as an outpost that has played a significant part in the defense of Delhi kingdom against Mongol invasions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The coins of Sakas (Scythian) period found on the site suggest that the place was inhabited in 100 (BC). After Multan this is probably the oldest living city in the subcontinent.

History of Dipalpur dates back to ancient times. General Alexander Cunningham writes that the place figures out in works of Ptolemy under different names. As per the tradition, Dipalpur was named after Raja Dipa Chand once he captured it.

Dipalpur once used to be the first fortification in the way from Khyber to Delhi. In 1285, Muhammad Tughlaq son of emperor Balban was killed in a bloody battle with Mongols and the famous poet Amir Khusuro was taken prisoner in Dipalpur. The dilapidated tomb where Muhammad Tughlaq rests stands neglected in a silent corner, far removed from the noisy haunts of men. Under Ala-ud-Din the town became the headquarters of Ghazi Malik. Feroz Shah Tughlaq visited the town in fourteenth century. Mughal Emperor Akbar made it the headquarters of one of the sarkars (revenue district) of Multan Province. The town lost its importance during colonial era. Partition changed the face of the town and it witnessed the new demographic and socio order in 1947. It is now a tehsil headquarters of Okara district.

Dipalpur in the past was surrounded by a fortification wall, rising to the height of 25 feet and strengthened by a deep trench and other defenses. When and by whom this fort was constructed is not known. But it was renovated, repaired and improved during the rule of Feroz Shah Tughlaq and later by Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khanan who was the governor during the time of Akbar. Feroz Shah Tughlaq constructed a grand mosque, palaces and excavated a canal from river Sutlaj to inundate the trench and irrigate gardens around the town. Wide and airy tunnels linked the royal residential quarters inside the fort to the adjoining gardens outside. There were 24 burgs (musketry holes) on the fortification wall, 24 mosques, 24 bavlis (ponds) and 24 wells in the town in its hey days. The trench, ponds and tunnels have been filled but at places the location of the trench can still be defined. Most of the wall has been razed. Two of the four massive gateways with pointed arches also exist though they are badly damaged and their wooden doors have vanished. The coats of cement have marred the architectural importance of the gateways.

Inside the walled city that is a vital living part of Dipalpur, dismayed, I looked around me and thought that I have entered a big and confused jungle of houses. The remains of once magnificent buildings of olden period adorned with beautiful wood engravings serve to relieve the dullness of the domestic architecture. The whole area has a homogeneous urban texture that has survived for centuries. The narrow and winding streets lined by redeveloped and shoddily built new houses give Dipalpur a mean and gloomy look. The old character of the city is eroding due to erection of new structures and unsuitable repairs.

Besides doors with decorated latches, jharokas, bay windows and cut brick works still surviving despite all odds, the most noticeable feature inside the old Dipalpur, which reminds of the past prominence, is the monastery of Lal Jas Raj, a guru much venerated by

the Hindus. As per the famous legend, Lal Jas Raj was young son of Raja Dipa Chand, the founder of Dipalpur. The boy sank in the earth due to the curse of his stepmother Rani Dholran. Raja Dipa Chand constructed this monastery in the memory of his son. Today the dilapidated and empty chamber stands infested with bats and rats. Termite is eating its woodwork. I could not open the doors to the chamber because they are jammed and a stairway is serving as storage for dried dung cakes of the neighbors. The structure is crumbling. "There is nothing inside. There used to be a grand annual 'mela' here.

Hindus have been coming here to shave off the heads of their sons till after the partition but nobody comes anymore," informed the residents who had gathered around me. Another noticeable building inside old Dipalpur, which reminds of the bygone glory, is a saray (inn) near the monastery of Lal Jas Raj. The architects of the period when this inn was raised were familiar with use of space, element of design and response to climate. It was a spacious building with airy rooms on four sides, a big courtyard in the center and four arched entrances. The inn used to be functional and firm but now it is dark and dirty. It has been divided and subdivided by its occupants so many times that you cannot make out its original shape. Even the verandas have been clogged to create additional rooms. The best would have been if the inn remained in public use. This does not seem possible now.

Muslim saints have been coming to this area to spread the light of Islam. Hazrat Bahawal Haq commonly known as Bahawal Sher Qalandar came from Baghdad and settled in village Patharwall near Dipalpur. The saint constructed a Hujra (living room) and a mosque outside the village. His grandson Hazrat Shah Muqem continued his mission. The village came to be known as Hujra Shah Muqem. This is the place that is mentioned in famous Punjabi folk love story 'Mirza Saheban'. Though there is no historical evidence that Jati Saheban came here and prayed: "Sunjian howan gallian which Mirza yar phere" (the streets should be deserted where my lover Mirza should roam about).

Mughal king Akbar along with his son Saleem and royal entourage stayed in Dipalpur when he came to pay homage to saint Hazrat Farid Ghang Shakar in Pakpattan in 1578. Akbar named the corridor as 'Bari Doad' by combining the syllables of the names of two rivers (Beas and Ravi) that bounded the belt. Baba Guru Nanak also stayed in Dipalpur for some time. A completely ruined Gurdawara (temple) reminds of the place where Guru Nanak stayed.

Situated on the old bank of river Beas, Dipalpur started expanding and spilling out of fortification long ago. It was declared as notified area in 1949, which has been raised to the status of Municipal Committee. Now it is a typical Pakistani market town with all the hazards of urbanization: congestion, mixed traffic, encroachments, potholed roads and piles of domestic waste. Municipal Committee does not seem to notice the plight of the residents, particularly those living in the old portion of the city. The area is very fertile and ideally suited for livestock and agro industries.

Sadly, our Archaeology Department is neither very keen to 'discover the missing links of human evolution in this area nor in preservation of bits and pieces of history lying under the layers of time. Challenge of restoring the ancient Dipalpur to its old magnificence might be too much, but the experts could carry out a survey to record the places having essential, historic, social and architectural value.

Historically Wrapped and Simply Romantic

When one has seen one Punjabi Town, one has seen them all, except Malka Hans. Now long forgotten by most people, a historic little town - serene, tranquil, pollution free - was once an abode of Waris Shah, who stayed here and composed universal romance Heer Ranjha. Legend has it that Malik Muhammad (alia Malka) - a member of Hans tribe founded the town some 700 years ago. Hans became powerful when Mughal King Alamgir conferred a vast land around Malka Hans on Sheikh Qutab Hans. In 1764, Muhammad Azam who was the descendants of Qutab Hans became head of the clan and made himself independent.

Ran Singh Nakka later treacherously took Muhammad Azam prisoner where he died in confinement. A great Punjabi poet, Waris Shah was born in Jandiala Sher Khan (district Shekhupura) in 1719. After completing his education in Kasur (district Lahore), he shifted his residence to village Malka Hans. Here he resided in a small hujra (living room) adjacent to the historic mosque that was constructed by Hans in 1340. Hafiz Ghulam Murtaza commonly known as Mian Wadda was the trustee of the mosque and used to lead the prayer when Waris Shah came here. In the absence of Mian Wadda, Waris Shah performed the duty of leading the prayer congregations.

It is this 'Hujra Waris Shah Da' that I had come to see in Malka Hans. Waris Shah had composed an illustrious Punjabi folk romance sitting in this hujra. The underground 8 x 6 feet hujra where the poet lived is still there though devoid of any furniture or things that could be related to Waris Shah to bring back the memory of the poet. Only sign showing that Waris Shah had been living here is a crudely written plaque with sketchy details about the poet. The classic work of Waris Shah - Shakespeare of Punjabi language - echoes in the countryside and youth and elders sing with joy. One can find a number of folk vocalists singing Heer Waris Shah around the vast expanses of Punjab and other parts of the Subcontinent where Punjabi language is used. Many people remember major portions of his work by heart. Poetry of Waris Shah is written in easy language and can be understood by anyone with average language skills. The couplets are used as idioms and phrases in day-to-day life. The ancient mosque, now known as Mosque Waris Shah, with three green color domes and a hujra are venerated by literary figures, curiously conscious and devoted faithful.

I could not see the book (Heer Waris Shah) written in longhand by the poet himself despite the best effort. There is another small room in the mosque premises with nameplate that reads, "Library Waris Shah" but that too was closed and the key could not be procured because "it had been misplaced". The monument is in the care and custody of Anjuman-e-Warisia (Registered). It is not being given the attention it deserves. The residents of this town celebrate Annual Jashne Waris when romantic and mystic poetry of Waris Shah is sung by folk singers. I was thinking as to how the plight of this priceless heritage could be brought to the echelons of power. The town is located 30 minutes drive away from Sahiwal and has a Town Committee, which has not been able to do anything other than brick lining in some of the dusty and dark streets in town. Conservation of legendary national heritage we are poised to lose forever is a difficult task for the civic body with little resources.

Exploring this sleepy little agricultural town, you can also see the dilapidated relics of

Parnami temple that used to be one of the central ashram of Parnami faction of Hindus. Mahant Darbara Singh had constructed palace like five-story majestic building of the temple over 200 year ago. Dust of ages has settled in deep layers on the pedestal where Smadhi of Dya Ram - the founder of Parnami sect used to rest in the main chamber of the temple. "Large number of Hindus had been visiting here before partition and there use to be a big annual mela in the month of Chetar," informed a villager who is using this place as a house. "I am paying rent to Auqaf for living in this Khandar," he complained a little wistfully.

This grand monument of the past with solid masonry and ornate designs wrought by artisans and artists centuries ago was one of the fine specimens of Hindu architecture. Termite is eating Wood but exquisite quality of woodwork on windows, doors and murals on the battered walls can still be seen. The thin red bricks excavated from this monument have been used in houses in the town. And, sadly, the temple cannot be defined in the images. Auqaf does not appear to have any idea about what to do with these splendid remains of the Hindu architectural legacy, except perhaps recovering the rent from the tenants. "Last time Auqaf got the place cleaned was when Indian Minister Hari Karishan Bhagat and Ambassador De Sharma visited the temple", informed the present occupant of the edifice. Legend has it that there was a tunnel from this temple to Pakpattan, though I could not locate the opening of the tunnel because huge quantity of rubble lying everywhere in the courtyard.

On the way back, I along with my friends had dinner break at a roadside-eating joint known as 'Pak Afghan Rohani Baba Hotel' near Yousaf Wala (Sahiwal). Sitting on ground, we had their famous mutton dish specially made in lamb fat. That reminded me of a small but famous eating joint in Saranan near Quetta.

Pleased in Pakpattan

Pakpattan - the name is enough to start the travelers, cautiously curious and devoted faithful dreaming. Already the magic words like sultans and saints are stirring in the head. Let your gaze slip over the dhaki - original citadel of Pakpattan - and the town will suddenly appear. The antiquity is its own message: the town is heritage, and heritage permeates the town. Enter the once walled inner-city through one of the existing gates and you will find yourself in archetypal form of an ancient town - crooked and narrow streets, dense housing, intricate woodwork on Jharokas, bay windows and doors. So many historic cities have developed losing much of their original character in the process during modern times, but Pakpattan has survived remarkably intact. It is the entire urban fabric of the place that is historic. Though, the major portion of the fortification wall has disappeared. At places, the wall has even been utilized as a part of the residences. Four gates (Shahedi, Rehimun, Abu and Mori) have survived out of six but they are all crumbling. Now extensive suburbs stretch from the foot of the wall all around. Thin red bricks from centuries old wall are seen used in the new houses all over the town. The portion of the settlement that sits on the mound can be compared with walled part of Multan City.

The remains of peripheral wall with ancient mystique define the inner portion that is totally pedestrian, vehicular traffic and modern development contained out of the wall. Homes have also retained their essential trait despite renovations to make them comfortable for modern living or to create additional space for more families. You can see the mythical woodwork, murals as well as tiled facades and colorful patterns in old havelies.

General Alexander Cunningham has recognized Pakpattan, anciently known as Ajudhan, as a town that appears in the work of Hellenic historians and other classic writers under the names of Ohydrakae, Sydrakae, Sudraykae and or Hydaekae. Two strategic roads of the past - one from Dera Ghazi Khan and other from Dera Ismail Khan - used to meet here. Great conquerors like Mahmud Ghaznavi, Taimur and traveler like Ibn-e-Batuta crossed Sutlaj from Pakpattan that had been principal ferry on River Sutlaj for centuries.

Medieval history of the town started when Amir Subuktagin subdued Pakpattan in 980 (AD) followed by Ibrahim Ghaznavi in 1080. Even today, the thought that Taimur during his invasion in 1398 spared the lives of those who had not fled the place, out of respect for the shrine of saint Baba Farid, inspire reverence.

The soul of the city is famous saint Farid-ud-Din Masud Ganj Shakar commonly known as Baba Farid. The saint was born in a village Kothewal (near Multan) in 1173 in a family that had migrated from Afghanistan. Saint, scholar and poet, Baba Farid traveled to Khurasan, Kirman, Badakhshan, Baghdad, Mecca Muazzma, Madina Munawara, Kufa, Basra, Damascus, Nishapur, Bukhara, Dehli and Multan before he finally settled in Pakpattan. Here he spent his life in spreading the light of divine Islam. It was due to the religious services and personal example of the saint that Islam spread in this part of the Subcontinent and many people including Hindu Jogi Birnath along with his followers came into the folds of Islam. The saint died in 1265 and his shrine was constructed by Khwaja Nizam ud Din Auleya in 1267.

Splendors of the 'Farid Complex' fire the imagination. The shrine - simple and destitute of ornament - stands next to the bigger shrine of his grandson Ala ud Din Mouj Darya, which was built by Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq. The main chamber of the shrine of Baba Farid has two doors - one in the East is called Noori Darwaza and the other in South in famous Baheshti Darwaza. Besides the principal grave of the saint, there is another grave in the chamber where his son Badr ud Din Suleman is buried. The ample, pure and unadorned architecture is very inspiring. Urs of the saint is celebrated in the month of Muharram but large of devotees stream into the shrine every day. You can also see Qawwal groups performing and malangs falling in state of trance mostly on Thursdays.

Both the principal shrines are in good condition but the adjoining ancient mosque has decayed. Auqaf is constructing a new mosque nearby as a part of Farid Complex. Besides the shrines of Baba Farid and Mouj Darya, there are over twenty shrines of saintly persons in the town. Most eminent out of these is the shrine of Baba Aziz Makki.

There is a whole different world outside the shrine parameters. Cubbyhole shops selling deathbed spreads, flowers, big bangles and sweets (for niaz) known as Makhane and eating joints are lined up in both the streets leading to the shrine. Business in the streets is thriving because devotees 'must' take something home from the shrine. Sleazy sounding and persistent beggars flock around devotees heading for the shrine. People are seen distributing free food: cooked food is available for sale in large quantity round the clock. A philanthropist from Karachi is running a separate Lunger Khana at his own expense since 1995. Bustling with activity, the place seems to have its own culture.

How the name Ajudhan was changed to Pakpattan? It is a fact that name Pakpattan (meaning pure ferry) distinguished due to the home and last resting-place of Baba Farid. According to a local lore, Mughal King Akbar on the eve of his visit to the shrine to pay homage to the saint declared Pakpattan as an official name of the town. The thought that so many people including Ibn-e-Batuta, Guru Nanik Dev Jee and Waris Shah had visited the shrine evokes awe and aura of eternity.

Wandering about in the older part of town near the relics of Kacha Burj - defensive tower that was erected by Haibat Khan during the rule of Sher Shah Suri, you can think about the strategic importance of this town in the bygone era. But, during Mughal time when danger from the North reduced, the town lost its defensive significance.

Pakpattan was first declared district headquarters in 1849 when British rule established in the Subcontinent. The headquarters were later moved to Gugera in 1852 and then to Sahiwal in 1856. British also instituted Pakpattan Municipal Committee in 1868. Kasur-Lodhran section of Railway line was laid in 1910 and Pakpattan became an important station on the Railway map because of railway divisional headquarters and loco sheds. Though this section of railway line was torn apart and sent to Mesopotamia during Second World War and the town could not prosper as an agricultural market in those days. On July 1, 1990, Pakpattan was again declared district headquarters. This became the only district of the country without any tehsil until Arifwala tehsil was included in the district in 1995. In order to preserve the bits and pieces of history lying under the layers of time, the experts could carry out a survey to record the places having essential significance. The living heritage should be declared as 'protected area' _ the concept that presently is not there in Pakistan.

Heritage Village

An old, sleepy and tranquil village Satghara lies about 80 kilometers from Lahore (20 minutes drive away from Okara) in the quiet backwaters of the Punjab. The coins found at Satghara prove that the place was inhabited at the time of the Kushan dynasty. The rule of Kushans was one of the most decisive periods in the history of the Subcontinent. At the height in the second century (A.D.), Kushans ruled from Oxus to Ganges and yet their influence spread beyond even these frontiers. On the southern bank of the Ravi, it is a typical Pakistani village where farmers live like rustics in the face of urban attractions. Though off the beaten track, it has never been out of limelight. Besides heritage conscious travelers from all over the world, Baloch leaders and contemporary historians visit the hamlet. Reasons: it is a "Tukia Nawab Chakar Ki" - last resting-place of Mir Chakar Rind. Part of our history is buried here.

As per one account, Mir Chakar Rind came to this village with seven families, hence the name. Another legend has it that the village was named Satghara because it was destroyed seven times by floods. Shah Abul Mo'ali, descendant of sixteenth century saint Muhammad Ibrahim Daud-e-Sani Bandgi in his book 'Maqamat-e-Daudi' maintains that Satghara was known by the same name even before the arrival of Mir Chakar Rind. In Baloch history, the sixteenth century was a very eventful period. Baloch fought series of wars amongst themselves. The result of these tribal conflicts not only caused large-scale bloodshed but also resulted in their mass migrations to the Punjab, Sindh and Gujrat (India).

One such immigrant, center of Balochi love lore and war ballad, Mir Chakar Rind is regarded as one of the great Baloch heroes. Born in 1468, Mir Chakar Rind lived in Sevi (modern time Sibbi) in hills of Balochistan and became the head of Rind tribe after his father Shiahak died. A natural leader and warrior, Mir Chakar Rind was a man with resolute determination. In 1496, Mir Chakar traveled to Hirat (Afghanistan) to muster support from Sultan Shah Hussain. To prove his personal valor, he was made to fight a mad elephant and ride a tough horse in Hirat. He succeeded in all these tests though could not get the support. A class of Balochs even regards him having been invested with saintly virtues and mystic powers.

Over a trifling matter - a Lashari youth butchered and roasted the kid-kamels - Mir Chakar and Gwaharam, head of the Lashari tribe went to war. Thousands of Rinds and Lasharis were killed in this war, and ballads that still echo in hills of Balochistan and are part of Baloch oral literature, commemorate the personal gallantry of the two heroes. After 'the thirty year war' against Lasharis, he left Balochistan and came to live in the Punjab in 1518." Why Chakar-e-Azam, as he was commonly known, preferred to settle in the central Punjab, far away from Sibbi is not known. Once at Satghara, he constructed a fortification wall around the village and burj (watchtowers) in 15 squares Kilometers area encircling the fort for early warning against impending dangers. In case of any threat, the guard on the watchtower would light up fire, which will be spotted by the other guards and the news would be communicated all around without delay. From one crumbling watchtower, I could see miles of waving cops in all directions.

Settled in Satghara, Mir Chakar Rind became a regional force to reckon with. He was

respected (and feared) in the area. Afghan King Sher Shah Suri approached Mir Chakar Rind to join hands with him and help him consolidate his gains. Mir Chakar Rind appreciated the situation and not only wisely refused to help Sher Shah Suri but also managed to elude Afghan armies. Instead, his forces under the able command of his son Mir Shahdad joined Humayun when after a long exile in Persia Mughal emperor came back, recaptured Delhi and ousted Afghan Suris in 1556. Emperor Humayun as a reward conferred a vast Jagir (including horses and slaves) upon him. Mir Chakar ruled this chieftaincy till he died at the ripe age in 1565. It is the tomb and fort of Mir Chakar Rind - or whatever is left of them - that curiously conscious and those interested in history come to see at Satghara. The fort is large. Actually the wall once encircled the entire village. Two gateways with flat bands and pointed arches still survive though badly damaged due to ravages of time. The wooden door panels have disappeared. With growth in population, the village has grown and spilled out of encircling wall long ago. Standing at a vantage point one can still feel antiquity permeating from the cluster of mud and brick houses inside the fortification wall. In some houses, one can see mythological and thematic murals of the Hindu period. On the periphery, the classical mud houses look nice.

Constructed of narrow red bricks, used in upright courses to ensure additional strength, the wall is 25 feet high and three feet thick. Some of its salient portions exist between the tomb and the first gateway. Despite the salinity and cracks creeping up the wall, the architectural feat seems to re-echo to the past memories. Beside one of the doorways, a sign has been posted announcing that the Archaeology Department protects the site. How seriously the 'warning sign' has been taken by the villagers can be seen all over the village. Red thin bricks excavated from the centuries old monument are found used in many spanking new houses in the village. At places the villagers have utilized the fortification wall as part of their houses. Major portion of the wall and what would have been the living quarters of the family of Mir Chakar Rind have been lost. The courtyard of the tomb has shrunk due to encroachments and presently it is being used as Shamlat deh (community center) for keeping the animals and elders to sit under the shadow of big pipal tree during lazy summer afternoons.

The followers who had accompanied Mir Chakar Rind to Satghara built the tomb after death of the hero. Today there is not a single Baloch living in the village. The neglected tomb is dilapidated and the surviving history is falling fast into decay. The main chamber of the once majestic and imposing tomb is octagonal in plan. The roof, decorative work and plaster have vanished. Cracks have snaked in all direction on the walls. The rainy water gathers in the roofless main chamber and stays there till sun dries it. The water is destroying the foundations of the crumbling edifice, which is gradually sinking in ground. There are seven rough mud graves inside the chamber. A small tablet distinguishes the central grave. It reads: Akhari Aaramgah, Mir Chakar (Khan) Rind, Satghara, Okara, Munjanib Yong Baloch Welfare Society, Ravi Road, Lahore. Even the name of the great hero on the tablet is not written correctly - having word Khan inserted quite unnecessarily. Similarly, the large plaque placed by the Archaeology Department needs improvement. The tomb was desecrated and its roof demolished by Maharaja Ranjit Singh who, on his way to Multan to fight against Nawab Muzafar, had stayed in Satghara about 150 years ago. It has never been repaired ever since. Governments, Archaeology Departments, visitors from all walks of life, police (there is a police station in the village), district administration, locals or Balochs, nobody seems to be concerned about the state of this important monument.

If one wants to absorb the sense of history, Satghara is a place to visit. One has to possess a sensibility shaped in granite not to be moved by the relics of past age, the monument of

departed greatness belonging to a celebrated hero who now rests helpless and neglected in this silent place, far removed from the noisy haunts of men. The first impact that this monument gives is an emotional one, for it is a sign of identity and a part of our history. It also has architectural, documentary, spiritual and symbolic values. In the vicinity, a few van (salvadora) trees, may be as old as the relics, stand witness to the bygone era. Swooping and cooing wild fowls and running squirrels also testify to the continuity of the human habitation in the area. Though not mentioned in the touristy literature, yet travelers who come to see the ruins in Harrappa (about 40 kilometers from Satghara) make to this monument village: to study the history, architecture and culture of the time when the monuments were built. The remains of the monument have to be preserved and saved from ruination, a danger they are facing at present.

As I drove back on a single way metallic road, plied mainly by animal transport and milkmen on the motorbikes, I could not help thinking: Can the plight of the priceless site be brought to the echelons of power? Can some national or international agency be moved to act and save the place for coming generations? We owe them this!

Shifts in Sher Garh

On the old bank of River Beas, Sher Garh is a Pakistani village where people live in the face of urban attractions. As per the history books, the village once boasted of Mud Fort and a grand mosque built during the time when Afghan Sher Shah Suri was consolidating his gains in this part of the world. Both the monuments have vanished. Only a small citadel gives an indication of the site of the mud fort and spanking new mosque has been built at the place where used to be an Afghan period mosque. The village claim to fame is the shrine of the Saint Muhammad Ibrahim Daud-e-Sani Kirmani.

Historic village Sher Garh lies about 20 Kilometers off the National Highway in the vicinity of old places like Pak Pattan, Dipalpur and Hujra Shah Moqueem. The Governor Multan, Fateh Jang Khan, gave the name Sher Garh after the name of Afghan King Sher Shah Suri. If one wants to absorb the sense of history, Sher Garh is a place to visit. Director Syed Noor has set his film Choriyan in the background of this village. One has to possess a sensibility shaped in granite not to be moved by the village of past age that has not changed much in last 400 years. In the periphery, few van (salvadora) trees, may be as old as the village, stand witness to the bygone era. The village is experiencing changes due to awareness and agricultural advancements, but at a snail speed.

Saint Muhammad Ibrahim is regarded as one of the foremost saints of central Punjab. His ancestors migrated from Kirman (Iran) and settled in Seet Pur (suburbs of Multan) where Muhammad Ibrahim was born. The family later moved to Sher Garh when Mir Chakar Rind was ruling in the area. Baloch hero Mir Chakar Rind having refused to help Sher Shah Suri joined Humayun when after a long exile Mughal emperor recaptured Delhi and ousted Afghan Suris in 1556. The emperor as a reward conferred a vast Jagir including Sher Garh (also, horses and slaves) upon him. He ruled this chieftaincy till he died in 1565.

Farishta has written, "Mir Chakar Rind was a holder of jagir and commanding hordes of warriors in Punjab." Muhammad Ibrahim completed his education in Basir Pur and Lahore. Contemporary of saints like Musa Pak Shaheed and Sher Shah of Multan, he got his spiritual blessings from Saint Syed Hamid Ganj Buksh in Uch Sharif before he set about preaching Islam in central Punjab. Komal Singh Maghyana, a famous landlord of his time who used to keep 1000 buffaloes (hence Maghyana) was one of the first who embraced Islam. Mulla Badayni wrote, "Hundreds of non Muslims used to convert to Islam on the hands of Muhammad Ibrahim every day." Sher Shah Suri built a fort in Rohtas against Ghakhars. But why his Governor Fateh Jang Khan built the mud fort near strongly defended and fortified places like Dipalpur and Pak Pattan? "It might have been built to guard against thieves and robbers", says Muhammad Abbas Kirmani, the direct descendent of the saint and present Gadi Nasheen. There is no trace of the fortification in the village. The mosque that was built in the middle of tenth century in the village was a fine specimen of Islamic architecture. It had large (100 x 25 feet) main chamber, five doors, five dooms and a wide compound with a well for abolition. The mosque had 30 feet high octagonal minaret in each corner. During the Sikh rule, the mosque was desecrated and damaged and it decayed completely in 1958. Now a new mosque has been built in red bricks at the same place. There used to be a library containing rare books and manuscripts, which too was destroyed by Sikh rulers.

Among the cluster of old and new houses inside the village is a dominating building of the shrine enclosed in a courtyard, which was constructed by Shah Abul Moa'ali _ the nephew of the saint. Upon entering the doorway to the shrine compound, I was taken aback at the sheer tranquility and beauty of the place. This grand edifice with solid masonry and ornate design wrought by artisans and artists centuries ago is one of the fine specimens of Muslim architecture. There are many graves of descendants and devotees and another smaller shrine in the enclosure. People were having food at lunger (community kitchen for free food) in one corner of the courtyard.

Constructed of narrow red bricks, used in upright courses to ensure additional strength, the shrine is located at the vantage point in the village. Being at the raised ground, it looks higher than its actual height. The fine quality of marble has been used outside whereas inside is decorated with intricate Kashi work. A devotee was reciting Holy Qura'an in the main chamber. The shrine is in the care and custody of the Auqaf. Though "the department has not been able to repair even the gold plated pinnacle that needs immediate attention. The family of the saint is actually looking after the shrine.

I managed to arrange an impromptu meeting with Muhammad Abbas Kirmani. A progressive farmer, who had graduated from Government Degree College Lahore in 1930, Muhammad Abbas is remarkably alert at the age of 84. Sitting inside blue and green room of his home adjacent to the shrine, Muhammad Abbas Kirmani told me about the family history. He also talked candidly about everything from agricultural policies to politics and from old customs to modern culture. I could not see the hand written Holy Qura'an, though. "It is taken out on the eve of annual Mela that is held on March 13," he said. Besides my differences of opinion on few of the things he said during our frank conversation, I was impressed by the amount of interest he had in variety of issues of the society, force of conviction in his arguments and intellect.

I shall have to go back to Sher Garh again. May be to see the annual Mela next March.

Oh Okara

The agricultural city derives its name from a tree known as 'Okaan'. During British period once Lahore - Multan railway line was being laid, there was a jungle of Okaan at this place, hence the name. Few van (salvadora) trees _ at the verge of extinction are also found in this part of the country. At the time of partition, one out of two textile mills that came as the share of Pakistan is in Okara. The city was declared district headquarters in 1982.

In 1930, Okara was famous agricultural market in the area. Presently, the Sabzi Mandi (fruit and vegetable market) handles sale of largest quantity of potatoes than any other market in the country. Muhammad Sarwar who is an arhti in Sabzi Mandi says, "Even the sheds are not being constructed." The committee has engaged only four ill-equipped sanitary workers for cleaning the market premises. We have employed our own sweepers and watchmen". Similarly, the Grain Market (with eight gates) is also situated in the city. It does not have any drainage system and water keeps on standing in the form of ponds.

But, the city now lacks grace. Keeping the sources of pollution in view, vehicles remain the second biggest pollutants in the world. The heavy traffic on the National Highway passing through thickly populated urban areas of Okara emits poisonous smoke and the air. In addition over 29000 rickshaws, wagons, buses, and trucks registered with traffic authorities are also plying in the city.

The city situated astride the busiest national highway faces a severe pollution problem. Karachi - Peshawar main railway line also passes through the city. Besides goods' trains 24 electric powered passenger trains pass over the main line daily. There are total four railway crossings to connect the two portions of the city on either side of the main railway track and National Highway. The fourth railway crossing although complete in all respect has yet not been opened for traffic. Railway under pass was constructed under one of the crossings. It submerges in water even in case of light shower and becomes a 'siphon' in rainy seasons. Deep water keeps on standing in the passage for days. The electric motors have been installed to pump out the water but they are not functioning.

SDO electricity of the area says, "The electric connection to the pumping station was provided in July 1997. Now it is the responsibility of railways to operate it". This case is a classic example of neglect, inefficiency, inter departmental bickering and bureaucratic sloth. The facility could have been made useful for the residents of the city if it was staffed and maintained properly. The standing water has taken the lives of three children in eight days in last monsoon season instead of providing relief to the sluggish traffic.

Completion of Jinnah Park was very festive for the residents of Okara but now it gives a repulsive look rather than that of a recreational place. On entering the majestic gate one realizes that the park is not being maintained. Result: polythene bags and wrappers are scattered everywhere, the grass has never been mowed, there are no flowers, and benches are broken and dusty.

A rehriwalla who sells 'Dahi Bhallay' in front of the park says, "on the average, I used to do

the business worth rupees 1500/- per day when the park was newly completed and all the lantern shaped lights were illuminating but now my sale has reduced to mere four to five hundred rupees a day. Nobody comes here after the last light".

Except few privileged places or points where people have installed their own bulbs, the city remains dark at night. Stray dogs, which are now proliferating unchecked, roam about in the dark streets. Many citizens have come to harm already. "The sewerage system for the city is neither sufficient nor it is working properly. It needs complete overhaul. The water that leaks from the underground sewer (and water supply) pipes is destroying the buildings by effecting their foundations", says a journalist Nasir Waheed. Riaz ul Muslemeen Colony, Ghaziabad, Seith Colony and Azimabad are worst effected by choked sewerage lines and over flowing gutters. Old methods, 308 sanitary workers and two tractor trolleys are not adequate to clean the overcrowded city. "Garbage generated by 300,000 residents should be handled efficiently", says Suba Khan who lives near railway station. A sweeper I saw working apathetically near Jinnah Park said, "I have 25 years of service with Municipal Committee and am being paid only rupees 2635/- per month. What do you expect me to do? Wonders." How true!

Socially Okara is not very lively place. People (who can afford) go to Lahore to celebrate the 'seasons'. Yet it is the only district headquarters in Punjab to have its own Arts Council. As per the law the Arts Councils are supposed to be in divisional Headquarters and Okara falls under Lahore division, thanks to one of the ex Chief Ministers Punjab who belongs to the area.

"What the city really needs is a Bypass so that the heavy traffic passing through the urban areas can be diverted", says Mukhtar Hussein who lives in Sirki Mohalla, a locality between the railway line and the highway. "The fast moving traffic plying on the road is a great hazard for citizens especially the children of adjoining areas besides causing air and noise pollution", he says. "All encroachments, particularly unsightly neon signs (they obscure more than they highlight) on the bifurcation in Sadar bazaar should be removed and environs of Gol Mosque be cleaned", wishes a shopkeeper of Sadar Bazaar. "Completion of 125 beds DHQ Hospital at 10 acres of land already acquired for the purpose should be given priority", demands a resident of Renala Khurd.

"All the great issues of small city remain unresolved and limited public resources are being sanctioned for mere show, without any love for the land, "says a social activist Zulfiqar Bajwa. " There is no single authority to oversee the growth of the city having excellent rail and road links with the rest of the country and ideally suited for live stock production and agronomic industries, "he says.

Slums of Sahiwal

Situated in Harappa-Pakpattan-Dipalpur triangle - cities inhabited since ancient times - the recorded history of present Sahiwal City starts with the beginning of British rule in the area. The only habitation here before the foundation of modern town was a small settlement of local Sahu (or Sahi) tribesmen called Sahiwal. This hamlet was selected as the district headquarters and renamed after then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab Sir Robert Montgomery when railways opened between Multan and Lahore.

Nothing much is known about Sahiwal prior to the colonial era started in the Subcontinent. After the Mughal power weakened, the area came under control of Kharral, Sial, Wattu and Sikh tribes who were engaged in constant clashes with each other. In 1849, the British formed the administrative districts in this part of the country and Sahiwal village became part of district with its headquarters at Pakpattan. Later, the district headquarters were moved to Gugera before they were shifted to Sahiwal in 1856. Later, Montgomery City got back its original name Sahiwal in 1966. The town started expanding with wild abandon due to unabated and unplanned rural to urban migration and increase in growth rate.

The population that was 2416 in 1868 mushroomed to 155,000 in 1981. Other than the slums and shanty localities, the principle buildings in the city today are the Central Jail, Church, Railway Station, Government Jinnah Public Library, Government Degree College, a couple of old havelis and a monumental arch (and park) known as Bab-e-Sahiwal. The monument and park are recently constructed but a dull plaque with historical details about the city shows the care and maintenance it has seen in the past. Rest of the city is a jungle of concrete with mixed residential and commercial structures.

And, slums seem to be abounding every vacant place in the city. Sahiwal City suffers from all the small problems associated with poverty and jobless youth with no openings or opportunities. The agricultural city is famous for best breeds of mammals like cows and buffaloes and growing cotton. It was also distinguished for its greenery. A city of poets (Majeed Amjad, Jafar Shirazi, Yasin Qudrat, Talib Jatoi), test cricketers (Mushtaq Ahmed, Manzoor Ilahi, Saleem Ilahi) and patriots like Abdul Aziz who made world 'Pakistani' as part of his name is turning gray from green. Initially the area where Sahiwal is situated was a desert bar that assumed fertile appearance after the irrigation system improved and Persian wheels changed into tube wells. Jand (Prosopis), Van (Salvadora) and Okkan trees used to be found in and around the city - now at the verge of extinction - were gradually replaced with the conventional trees. But, the trees that once covered the city are being cut on one pretext or the other. Majeed Amjad on seeing trees being cut on the bank of Lower Bari Doab Canal passing close to the city composed a famous verse: I feel that my arms, my legs and my head is being cut once I see green trees being chopped off. Sahiwal has been given twin city status with lush green city Rochdale in England.

The administration of Rochdale City has gifted a sewerage opener and a vehicle to the Sahiwal municipality, which was raised in 1867. But, sadly, the municipality has badly failed to keep the city clean with a truck, five tractor trolleys and an army of 300 sanitary workers. It seems that waste generated by the residents of the city is not lifted at all. It is found in the

shape of heaps everywhere and is thoroughly fermented. Similarly, the sewerage system in the city is higher than the city roads and streets. In case of rain the water stands like ponds on the roads and sweepers are seen removing the water from the roads with the help of containers.

The Bypass is hardly used by heavy traffic plying on the busiest road in the country. Reasons: the trucks pass through the city because truck addas are located inside the city astride National Highway and busses pass to lift and drop the passengers. This may be the only district headquarters in Pakistan without any intercity public transport system. You can use a sturdy Tonga or auto rickshaw for going from one place to the other. There are two bus terminals in Sahiwal. "Going from outer terminal to any place within the city is an ordeal", says an advocate Syed Waqar Ahmed Gilani. "During day it takes lot of time and at night I have to pay as much as rupees 45/- for going to Tariq Bin Ziad colony whereas I pay only rupees seven for coming to Sahiwal from my village", he adds.

Sahiwal today is a city of encroachments, mixed traffic and graffiti having no healthy social activities for its residents. Despite the fact that it is linked though rail and road with all parts of the country and ideally suited for agriculture-based industries and live stock production, yet the civic agencies and city planners appear to have made no effort to develop the stagnant economy. Even Harrapa, a great attraction for tourists, archaeologists and historians has not been restored to generate income in the age when tourism industry is booming in the entire world.

Traveling on Bike

While traveling, off the National Highway, not only you travel in soot free and serene environment but you see more too. Lately, I got a chance to explore the lush green plains of Punjab, riding my trusted old motorbike on Band Patri of Lower Bari Doab Canal (LBDC) from Sahiwal to Balloki Headworks. Many new and interesting things came in the way, which normally remain hidden from commuters on the National Highway or travelers in the area. The journey embraces you with lovely colors, atmosphere, people and bits and pieces of history. And, there is no hassle anywhere in the way.

I took the side route and got onto the LBDC from Sahiwal, the city famous for greenery and best breed of mammals. The first thing along the LBDC that attracted my attention was Mandi Maweshian (animal market) near Okara _ one of the largest in the country. It is a complete bazaar where a large number of fine quality animals changes hand every month. You can find makeshift hotels (with arrangements for night stay), veterinary doctors, milk and fodder shops and even provision stores. "It is a complete market that keeps moving from one place to another as per its permanent schedule," told me an astute manager, who establishes a hotel wherever the market goes. "We have buoparis (businessmen) from Karachi to Peshawar, local farmers as well as people working in the market as our customers," he added. Another shopkeeper told, "Farmers sell their live stock here and buy provisions for their homes." The market has its own unique culture.

Next in the way comes one of the biggest fruit farms in Asia that was planted in 1933. Visiting the farm is a tranquil experience. Besides factories making large variety of products, a beautiful humming bird that appears on the logo of the farm's products dwells freely in the vast orchards attesting to its unpolluted environment. A rare flying ability of the bird enables it to hover, rise, move backwards and descends like helicopter. The bird usually feeds hovering suspended with air. Though not a keen bird watcher but I was surprised to know that "the small living avis can consume liquid up to eight times and solid about half of its body weight." Leaving the farm, you hit one of the first Hydroelectric Power Stations constructed in the Subcontinent. Sir Ganga Ram, an Engineer and famous Philanthropist had built this Power Station in 1925 in order to irrigate about 70,000 acres of agricultural land that is higher than the normal level in the area and could not be irrigated through the LBDC. Ganga Ram forked the canal, built the Power Station and installed five motors to generate electricity. The Governor Punjab, Sir William Malcolm Hailey laid down its foundation stone on March 22, 1925. Engineer in charge of the station Mr. Iqbal explained the working of the station and briefed about its excellent performance despite the old vintage. The Power Station is not linked with National Electric Grid and provides electricity for the five pumping stations for lifting the water from the LBDC.

The Power Station remained with Power and Works Department till 1958 when it was taken over by WAPDA. Why not more hydroelectric station in the country? The question keeps coming back to my mind.

First sight of the Power Station reminded me of Venice City. The building seems to be floating on water. The canal is covered with trees up and down stream. There is a small white

mosque inside the canal in front of the station building. Green area adjoining the station is very restful.

Just about three Kilometers from Renala, you see a huge colonial ere mansion standing tall in the fields. This used to be headquarters of the Renala Estate _ the land leased by Major D. H. Venrenen in 1913 on the condition of horse breeding (ghori pall). The company had been producing very fine breed of horses in the past. Villa, a symbol of past glory _ is still owned by the family of landlady T. F. L. Taylor. That is the place from where my real 'hardship by choice' started.

I was traveling on a rural route, seeing the path but not knowing what was coming next. Not knowing what one is going to see ahead is sometime inspiring. But, about 11 Kilometers from Power Station, rear tyre of my bike went flat. There was no place in sight from where I could get it fixed. Advised by Chragh Din, a local, I waited for the 'help' to come and we talked.

Chragh Din, relaxed and amiable old man who was fishing asked about my destination, purpose of journey and why I was traveling on a bike. He did not seem convinced with my answers once I told him that I am traveling just to see the area. He was surprised instead. I enjoyed talking to him though. He was so candid and frank about everything he said.

Mechanical and animal transport, plying on Pakistani highways and roads has almost equal right of the way. But, I was greatly pleased once a Tonga appeared on a track coming out of sugarcane and blooming mustard fields. I loaded my bike on the back and rode a sturdy Tonga to reach Akhtarabad _ the nearest place on National Highway with vulcanization facilities. It took me three hours to get on to my way to Balloki headworks.

As harvest approaches, the traveler, especially in the irrigated tracts, ride through endless expanses of waving crops of different shades of color, out of which the villages seem to rise like islets in an ocean of green. After the harvest all is changed: the dull brown of the fields is relieved by the trees, solitary or in groves and avenues, and by the hamlets and village ponds.

Near Balloki Headworks on River Ravi, one passes through a wide water reservoir that looks like a lake. In winters, this lack is full of native waterfowls. Flocks of Wild Ducks, Cranes, Strokes and black winged Stilts are the commonest sights in the area. Though at the dusk of the sunny winter day I could only see few Tobas hovering over their evening catch and few flocks of Murghabis (wild ducks). The fish kababs at Balloki Headworks are a specialty and culinary delight. I had a dinner break at Balloki, treated myself with fish kabab - fresh from the river - and moved to National Highway for onwards journey to Lahore via more familiar route.

When in Patoki, Say it With Flowers

Flowers bring people together. Blossoms can fuel a flaming passion, calm a raging jealousy, comfort a living being or earn a living. Presenting flowers or sticking a flower in someone's hair or on lapel is a romantic and cherished social folkway. Aside from romantic and literary delights, there is commerce in flowers too. Now florists are seen in posh neighborhoods in most big cities. In Lahore, from single rose to bouquets are on sale on every corner. Rates of flowers vary from customer to customer and from time to time. Where the flowers come from?

Patoki town is famous for flower growing and has one of the 'biggest clusters of flower, fruit and decorative plant nurseries in the country. Growing flowers and tree plants and selling is a major business concern in the sleepy town situated in the suburbs of Lahore. Town famous for flowers all over the country is dusty with all problems of small towns: power outages, water shortages, lack of sanitation and management. Single bazaar in Patoki where one can buy most utility items is congested due to excessive encroachments of all sorts. Residential area in town is a mixed cluster of houses widely varying in size, style and quality. But, you cannot see many flowers grown in Patoki nurseries in the houses. Instead, people keep their cows, buffaloes and goats in the streets. "It is muddy in rainy season and 'dust bin' when not raining. The only good thing that has happened to our town in last couple of decades is construction of a bypass, which has relieved the inhabitants of heavy traffic that used to pass through the residential area day and night," says a resident. Leave a typical Punjabi rural market town by road and it is like sailing through the ocean of green. All those who drive on soot choked and congested National Highway between Lahore and Sahiwal are familiar with over one kilometer lush green and fragrant stretch of nurseries on either side of the road on the edge of the town. Aside from the fragrance of the wares, the traders offer variety of flower, creepers, decorative bushes, ornamental and fruit tree plants, flowerpots and seeds. 'How to grow' flower books even if you have no space in your home are also available. I saw a few breeding greenhouses on the roadside and hundreds of rows of crossbred blossoms on spring morning. Budding flowers, sprouting of new leaves and fluttering butterflies are things of joy.

It all started when a migrated family settled here after partition in 1947. Two brothers set up a small nursery along the roadside. The concern started growing with the passage of time. Later, the family grew large and divided the business assets, which resulted in more nurseries as a family business. Afterwards, more and more people started growing and selling flowers and now Patoki town has earned its claim to national fame for growing flowers and decorative plants.

Despite having potential for becoming a recognized industry, flower trade in Patoki is still a family business. "Rose plants grown in Patoki are sent to places as far as Quetta," told Mubarik Ali, a proprietor of a well-laid nursery, "but what keep us going are commuters on the National Highway who stop by and purchase flower or fruit plants for their home gardens. Or when we get a large order from some five star hotels or a multinationals based in Lahore to provide them grown flowers plants (in pots) for any special event. We deliver them the flowers, indoor plants, shrubs and even creepers in pots and the landscape experts and

interior decorators arrange them for the display on the site." Besides growers and traders, large number of people is associated with this trade: pot makers, gardeners, and laborers. Artistic flowerpots are also displayed for sale on the roadside. This is another complimentary industry that has come up in town. Making flowerpots (also household utensils) is a traditional and useful craft practiced all over rural Pakistan. They are made of simple clay and backed with dung cakes in a local bhathi (oven).

Another flower grower Mian Khan told about beautiful tradition that has matured with the cooperation of his nursery in a nearby village Thatta Ghulamka where German volunteers are working on different poverty alleviation projects. In the village every newly married couple is presented a fruit tree whereas parents of every newborn get flower tree by the community based NGO Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama. Result: the blooming bougainvillea and fruit trees have been planted in courtyards of each home of the village.

Flowers have become an international trade item. An international report reads, "American alone now spend 15 billion dollars on flowers and plants per year. Columbia produces robust flowers. In 1998, only oil surpassed flowers in Columbian export revenues. Germans nurture special passions for roses and the country has become world's top flower importer. Kenya has become a major exporter from Africa." Nature being on the side of agricultural Pakistan, flowers can be one of the best sources of earning for Pakistan. We have potential markets in Middle East and some European countries to start with.

"The best marketing strategy for agriculturists cum businessmen associated with flower trade in Patoki is that each large nursery should specialize in particular kinds of flowers and should have brand names. The farmers should switch over from traditional crops like wheat and sugarcane to flowers. The government should encourage flower growers and make special arrangements for packing and shipment of delicate product by air from Lahore," says marketing expert Dr. Irfan Malik. But Mubarik Ali says that this needs funds and developed infrastructure. There is a requirement of research center where agricultural scientist can work on growing new and more productive varieties in all weather conditions.

Mud Architecture

Revival of traditional architecture in Pakistan

The future lies in mud architecture. Though this sweeping statement may sound prehistoric, but it is very relevant to modern times. Building living spaces with mud is a tradition dating as back as the start of civilization. Some excellent examples from the Great Mosque - the world's largest mud building and UNESCO's World Heritage site – to the oldest surviving mud specimens found in the Harappa, Pakistan, show the continuous use of mud buildings.

Having grown up in mud house myself (before I moved to urban center), mud buildings have a special place rooted deep in to my cultural consciousness and this personal bond encourages a more intimate relationship between me and the mud as the material transformed from formlessness to form. Hence my interest in mud architecture and how I see its future in Pakistan.

Why use Mud? Mud – a mixture of earth and water - is economical, practical, functional and attractive. It is easy to work with, and it takes decoration well. Mud is especially useful in humid and hot climates like we have in Pakistan. Mud is a natural material that is found in abundance, especially where other building materials such as bricks, stone or wood are scarce due to affordability and or availability. In Pakistan, use of mud has evolved from local necessity. Which is why the use of extremely sticky mud deposited found along river banks or elsewhere in Pakistan combined with appropriate technology makes an excellent material to build functional and climate friendly buildings?

Work has already started and many experts are critically analyzing the more purposeful use of mud as a building material. Dr. Gus Van Beek of the Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History is working on a book in which he is examining methods of construction and varieties of designs in contemporary as well as ancient structures found at many places. Dr. Gus Van Beek's research started when he uncovered arch and vault construction at Tel Jemmeh, Israel. Dr. Gus Van Beek is covering major types of construction in Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, Israel, Syria, Iraq, Iran, India and Pakistan.

At local level, Society for the Promotion of Art and Culture (SPARC), registered in Lahore since 1994, is undertaking the task of revival of much needed mud architecture in Pakistan. SPARC is holding workshops at different art and architecture institutions in order to restart the traditional building with mud in rural as well as urban areas of Pakistan. These workshops will not only create awareness and initiate a thought process at grass roots level but will also train SPARC employees in mud architecture. Dr. Norbert Pintsch from Senior Expert Service (Bonn, Germany) is planning to present new techniques of mud building to adapt the construction technique mixed with appropriate technology in Pakistan.

Prof Dr Norbert Pintsch is an experienced architect by profession and mud enthusiast by choice. Since completing first building project as an architect at the age of 18, Prof Dr Norbert Pintsch has been in various activities as an architect and civil engineer all his life. One of the best starting points for Prof Dr Norbert Pintsch may be a mud building that stands in Peerzada Festival Area, Green Acre, Lahore. Renowned Pakistani architect like Ghayyoor Obaid are also keen on mud architecture there. Any other example that I know of is remains

of Sher Shah Suri built mud fort in historic village Sher Ghar near Okara.

The mud architecture is a great resource that focuses on architecture constructed of mud brick, rammed earth, compressed earth block and other methods of earthen construction. The proliferation of concept to use mud and improved techniques in order to raise the level of living in the population is a very welcome idea and we in Pakistan need that. This can go a long way not only in the form of changing the look of population centers, rural as well as urban, but also in solving environmental problems and problems related to use of energy and other finite resources.



Dolls
Village

Dolls and toys changing a rural community

Village Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka - a cluster of mud and brick houses - looks like any typical Pakistani village. The fact is that awareness, community work and use of appropriate technology has changed the village all together. Influence from Indus civilization from nearby Harappa and modern techniques brought by use of appropriate technology can be seen in the village together.

The toys and handicrafts made in the village are on display in international museums, prestigious galleries and showrooms in Pakistan and abroad. Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka (TGD) got an international fame when village project Thatta Kedona (meaning toy from Thatta) was selected as one of the 767 worldwide projects presented in the "Themepark" at global expo in Hannover (Germany) as an example of thinking of twenty first century. The toys and handicrafts from TGD show how culture goes beyond simple work of art and becomes collaboration among applied and natural sciences as well as other forces that affect our lives.

Thatta Kedona is a project, first of its kind, in rural area where handmade quality toys are crafted using all indigenous materials and traditional designs based on cultural and folklore themes. The workmanship of the dolls and toys has acclaimed international recognition through their participation in numerous international events, exhibitions, fairs and displays. These toys are the embodiment of dreams, hopes and most of all self-reliance of the hands, which breathe a part of their own soul into them.

How all this started? It was just a coincidence that in 1992, Professor Dr. Norbert Pintsch and Dr. Senta Siller, two German volunteers, visited TGD that is situated in backwater of Punjab some 80 kilometers from Lahore and 40 kilometers from Harappa. Both Germans were impressed by the natural and simple rural life in the village and decided to work for the rural community.

Chain of events started; community based Woman Art Centre with an aim to involve local womenfolk in productive, creative and healthy income generating activities opened in TGD in 1992. At the same time, Dr. Norbert Pintsch – an architect by profession - established Technology Transfer and Training Centre (TTTC) for men. These activities created awareness and built confidence among the village folks and they started making dolls and toys on self-help biases that are marketed all over the world and earnings come to the villagers who make them.

Thatta Kedona is a holistic project. Handicraft is in the spot on the stage but the project has a cultural philosophy. In addition to active use of appropriate technology, work in all other fields {education, agriculture, hydrogeology (drinking water project), public health, economy (marketing, distribution), tourism and communication} is in practice.

TTTC is concentrating on improved agricultural techniques and creating other suitable jobs for men right in the village – all carpenters, blacksmiths and tailors are profitably involved in production of toys. "The goals of the project are self-help activities at a grass roots levels, holistic village development, empowerment of women, income generation, literacy and

vocational training, says Dr. Norbert Pintsch – an untiring worker who is fondly called Chaudhry Norbert in the village. The philosophy working behind this selfless work is "preservation of cultural heritage, reduction of migration to cities by generating additional income in the village as the future lies in the rural areas," he adds.

Dolls from TGD in authentic attires of the specific tribes, communities and areas and thematic toys tempt tourists and diplomats. Foreigners collect these dolls as a souvenir of the time they spent in Pakistan. "During last ten years, TGD tin rickshaws have travelled to so many different countries. Tin "Tin rickshaws sit in the ambassadors' residences not only in Islamabad, but accompany them to the next and second next postings. I have met TGD dolls in the Japanese ambassador's home in Jakarta and also in the German embassy in Damascus," tells Dr. Norbert Pintsch with pride and pleasure. "Part of the artists goes wherever the toys go," says Razia a young artist from the village. Each toy has a small plate attached carrying the name of its maker.

Thatta Kedona, in addition to producing dolls, toys and other cultural handicrafts has been a centre of learning since its inception. Students from different universities have been visiting Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka for research, orientation and or for sightseeing. Last month (April 2010), three groups of students from two different universities in Lahore visited the village and "spent time relating to the traditional culture in its most original form," said Saima Khan, a student from one of the universities.

Work of Dr. Norbert Pintsch and other volunteers that come here has not only moved the people of area but also raised a spacious and simple building for the Women Art Centre and TTTC. Now there are as many as 120 women from the age of 24 to40 working in both the centers making dolls dressed in regional (Punjabi, Sindhi, Pathan, Balochi, Kashmiri and Kalash) embroider costumes, miniatures, hand knitted shawls, tin rickshaws and trucks and other toys and earning their living. They are making their own lives better and strengthening their families. "They (women) are moving towards true equality and independence" says a doll maker who has twelve year of schooling, is married in this village and working in the Centre.

Village TGD is changing in the process. The relative prosperity is visible. TGD was the first village in Punjab to have its own solar power house a decade ago and it is still working. Villagers are putting their children, particularly the girls in school. The Woman Art Centre is also playing a part in the well being of the villagers. The Centre has provided furniture and educational training aids to the two government primary schools (one for girls and the other for boys) in village and has also opened a well equipped basic health care centre. Books are distributed among students every year. Fruit and flower trees are given to residents for their court yards and they are encouraged to grow their own kitchen gardens. Best of all, annual quality of life competition is held in the village when best mud houses and brick houses are selected in different categories. Owners of mud houses have lucrative incentives and they keep their homes in spanking condition and well maintained all the year. This alone has changed the look of the entire village. The Toy Village has entered a new era with the start of the Internet Radio Project in the beginning of 2010. The idea of the Internet Radio originated from influx of visitors and their interests since early 90s. Now the local and focused information can be spread effectively with the Internet-Radio.

This seems to be one of the very convincing evidence of what a community can do together; lack of resources notwithstanding. No?

Dolls of the World

Reach of the idea that took birth in Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka

The idea behind Dolls of the World took birth when Thatta Kedona - a self help project - started in small Pakistan village Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka back in 1999. Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka, internationally famous as the Doll Village, is a small hamlet in the backwaters of Punjab (80 Kilometers from Lahore near Okara). Residents of the (TGD) lead simple rustic life.

First of its kind, Thatta Kedona is a project in Pakistan where handmade quality dolls and toys are crafted using all indigenous material and traditional designs based on cultural and folklore themes. The workmanship of the dolls and toys has acclaimed international recognition through international networking with international events, exhibitions, fairs and display at International Doll Museum Iceland and Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Kultur, Germany. These toys are the embodiment of dreams, hopes and most of all self-reliance of the hands, which breathe a part of their soul into them.

This is a holistic project. Handicraft is in the spot on the stage but the project has a cultural philosophy. Education, science, agriculture, hydrogeology (drinking water projects), appropriate technology (men center with around 18 young men), public health (basic health unit with 7 ladies), economy (income generation), tourism and communication, are all in practice.

How all this started? A Pakistan student in Germany, Amjad Ali who is a native of village Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka invited his German teachers Dr. Senta Siller to visit his village back home. Dr. Senta Siller along with Dr. Norbert Pintsch came to the village where they were presented a doll made by a local woman. Dr. Senta Siller was impressed by the doll and liked the natural and simple village life. She decided to work for the village and started a community based Woman Art Centre in there in 1992. The aim of this centre is to involve local womenfolk in productive, creative and healthy income generating activities in consonance with village culture.

For men Dr. Norbert Pintsch established Technology Transfer and Training Centre. This created awareness and built confidence among the village folks and they started making dolls and toys on self-help bases that are marketed all over the world. The two senior German experts (Dr. Senta Siller, Dr. Norbert Pintsch) and countless other foreign volunteers are working tirelessly and the vibrant rural community in Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka is benefiting in the process.

"Self-help activities at a grass roots level, holistic village development, empowerment of women, income generation, literacy and vocational training are the goals of this project," says Dr. Norbert Pintsch. "The philosophy of project is preservation of cultural heritage, reduction of migration to cities by creating additional income in the village, future is in the rural areas," he adds.

Thatta Kedona is quite different in nature as compared to other similar institutions: Help and support is provided to the people within the countryside, because if the villagers earn some

money, they are not forced to move to the cities, which are already overburdened with many problems.

Thatta Kedona has grown multidimensional over time. Now Thatta Kedona cooperates with six local NGOs all over Pakistan from Karachi to Hunza and in many countries around the globe. In Pakistan, the project also enjoys cooperation of prestigious educational institutions – Bahaud Din Zakriya University Multan, Indus Valley School for Art and Architecture, Karachi, School of Visual Art, Lahore, Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi – interested in heritage, culture and or agriculture.

Women from other countries heard about the success of the project in Pakistan through DGFK (German Cultural Preservation Society) newsletters and other media channels as well as through word of mouth (mostly from diplomatic corps housewives) and invited Dr. Senta Siller – honorable mother of dolls as she is called - to start similar projects in their countries. In Cameroon, three independent NGOs — Akwatinnighah (1998), Akaanhong (2002) and Center of Appropriate Technology in (2001) are working where over 90 persons are involved in handicrafts and appropriate technology with support from Bamenda University of Science Technology, Bamenda.

Dr. Senta Siller and Dr. Norbert Pintsch also started Tanto Mejor Por La Paz, Saboya in Colombia in cooperation with four independent local NGOs in 1999. Over 60 persons are busy in handicraft with collaboration from Dept of Environment Technology National University in Bogate and Thatta Kedona.

In addition, Thatta Kedona has networked with International Dolls Museum Flateyri, University of Reykjavik in Iceland and Benaki Museum Greece. In UAE-Dubai, Thatta Kedona is participating in Global Village Expo every year since 2001. In Germany, besides most German senior experts coming to Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka, Dolls of the World project has support from Institute for Planning and Consulting, Potsdam.

This international community of likeminded people has come a long way since it started back in 1991. Anyone who visits the Doll Village can see the changes on ground and in the air and waves the project is creating around the world.



German Connections

Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, Dr. Ruth Pfau, Dr. Senta Siller

Some people live for others. Three honorable German ladies have been living in Pakistan and working to make the life of others better. People of Pakistan passionately recognize the services of these honorable ladies.

Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel (April 7, 1922 - January 26, 2003) was a well known and very influential German scholar who wrote over 500 books and left deep impression on the people of Pakistan.

Annemarie Schimmel received a doctorate in Islamic languages and civilization from the University of Berlin at the age of nineteen. At twenty-three, she became a professor of Arabic and Islamic studies at the University of Marburg (Germany), where she earned a second doctorate in the history of religions. A turning point in her life came in 1954 when she was appointed Professor of the History of Religion at the University of Ankara (Turkey). There she spent five years teaching in Turkish and immersing herself in the culture and mystical tradition of the country. She was a faculty member at Harvard University from 1967 to 1992 and became Professor Emeritus upon her retirement. She was also an honorary professor at the University of Bonn. She published more than 50 books on Islamic literature, mysticism and culture, and translated Persian, Urdu, Arabic, Sindhi and Turkish poetry and literature into English and German.

For her work on Islam, Sufism or mysticism and Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the government of Pakistan honored her with Hilal-e-Imtiaz. She was showered with many other awards from many countries of the world, including the prestigious Peace Prize of the German book trade.

Similarly, Dr. Ruth Katherina Martha Pfau (77 years), commonly known in Pakistan as Leprosy Lady is the founder of the Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre Karachi and leprosy adviser to federal government. She has spent more than half of her life helping the leprosy patients in Pakistan, a country that is now her own.

"The intensity with which she has worked towards the alleviation of suffering in the northern areas of Pakistan has not changed since the day it began. Subsequently, she moved her efforts to the northern areas of Pakistan, basing herself in Muzaffarabad. Since the Oct 8 earthquake, she has been focusing all her efforts on providing for those still suffering from the disaster," reads a citation.

The government of Pakistan has conferred Sitari-e-Quaid-i-Azam upon Dr. Ruth Pfau to recognize her selfless work for people in our country.

Annemarie Schimmel had been working in Pakistan in the field of Literature, Dr Ruth Pfau works in Medicine and the third German lady Dr. Senta Maria Anna Siller is working in rural

areas of Pakistan to create additional income through self help projects.

Dr. Senta Maria Anna Siller (71 years) studied Graphic Design at the School of Art in Berlin. She did her MA in Archaeology, Philosophy and Education and received a degree of doctorate in History of Arts from the Technical University of Berlin. She served as lecturer and later as Deputy Head of an Art School in Berlin.

Earlier, she earned her first money with silhouettes and illustrations, which along with design became her passion for life. Besides bringing up four children, she continued various activities as a designer (for exhibitions and fairs, children's clothes, toys and book illustrations) and ran a textile company before she came to Pakistan for the first time in 1965.

After having left civil service and design consultancy, Dr. Senta Siller became honorary manager of self help project in rural Pakistan in 1993 [also in Cameroon (in 1998) and in Colombia (in 1999)]. Main country of her activities is Pakistan from where she is networking with other projects in different countries.

Dr. Senta Siller has organized over five hundred exhibitions, shows and events for income generation for women in rural areas. The focus of her work is "Income generation as a tool of help for self help, poverty alleviation on grass roots level by ethnic applied arts, the future is in the rural areas and how income generation is necessary there, production of internationally marketable unique and thematic handicraft, eco technology for the independence from central solutions, and the use of communication and information solutions giving chances and opportunities to the people in the rural areas and promotion of rich traditional culture of Pakistan."

Civil servant appointed for life, Dr. Senta Siller has been conferred different awards like "Floriade" (the Netherlands), "Gestaltetes Spielgut" (Creative Toys-German Toy Industry), "Bundesverdienstkreuz" (highest civil order of merit of the Federal Republic of Germany) to name a few. Pakistan recognizes her relentless and untiring work in the field of income generation for rural women through self help projects.

Making difference in lives of others is a great accomplishment. I am returning back a part of what life has bestowed upon me," says Dr. Senta Siller.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Long trail of heritage

Pakistan, a young nation forged in the crucible of one of the world's oldest civilizations possesses a unique heritage. It is one region in the world where a complete cultural profile from the Stone Age to the Islamic period exists in some form or the other. The archeological treasures the glory and grace of civilization of the past, and they badly need attention for their preservation and protection before they disappear forever. Pakistan's heritage consists of archeological remains, monuments, settlements, individual buildings, trade routes, mountain passes and works of arts. These tangible cultural assets are of great historic, archeological, architectural and artistic merit.

There is a wide range of practical reasons why the historical buildings and monuments should be preserved. The built heritage have both aesthetic and economic values: they stimulate inquiry, business enterprise, and social, religious, research, and academic interest. They provide recreational enjoyment for resident and visitors alike, and they serve as places of residence. A country's heritage also provides insight into the social, political, economic, cultural and technical forces and values that have fashioned it. The economic benefits and financial costs associated with conserving and preserving heritage features can be measured.

Sadly, the condition of built heritage of the country is not very satisfactory. Reasons: lack of physical and financial resources to maintain and conserve them. Which is why many have deteriorated and even decayed? Of great concern is the fact that these national resources, if and when they do receive attention are largely dealt in isolation. The more important dimension – the area conservation – is not there in Pakistan.

The nature of the forces at work either favoring or diminishing the continued existence of the heritage resources is of the paramount importance. In Pakistan's case these forces are largely negative. The nation's built heritage is decaying naturally, and that deterioration is being accelerated by human activities. The causes are rooted deep in economic, social, educational, political and legislative activities. Past policies have focused on industrial and economic growth at the cost of environmental issues and the quality of life. Natural resources have been indiscriminately exploited, resulting in ecological imbalances with detrimental effects upon the country's built heritage. Industrialization, irrigation system, deforestation, and urbanization have also taken their toll.

But there are examples of excellent conservation work too. Nice jobs have been done in shrine of Shah Rukn-e-Alam and Services Club in Multan. Renovation of some of the Sikh Gurdwaras and Hindu Mandirs dotted around Pakistan is also good example of conservation of historic buildings. But much more remains to be done.

Existing policies for the preservation of built heritage in Pakistan and province of Punjab are framed by two pieces of legislation: -

a. The Antiquities Act 1975. This act supersedes the Ancient Monument Act 1904, and is administered by Government of Pakistan. The act provides for the listing of historic monuments and sites as protected monuments, the preservation of demolition, alteration and

the erection of new developments within 200feet, with penalties and fines or imprisonment for infringements and the preparation and implementation of repair schemes funded by the Federal Government.

b. The Punjab Special Premises (Preservation) Ordinance, 1985. The ordinance is administered by the Department of Archeology, Government of Punjab. This ordinance has similar provisions as the Antiquities Act.

Once an important and dignified town in the plans of the Central Punjab, Gogera today is only a shabby and sleepy suburb of Okara on the bank of river Ravi on Okara Faisalabad Road. (Fasilabad was founded by Lieutenant Government Punjab, Sir James Lyall in 1896. The plan of Fasilabad was prepared on the pattern of British flag by sir Ganga Ram, a civil engineer, town planner and renowned philanthropist). Gogera town still boasts its importance when it was British power center and district headquarters from 1852 to 1865 and the part played by the resilient people of the area during War of Independence in 1857. The stories of the war that was fought around Gogera echo in the pages of history books.

On May 13, 1857, the news of British military actions at Mian Mir (Lahore) reached Gogera that set off the chain of events. As a result of what happened in Lahore, Ahmad Khan Kharal and his companions broke Gogera central Jail on the night of July 26, 1857. Deputy Commissioner Elphinstone and Extra Assistant Commissioner Gogera Berkley (locals pronounce bar killy) fought the people of the area. Many adjoining villages including Jhamra - village of Ahmed Khan Kharral - were burnt and innocent people killed in search of Ahmed Khan Kharral and other freedom fighters. Troops and artillery guns from Lahore and Multan Garrisons also reinforced the Gogera based British army. British suffered heavy losses including killing of Berkley. Save the last resting place of Berkley, there is nothing much left on ground that could be associated with the War of Independence or bring back the memories of the days gone by. Signs of the grave of Barkley are also fading fast. British government should consider building a monument like an obelisk built at Killa Kohna Qasim Bagh in Multan or in village Chelianwalla (not to be confused with Jallianwala Bagh) in district Mandi Bahauddin, both constructed in the memory of British officers who were killed there.

The circumferential walls of a Christian colonial cemetery housing the last resting-place of Lord Berkley can also be seen neglected ever since. The British Government had allotted agricultural land to the local trustees for upkeep of the cemetery but they could not preserve this important historic sign. "The parameter had been used to keep the animals in the past," told my host Alam Sher, a photographer and social activist who accompanied me during the field survey of the area. I asked many locals but nobody could indicate the place where used to be Gogera Central Jail.

The history of any building begins from the first day of its creation, sometimes even earlier than that. It continues through its long life to the present day. A historic building has an artistic and human message, which can be revealed by the study and exploration of its history. A complexity of ideas and of cultures may be said to encircle a historic building and be reflected in it - Architectural Style – Gogera Fort

An old building - a British court - that reminds of the colonial period has been converted into a school. The verandas of the old building with round arches have been clogged to create additional rooms and red thin bricks are covered with coats of whitewash. It was much better if the building could have been conserved in its original shape. That does not seem possible

now.

Just in front of the school is dilapidated and crumbling Gogera Fort with its round corners towers. There are few rooms and an old Bakhshi Khana inside the fort. Who built the Fort and when is not known. Legend has it that it was built before the Mughal era. UNESCO experts associated with Lahore Fort say, the Fort is at least 400 years old." May be it was built by any of the chieftains in the area as a private safe house. The British used the place as a treasury and also to keep the prisoners before and after appearing in the court.

The architects of the Fort used mainly brick. In the absence of fine stone, which was not readily accessible in this part of the world, brickwork of remarkable quality was produced. Presently, the brickwork has been covered with mud plaster and coats of white wash at places. The broad and thin bricks like those used by the roman builders have been used. To ensure additional strength, bricks are used in upright courses in four lofty and rolling battlements of the Fort - like huge chimneys in each corner (Corner towers have about 7.8 meters circumference. The walls of the towers are 60 centimeters thick). There is a guard post in front of the western gateway, which is used as main entrance to the property.

The barracks along the parameter walls have vanished. The treasury room inside the complex is still intact and is being used as a living room these days. The huge bargad (banyan) tree in the compound is an abode of squirrels and common birds. There is also a water well in the courtyard on which electric pump has been installed that serves as a source of drinking water for the residents. Sitting in the shade of old tree, one may think about the secrets hidden in the monument, which we are poised to lose forever, if due attention is not paid to it soon.

After the British rule, partition in 1947 once again changed the socio-economic order. Historically, all properties that fell in the hands of the emigrants from India were allowed to seed and disintegrate. Since independence Gogera Fort has been home of the family that migrated from India. But the family has not been able to keep the fort's lore. Agricultural family occupying the fort is not even aware of historic, symbolic or aesthetic values of the building that is their home.

A road bifurcates towards north from Gogera town and leads to village Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka (TGD) in the backwaters of the Punjab. The village has become famous all over the world for dolls and toys made here by village folks. Volunteers from German NGO DGFK are working in this village since 1992. Aside from locals, large numbers of foreigners interested in rural culture, social work and poverty alleviation, and experts in different fields of human activities come to this village and pass by the grand building of Gogera Fort. Community based local NGO Anjuman-e-Fala-e-Aama is working in cooperation with DGFK under direct supervision of two full time volunteers Dr Senta Siller and Dr Norbert Pintsch.

The idea of the conservation of the Gogera Fort and turning into a monument not only for the foreigners who frequent this area but also for next generations has become one of the active concerns of the NGO. Norbert Pintsch, Volunteer Project Director Technology Transfer and Training Center for Men in TGD, an Architect by profession and social worker by choice is taking keen personal interest in this project.

Importance of Gogera Fort is Multidimensional. Its conservation should include all

necessary actions (by specialists only) to enhance and perpetuate the life and existence of the Fort. The purpose of this noble endeavourer is to retain, as far as possible, the history, the traditions and cultural values being presented by this archetype to those who use and look at it with wonder.

NGO Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama [registered under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961 (XLVI of 1961) at Lahore, vide Government of the Punjab, Directorate of Social Welfare Registration Number DDSW-LD/92-405 of March 17, 1992] has deep roots in the area and is equipped with expertise and knowledge. The NGO has earned trust due to its transparent work and sincerity of purpose. Aside from turning Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka into a model village, the NGO can turn the idea of Gogera Fort as a useful monument into a reality.

A partnership will be needed to mobilize all resources: international agencies, foreign governments, NGOs and private sector. UNESCO and ICOMOS are involved in technical assistance and publicity rather than direct financial aid. The Gattey Organization, Agha Khan Foundation and various western governments have had long-term involvement in monuments all over the world. Financial assistance of Norwegians for conservation and preservation of the Sikh Imam Dean Tomb near Peshawar, technical assistance of Oxford Brookes University (UK) in completing documentation of various historic buildings in Pakistan or long term German involvement in the monuments of Baktapur, Nepal are some examples in this regards. Public departments may be approached for technical assistance, grant of protected status and improvement in infrastructure in the form of roads and telephone.

In such projects it is generally accepted that there will be some measure of cost recovery, so that the customers 'pay as they use' the facility (entry fee, may be).

The Gogera Fort is a personal property of the family. The family also own agricultural land around the Fort. This fact makes (in a way) obligatory to involve the owners in the conservation and later management plans of the Fort.

There are number of national and international institutions, which may be involved in matters relating conservation of historic fort. Some of the institutions that can help are:

a. National

- Department of Archeology, government of Pakistan
- Department of Archeology, government of Punjab.
- Auqaf Department, Punjab
- Municipal Committee, Gogera
- Okara District Government
- Pakistan and Punjab Tourism Corporations.

b. International

- Non Governmental Organization
- Foreign Governments
- UNESCO
- International Commission on Sites and Monuments (ICOMOS), a subsidiary of UNESCO
- Agha Khan Foundation
- IUCN- The World Conservation Union

c. Private Sector

- Industrial concerns (like Tobacco and Soft Drinks)
- Individuals

People travel for many reasons: to see the things they cannot see at home, to get away from the routine of life and work, to meet interesting people, to study different cultures and or to seek spiritual solace. For last decade, TGD has become a unique village to attract large number of foreigners. Only in year 2000 travelers (including experts in different fields and social workers) from 40 different countries visited this village. And, most houses in TGD have built guest rooms for visitors who come here and stay as paying guests in homely atmosphere – clean linen, local cuisine and traditional hospitality. From Gogera one can ride a traditional horse drawn Tonga or an auto rickshaws to TGD on Gogera-TGD Heritage Trail.

History and archeology make for good tourism that is largely a function of prosperity. The more money people have the more of it they will spend on travel and other intellectual pursuits. Today, worldwide tourism is an unprecedented 4.4 trillion dollars industry expected to be 10 trillion by 2012. Now once every beach, airport and other conventional tourist spots feel crowded like a cinema hall, people are constantly looking for quiet, unique and brand new destinations. Millions of tourists come to Asia every year. But the irony is that outside world does not know about Pakistan or has a distorted image of it; hence tourists cannot plan to visit. After all, Pakistan has much more to offer than many other countries combined together.

Tourism in Pakistan is only in an embryonic state. There is a need to develop sustainable tourism; a concept that implies that action taken now should be for the benefit of, and not on the expense of, future generations. Both Public and Private sectors should be motivated to come forward to support tourism in the country. And, there is a lot of untapped potential in this field.

Historically, archaeologically and geographically Pakistan is a place of antiquity and great importance. No ordinary coldness of phrasing can express the surprise and delight, with which one makes acquaintance with the heritage sites spread all over Pakistan. In part three of the report, some places of interest for visitors have been described.

Gogera Fort is located in historic tapestry. Besides activities in TGD and famous Harrapan ruins, there are many other reasons to visit the area and the Fort. Some of the interesting places around Gogera Fort have been mentioned in elsewhere in the blog.

A Global Strategy for a balanced and representative World Heritage List, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 1994, aims to ensure that the List reflects the world's cultural and natural diversity of outstanding universal value. Conferences and studies aimed at implementing the Global Strategy have been held or are planned in Africa, the Pacific region, the Arab region, the Andean region, the Caribbean, central Asia and Southeast Asia.

Since first visit of Dr. Senta Siller and Norbert Pintsch to village TGD in early 90s, so much has happened and so much has changed. National and international print and electronic medias have extensively covered the activities of the village. Only two of the articles are being reproduced in this section: - Dolls from Pakistan(Selling Pakistan Abroad) The cluster of mud and brick houses in the plains of Punjab, TGD looks like a typical Pakistani village

about 80 kilometer away from Lahore and 40 kilometers from Indus civilization ruins in Harappa. There is no gas or telephone in the village. No matelled road leads to it. Even the electricity is a recent phenomenon. Yet it is different; the beautiful dolls and other handicrafts made here by the village women are collectors delight all over the world. Influences from Indus civilization from nearby Harappa and modern techniques brought by the German volunteers can be seen in the village together.

They dolls made in the village are on display in International Doll Museum in Iceland, prestigious galleries and show rooms in Pakistan and abroad. TGD village doll - registered as Amjad's Village Project - was one of the 767 worldwide projects presented in the "Themenpark" at EXPO 2000 in Hanover (Germany) as an example of thinking for 21st century. Earlier, the dolls from Pakistan participated in International Toy Fair in Nuremberg. In 2001, on a special invitation from Dubai Shopping Festival, the dolls were displayed and were appreciated not only by Arab royalty but also by the general public. These dolls show how culture goes beyond simple work of art and becomes collaboration among applied and natural sciences as well as other forces that affect our lives. Dr. Senta Siller, after her meeting with S. K. Tresslar, Minister for Culture and Tourism informed, "we are going to open a display and sale shops in museums where cultural artifacts made I village TGD will be kept. We will start from Lahore Museum and later expand to all." How all this started? A Pakistani studying in Germany, Amjad Ali who is a native of village TGD invited his German teacher Dr. Senta Siller to visit his village back home. Dr. Senta Siller (and Norbert Pintsch) came to the village where she was presented a doll made by a local woman. Dr. Senta Siller was impressed by the doll and liked the natural and simple village life. She decided to work for the village, established NGO Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama and started community-based Women Art Center in TGD in 1992.

The aim of this center is to involve local womenfolk in productive, creative and healthy income generating activities. She created awareness and built confidence among the women, specially the young girls of the village and asked them to manufacture dolls and toys on self-help basis that she is now marketing all over the world. The village and its residents are benefiting in the process. Some people live and make difference in the lives of others. Born in 1935 in Vienna (Austria), Senta Siller took refuge in Germany following the Second World War. After graduating from School of Arts in Berlin, Senta Siller knew that she has found her métier: designing and illustrations. As a designer, she has worked for exhibitions, fairs, children's clothes, toys, and books' illustration and also ran a textile company. She has done masters in Archaeology, Philosophy, Education and doctorate in the History of Arts. Civil servant appointed for life, she has been given different awards including "Bundesverdienstkreuz" - the highest order of merit of Federal Republic of Germany as recognition of her dedicated services to humanity. When women's initiative groups read about Pakistani dolls in the newsletters of DGFK, they invited Dr. Senta Siller to start similar projects and to train women in doll and toy making in Cameroon and Colombia. She started her voluntary work to train multipliers in both the countries in 1997. The expatriates booked dolls in advance and other support in marketing came from volunteering ladies of the German community in the respective capitals. Presently, Dr. Senta Siller is networking among the women activities in all these countries. Dolls from Pakistan in authentic attires of the specific tribes, communities and areas tempt visitors, tourists and diplomats. They collect these dolls as a souvenir of the time they spent in Pakistan. "During last six years, the Pakistani dolls went in suitcases of our client to 40 different countries. They sit in the Ambassadors' residences not only in Islamabad, but accompany them to the next and second next postings. I met TGD dolls in the Japanese ambassador's home in Jakarta and also in the

German embassy in Damascus," tells Dr. Senta Siller with pride and pleasure. "Part of the artists go where ever the dolls go," says a young artist. Each doll has a small plate attached carrying the name of the doll maker.

Doll making is one of the oldest and popular traditional folk art in Pakistan. Simple stuffed dolls are made for children, particularly in rural areas where people are still striving for the attainment of basic needs. The main difference of previous doll making and the modern techniques taught by Dr. Senta Siller is that she has introduced variety in size and shapes and dressed them in colorful costumes with attentions to details. This has resulted in high quality soft toys to cater to demands of the gift market.

Dr. Senta Siller has not only moved the women of the area but also raised a spacious and simple building for the Women Art Center with the help of German Embassy. She even managed Solar Energy System - probably the first in Punjab - for the center with the assistance of Embassy of Japan. Besides clay lamps, that used to be the only source of light before the village was given electric connection in March 2000. Now there are as many as 120 women - from the age of 24 to 40 - working in the center, making dolls dressed in Punjabi, Sindhi, Pathan, Balochi, Kashmiri and Kallash embroidered costumes, miniatures, hand knitted shawls and many more items and earning their living. They are making their own lives better and strengthening their families. "They (the women) are moving towards true equality and independence," says a doll maker who has twelve year of schooling, married in this village and working in the center. Dr. Senta Siller is already planning to expand its working to neighboring villages.

Technology Transferred Training Center (TTTC) for Men has been established under the guidance of another German Norbert Pintsch - energetic and industrious volunteer - where village boys are being trained in different skills. Workshops on construction, appropriate technology, toys, tourism, transportation and agriculture are functioning in the TTTC. Some of the men of the village have already been trained in vocations like electricity wiring, motor winding, plumbing, tailoring, driving, book keeping and livestock vaccination.

The main emphasis is on progressive farming and use of improved agricultural techniques with particular reference to area specific agriculture, water, and soil and animal problems in TGD. Workshops and seminars are attended by large number of experts (including professor L.A. Hijazi, Professor Ghulam Jilani students of Barani University Rawalpindi) and local formers.

As per the survey conducted by the NGO, the men of the village conventionally are occupied in farm work whereas women are busy in household to the extent that children are fully ignored. Underground water is quite safe for irrigation as well as drinking purposes. Water available to livestock is not clean. The elders are not ready for new and improved practices in agriculture. Farmers prefer to own more livestock as prestige with the result that livestock rearing is not economical due to unproductiveness because of lack of fodder, feed and unhygienic rearing. There are 1000 buffaloes, 800 goats and sheep and 60 pairs of bullocks in the village. Early marriages are common practices in the rural society.

About 640 acres of agricultural land is available in the village. In opinion of the experts visiting the village, it is suggested that a switch over to high value crops (Jamboo fodder, bajra, napier, hybrid grass, sunflower, vegetables and cut flowers) and improved livestock production practices through training and demonstration are the solutions in order to

increase the yield as the land cannot be increased. It should be done along with other forms of cottage industry development like honey bee keeping, poultry, fish farming, back yard orchard development and vegetable farming for home consumption and imparting off-farm vocational training.

At present it is difficult to convince farmers for a switch over as recommended by the experts because of their poor economic conditions and lack of risk bearing capacity. Their present farm production practices provide them with a subsistence guarantee. The immediate solution could be to sign an agreement with them, after appropriate training and providing them with required inputs, to pay the differences if new practices fail to produce lesser than their present ones.

An annual Quality of Life competition is held in the village when best houses are selected in three different categories. The villagers work with three-panel-wall, like in Harappa, several thousand years ago, using local material with good conditions for the climate. The Chief Explorer from Harappa Dr. Mark Kenoyar had places in the jury for the competition held July 2000.

Beautiful tradition that has matured in the tranquil hamlet is that every newly married couple is presented a fruit tree whereas parents of every newborn get flower tree by the NGO. Result: one can see blooming bougainvillea creepers and fruit trees in courtyards of each house. Murals are painted on the parameters wall and large mud containers for grain. And, each house has a guest room for visitors who come here and stay as paying guests in homely atmosphere. Village TGD is changing. The relative prosperity has beginning to show. Villagers are putting their children, particularly the girls in school. The Woman Art Center is also playing a part in the well being of the village. The center has provided furniture and other equipment to the primary school in village and opened a well-equipped Health Care Center. Which is why the village women remember medical doctor Laila Mason – who first established the Health Care Center - with affection? Groups of foreigners and local journalists, social workers and intellectuals visit the village under the programs like 'Development of Education and Culture in Rural Areas'. Such visits are very festive events. All villagers participate in the celebrations. The center exhibits the handicrafts. A cultural show (including camel and horse dances, folk music, dhol (drum) dance and puppet show) are arranged on the occasions. The traditional functions also attract large number of people from adjoining villages. In addition to raised income, increased awareness, enhanced opportunities, peace and security, participation and sustainable future help to defeat poverty. Improving livelihoods enhances women's self esteem, their confidence and their power to make decisions and their position in the family. The women and their families benefit, and their communities prosper.

Women can change it Poverty in any form is a denial of human rights. It is more plausibly judged by the reduction of deprivation than by the accumulation of additional wealth with 'have' class. The conventional economic indicators like Gross National Products and Gross Domestic Product can hardly capture the implications of these high sounding terms on the 'have not' class. And, there is no single yardstick that can be used to satisfactorily define poverty. And, income poverty is only a narrow approach to address the complicated issue. Nevertheless, for convenience sake, poverty can be categorized as absolute, relative and subjective.

The concept of absolute poverty involves determination of basic needs that are measured in

terms of resources required to maintain the average well being of an individual, family or group of individuals called society. These resources may include the quality and quantity of food, clothing, shelter, basic health care and education: the basic requirements of life. If these basic necessities are priced and someone's income level falls below that figure, it marks absolute poverty. But an argument still holds that the basic needs also vary among people in the same society. For example, a laborer living in a cosmopolitan like Karachi needs different things than another laborer living in a remote area of Sind or Punjab.

Poverty has good reasons to celebrate. The last few years have seen an increase of 20 percent of those living under the poverty line the world over, bringing the number to a staggering 1.2 billion. Looking at its diversity, even absolute poverty is an incomplete gauge to determine poverty. But as is the case with most statistics, the figures remain just that - mere numerical data that leave one untouched. The figure cannot project the numbing visual imagery of misery, denial, helplessness and surrender of spirit. Instead, it can be replaced with standards that are relative to a particular time and place, which are as acceptable as a style of living and quality of life in accordance with the conventions and requirement of the day. Any definition of poverty must be related to the needs and demands of a changing society: from simple to complex. The living conditions of a relatively poor man in the same society might change with time and, therefore, a problem of comparison does not hold water. In short, circumstances and expectations usually differ with time and from place to place.

In this regard, comparisons are invalid. Different standards of poverty are required based on relative poverty according to the convention of the particular society and its actual needs. Poverty can be better compared in different societies from these viewpoints. "But why compare it, why not do something to alleviate it," says a German volunteer Dr. Senta Siller working in rural areas of Pakistan. Subjective poverty is poverty with a difference, that is, the poor have to accept or feel his poverty, not from the assessment of onlookers - a wealthy businessman who can no longer sell for an expected economic profit per day considers himself to be poor, while relatively poor stills consider him to be rich looking at his lifestyle and income level. Alternatively, individuals or groups who do not see themselves to be poor may be judged by the majority to be in poverty. The perceptual nature of this concept makes it unique. Most significantly, what defines the situation of the poorest people is their insecurity and vulnerability. For example, an unskilled laborer in the remote part of Pakistan like Cholistan or Thar, who is engaged in subsistence farming, would be vulnerable to rising unemployment caused by the economic crises during extended dry spells. In short, the poor suffer from a variety of disadvantages, all of which interlock with one another to create an uncompromising and perpetuating poverty trap.

Income levels vary and, as a result, poverty exists. No human being is meant to be poor, but in most cases the prevailing systems (economic, political as well as civic) subject one to be. Since it is difficult to change a system overnight, the individual can change to beat the system strategy to end poverty. Based on this premise, the Women Art Center (WAC), a female centered Non Governmental Organization in Thatta Ghulamka Dheroka (TGD) - a village in the backwaters of Punjab 80 Kilometers from Lahore caters to defeat poverty of rural women by increasing their income levels through diverse income generating activities. Over 200 rural women who are benefiting from this scheme are engaged in toy making, which are sold all over the world by the NGO.

In addition to raised income, increased awareness, enhanced opportunities, peace and security, participation and sustainable future help to defeat poverty. TGD has a primary

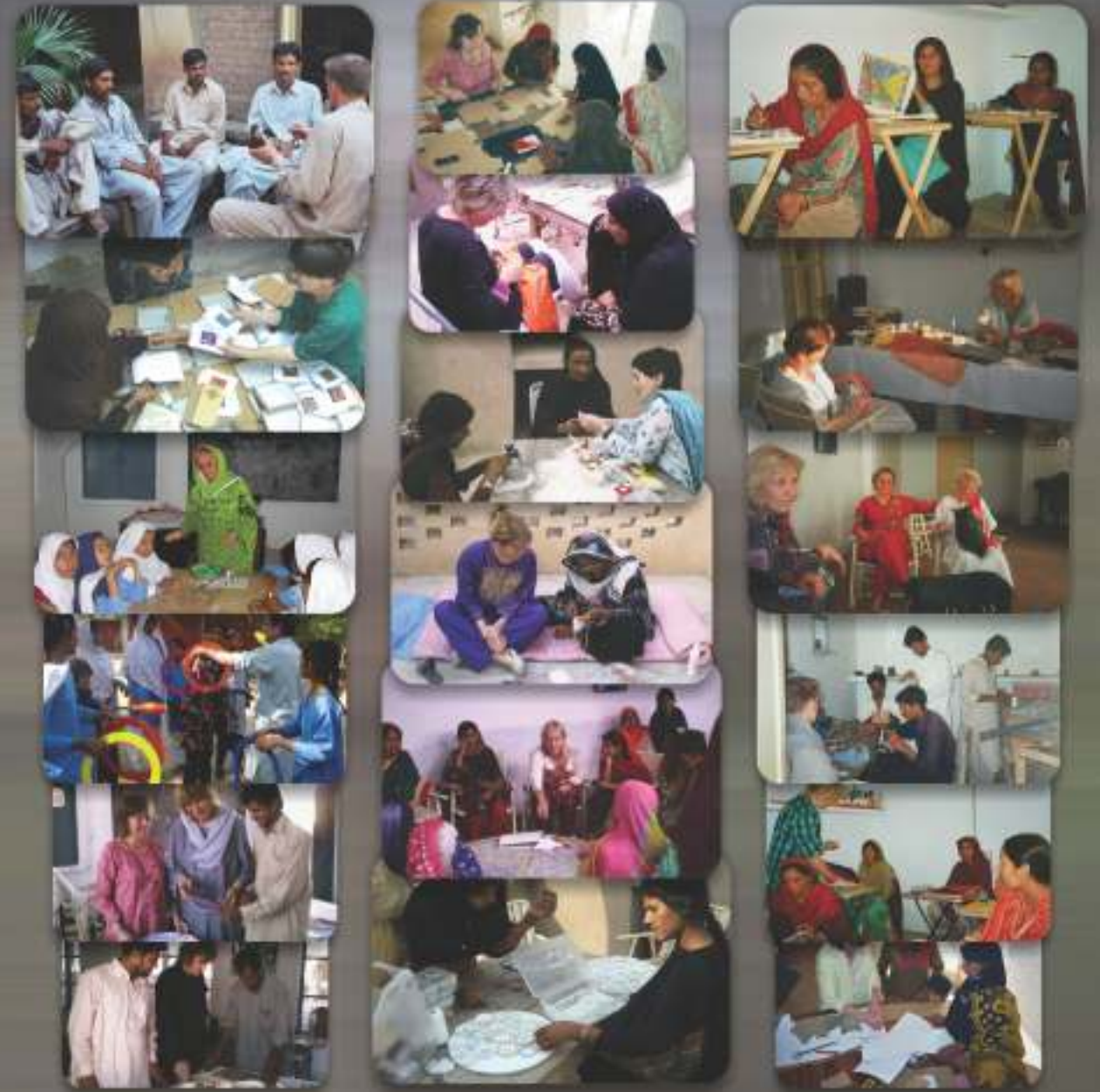
school for girls. The first girl named Shazia who was allowed to go to higher secondary school in a nearby town Gogera was gifted a lady bicycle by the WAC. The girls of the village taught Shazia how to ride and came to see her off on the first day of her school that is situated about four Kilometers from TGD. It was a very sentimental occasion. How many villages in the world can boast off all of these characteristics? Just as poverty is not solely a matter of lack of income or perpetual, want, it follows that its eradication must be achieved through strategies, which enhance the ability of local communities to adapt to stress, overcome emergencies and improve long term productivity. In this regard, WAC holds the views that income defeats poverty as the women of this village are today economically above other rural women. If these women can defeat poverty through hard work to increase their income levels, why not others, this question keep coming to my mind?

PART 1-B

Posters

- Thatta Kedona and Handicraft (1993-2010)
- Handicraft Workshops / WAC&TTTC
- Education Project / AFA
- One Baby – One Tree / Health Project, BHU
- Technology-, Transfer- & Training Centre
- Agriculture & Drinking Water Project / TTTC
- Appropriate Technology & Mud House Workshops / TTTC
- Mud-House-Owner in Rural Areas (MORA)
- Guest & Visitors: Tourism Project / AFA
- Awards (EXPO2000, UNESCO AWARD 2007)
- PR (Village Museum & Internet Radio)

HANDICRAFT Workshops (1993-2010)



AFA (NGO)
Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka, Distt. Okara

WAC, Pottery-Project

AFA (NGO)

in Village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
District Okara, Punjab,
Pakistan



2010/11

Founded by Monika Kuppler,
it is now in the 5th year

EDUCATION PROJECT



Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama (NGO)

in Village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
District Okara, Punjab, Pakistan

2010 / 11

Founded by Dr Senta Siller, it is now in the 18th year



ONE BABY ONE TREE PROJECT

Basic Health Unit of AFA (NGO)

in Village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka

District Okara, Punjab, Pakistan

2010 / 11

Founded by Dr Senta Siller, it is now in the 18th year



Agricultural, Construction & Water

WORKSHOPS



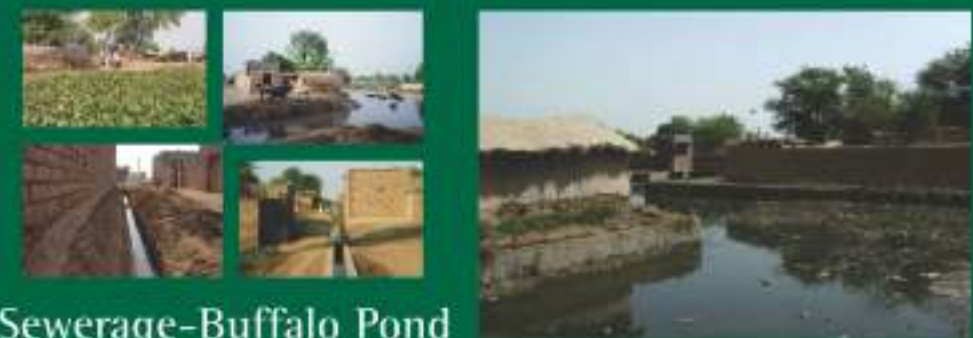
Housing & Construction



Agriculture



Drinking Water



Sewerage-Buffalo Pond

Technology-, Transfer- & Training- Centre

| Founded at 1997/98 |



in Village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
District Okara, Punjab, Pakistan

MudHouse Experiments Appropriate Technology

Development, Publications & Events

Technology-, Transfer- & Training Centre / AFA
Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
Peerzada Cultural Complex / PCC
Lahore
Institute for Experimental Construction / BNU
Lahore

Institute for Planning & Construction | Society for the Promotion of Art & Culture | Foundation for Promotion of Academic Collaboration

Mud-House-Owner in Rural Areas (MORA)



Owners of a number of mud houses in a village have joined hands in a conservation project for the purpose of promoting the traditional culture. The program consists of part-funding of conservation costs and it is accompanied by an observation program, in which physical measurements are carried out. The amount of support is disbursed at the end of the conservation work.

Since year 2000, the village has already been participating in a project called 'Preservation of Cultural Heritage', in which SPARC has been giving away prizes for:

- the best mud-house,
- the best detail and
- the best brick-work.

SPARC decided last year to initiate an annual conservation program for selected objects as a reminder for the advantages of mud-construction and implementation for the public good.



ANJUMAN-E-FALAH-E-AAMA (NGO)

Thatta-Ghulamka-Dhiroka, Distt. Okara, Punjab.

www.thattakedona.com

Guests & Visitors (1993-2010)



AFA (NGO)
Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka,
Distt. Okara

AWARDS for AFA (NGO) THATTA KEDONA

The project:
Amjad's Village
has been registered as
"EXPO 2000 Project"

Birgit Brauer
Commissioner General
Member of the Executive Board

Bernd Hartnagel
Director Projects of and for the World

Pakistan
Turkey
China/Expo
UAE-Dubai
Germany/Expo

**Seal of Excellence
for Handicrafts**
2007 South Asia Programme

- Excellent
- Authentic
- Artistic
- Eco-friendly
- Marketable

Dolls
Pakistan
Submitted by Thatta Kedona, Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama

The international 2007 seal acknowledges that this handicraft product conforms to the rigorous standards set by the Seal of Excellence programme. The seal process also motivates dolls and markets used to create these dolls, marking the revival of traditional doll-making in the Punjab, and spreading the effects of the program to regenerate and extend a village craft tradition with products of high market potential.

Richard A. Engelhardt
The World
Handicrafts Centre

Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama (NGO) in Village
Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka, Distr. Okara, Punjab

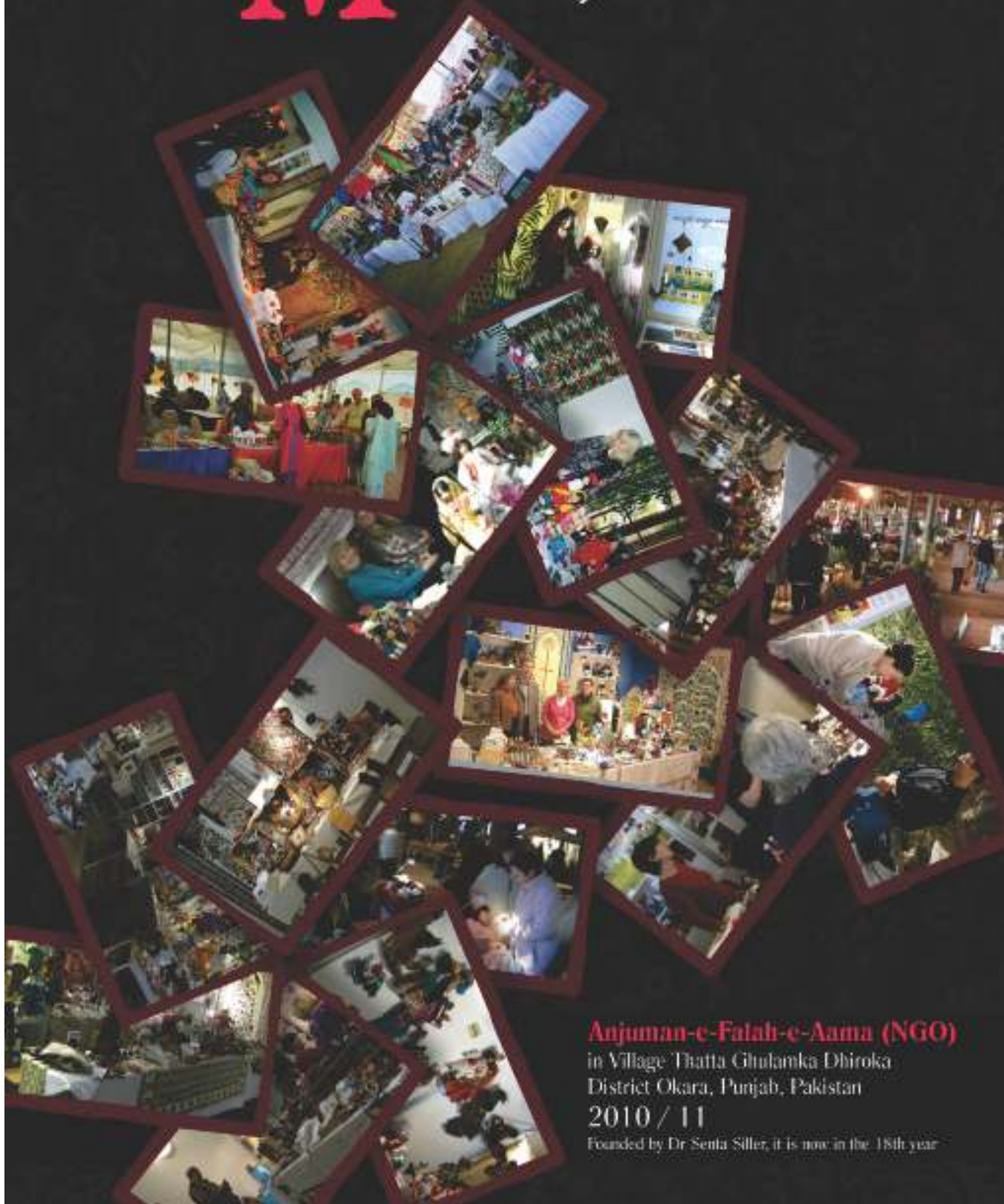
VILLAGE MUSEUM

Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama (NGO)



Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
District Okara, The Punjab
www.thattakedona.com

MARKETING PROJECT



Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama (NGO)
in Village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka
District Okara, Punjab, Pakistan
2010 / 11
Founded by Dr. Senta Siller, it is now in the 18th year

PART 2

Stories from
Ulrike Vestring

- :: From Thatta Ghulamka-A Love Story
- :: Thatta Kaidona, The Village Of Toys
- :: A Village In Southern Punjab

From Thatta Ghulamka-A Love Story

Is it right to fall in love with a child? Rani is the name of the little girl who for days I can't get out of my mind. I met her in Thatta Ghulamka, a mud-hut village three and a half hours to the south of Lahore. What is a person like me doing in a place like Thatta Ghulamka?

We had left Lahore in the early morning on account of the summer heat and the traffic which later in the day becomes almost impenetrable. We drove along one of the canals which give the city with its million inhabitants a confusingly rural charm somewhat similar to Holland. The reality of Pakistan soon caught up with us as we turned onto the interurban road which leads from Lahore via Multan to Karachi. Rumbling over the pock-marked asphalt come ox-carts, horse and carts, tractors, trucks, busses and coaches - all a merciless strain on human, animal and material resources. Again and again the general chaos builds up to situations of extreme danger, as every driver takes at any moment extreme risks in order to gain a slight advantage over the others. Overtaking three at a time without consideration of the oncoming traffic is a common manoeuvre. The others then have no other choice but to save themselves amidst a cloud of dust on the hard shoulder.

One and a half hours later your nerves and backbone desperately need a rest. And so we stop at a building which claims to be a hotel (with the stress on the first syllable) by virtue of its fireplace and a few "charpoys", - the locally common divans stretched with hemp rope. Mian, the driver, who along with car was provided by a friend, is a splendid fellow: quick as a shot he is behind the counter, and unassisted starts to make tea for the foreign ladies in his charge. In the interior of the building, which is open to the street, there are chairs and tables - so, it's a big "hotel". A few guests are sleeping on the charpoys in the background. Heaving a sigh of relief we take our seats under a whirring fan hanging from the ceiling. It is eight o'clock in the morning; the temperature outside is 38 degrees.

Fortunately I'm not travelling alone to Thatta Ghulamka. Senta from Berlin is accompanying me. For seven months she has been instructing the women and children of the village in the production of cloth-dolls in order to give them the opportunity of earning some money. I want to see this. The story of Senta and her village of toys will be told at a later date' perhaps it will also be a love story.

As we continue our journey Senta speaks of the people in the village and her growing love for them. She talks about Rani. The little one is six years old and, as her hair has been cut short, she doesn't look at all like the other girls in Pakistan. Senta talks about Rani's astonishing intelligence and her need for loving care and attention. According to Senta this is perhaps because her mother died shortly after she was born. When the doll-maker is in the village, Rani doesn't leave her side. Occasionally she begs for permission to take her siesta on the carpet next to Senta's bed.

We have left the nerve-racking trunk road in order to make a detour round Okara, the district capital, which lies 150 km. south of Lahore. The road stretches between fields of sugar-cane and along the irrigation ditches which are so typical for the five-river plain of the Punjab. Buffaloes, seemingly timeless, stand in the brownish water; the look in their eyes is strangely

transformed, colourless and glassy; and among them children are splashing about. Once again it strikes me that there are only boys here - in these parts such activities are out of the question for girls.

We cross the little market town of Gogera, and a few kilometres further on, as we turn off the asphalt road and into a country lane, Senta's face is filled with a look of expectancy: "We'll soon be there!" Her request to drive slowly because of the dust is thrown boldly to the winds by Mian. This results in it raining brown dust from the roof over the windows, and Mian almost misses the bridge over the canal at the entrance to the village.

We have left the car and have greeted a group of women and girls who are sitting on mats and working in the inner-courtyard of Senta's doll-making centre. When the sun rises and the clay walls no longer offer any shade, they will go home: in summer the three hour work and school period begins very early. Next year a new centre will be built with roofed-over areas for school and workshop.

Due to a projecting wall I can't see her coming, but I can hear Senta softly calling "Rani". Into her outstretched arms runs, no flies, a high spirited, graceful being with a mop of tousled brown hair and slender yet strong limbs. Behind her follows a horde of children, barefoot and wearing shirts and pantaloons. After Rani has also greeted me with radiant black eyes and a curious grin, she takes Senta's hand for a walk around the village.

A very old woman sitting on her charpoy in the shade of a tree asks us to sit with her. Meanwhile Razula, Rani's elder sister, has joined us, and the woman who had adopted the two girls after the death of the mother. Senta tells me that the father of the two girls had left the family immediately after the birth of the second daughter, just as he had left another family previously. In his third marriage this tireless man married a fourteen year old whom he got by bartering: his own daughter from the first marriage who had also just become fourteen was given in return to a fortyfive year old widower. Now he is said to be on the lookout again, hoping at long last to beget the son he so yearns for. Perhaps someone should explain to him the biological fact that it is his contribution to the act of conceiving which is the decisive factor in determining the sex of the child.

During our next stop in one of the astonishingly clean inner-courtyards we are invited to tea. I take a look around and let the children explain everything to me: the hand operated pump which draws from the abundant supply of water lying close to the surface; the oven for baking bread which has been sunk into the ground; the fireplace for cooking; and, finally, the special round oven with a lid, in which the buffalo milk is boiled down over a low flame to make it preservable.

It is incredibly hot; even the constant blowing of the little wind becomes now around noon more like a breath of fire. The tea boiled up with buffalo milk and lots of sugar makes me sweat even more profusely, and somehow the many children sitting with us on the bench seem to shift closer and closer. The boys have their fabric schoolbags with them, and one of them shows me his English book. The simplest of words under pictures: dog, cat, flower, car. The school drill obviously wants them to spell rather than pronounce the words, as a somewhat older child proudly demonstrates to me. Meanwhile Rani nestles into my left side and Sunny, her somewhat older cousin, sits on my right. I ask Senta if he is the future husband as decreed by the family elders. "Probably" is the answer, but Rani has already confided in Senta that Sunny is too dirty for her. Sunny shows me his writing skills on the pad I had

brought along, and then Rani gets hold of the pad. Now I have a page full of her squiggles which to her great satisfaction we furnished with her name and the date; Rani 19, May 1994.

Senta tells me that Rani sneaks into the boys' school; she is the only girl there. In the village there is no school for girls, only a building designated for this purpose which at the moment houses a few goats. The people in the village have been waiting for a long time for a state employed teacher although everywhere the talk is of the importance of education for girls. Senta has already thought about persuading her sponsors in Germany to make provisions for a teacher's salary.

In the meantime I have heard that matters have taken a favourable turn: the provincial government is willing to release funds from a special programme. This will finance a teacher's salary for the girls' school for a period of six months (a total of three thousand rupees or about one hundred and fifty German marks), a blackboard and books for thirty pupils. A qualified teacher is prepared to move to Thatta Ghulamka and open the school for the coming school year. There is also a special fate which led to this decision: the woman, who has a two year old son, wants to leave her husband, a drug-addict. The thirty marks salary is not enough to live on even in the mud-hut village. Perhaps she could supplement her income in Senta's doll-project?

Whatever, from August Rani will attend school regularly. I do, however, ask myself how long the new teacher, even if she already has experience, will be able to hold the attention of a child like Rani. She is terribly inquisitive, she wants to know and understand everything, but she is also fidgety and perhaps a little unruly. She has already told Senta that she doesn't want to stay in the village. And she is making childlike plans to realize her dream; if her plans grow up with her, then perhaps she will succeed.

Will Rani like to look back on her childhood in Thatta ghulamka? The things which seem like hardships for people from the civilized world: a life without electricity, without running water, without a sewerage system, without telephone - such things aren't an important factor for the children here. Within the boundaries of village life they enjoy the greatest freedom. In contrast to the towns, the streets and neighbours' courtyards here are safe playgrounds. At the edge of the village (the fields begin with trees where the mangos are now ripening. At the other end there is the village pond where the buffaloes wallow and where - as Rani demonstrates: the turtles are sooo big. Do the mothers make soup out of them? Everybody shudders: the people here have a deep, perhaps religiously based aversion to all animals with shells.

Admittedly, the village can be too limited for an adolescent, especially if he is bright and full of energy. And even more so, if the young person is a girl. Childhood ends early for girls: from the age of ten or eleven they have to behave like the grown-up women, wearing a headscarf and with lowered eyes. There is a major difference separating Rani from her sister who is only two years older: the big sister appears much less carefree and much more serious. She had duties in the household and is responsible for her younger sister. And one thing she knows for certain - one day the head of the family will disclose that the decision has been taken for her to marry one of her relations. When it has come this far, and even little Rani knows this instinctively, then any opposition is in vain. People in the village remember with horror the story of a young woman who after the birth of her first child admitted that the father was not the husband but a neighbour. She was killed by her own relatives. Her son, who is now fifteen, would like to leave and start a new life far from the village without the

stigma of his birth.

Such stories make one feel anxious about Rani who may have something of the rebel in her. But for now her lighthearted happiness dispels such thoughts. Hardly is our sauna-like siesta over and Senta and I have refreshed ourselves with the ice-cold water, which is left over from the ice bought in the morning in town, then Rani is back again: "Didn't you promise earlier" she says to me, "to take me for a drive in your wonderful car?" She has thought over everything very carefully: she and Senta accompany me to Lahore and return to the village next day. Rani's eyes sparkle at the thought of adventure. But it is impossible: Senta has a lot to do in Thatta Ghulamka in the next few days before she returns to Lahore and then goes home for her hard earned holiday. And what can I do with Rani in the Punjab-Club where our consul has found me quarters? But can a person let such an enthusiastic child down?

Senta and I quickly make alternative plans. Rani can drive with us as far as Gogera, accompanied by Cheti, the 10 year old girl from the neighbours' house who is particularly responsible. In Gogera I will put Cheti and Rani in a "tonga", a horse and carriage, which will take them safely back to the village for twenty rupees. Rani's joy is so overwhelming that we have to rehearse the whole scene before the journey actually starts. Waving and skipping the little girl sings a song which she has just made up on the spur of the moment:

Rani, Cheti and Ulrike are riding in a car,
Bye, bye to Senta, bye, bye to all,
We're riding in a car, in a car to Gogera.

And this is how it happens. First I have to talk to Mian, the chauffeur, and to his friend, who Senta, slightly worried, sent along as a kind of bodyguard. I have to explain to them why all of a sudden two little girls are getting into the car with me. Rani, as a matter-of-course, decides who should sit where: she will sit by the window with Cheti next to her. Cheti is looking rather serious and has pulled her headscarf tightly over her head. Shortly before setting off, by the way, Rani suddenly disappeared only to reappear transformed. In place of her somewhat threadbare pantaloons outfit she was now wearing a brightly coloured T-shirt and shorts, which Senta had brought her from Lahore. After fond farewells from the doll-maker I sit next to the children in the back of the car and laughing and waving we drive out of Thatta Ghulamka. I have half an hour to enjoy Rani's enthusiasm and Cheti's somewhat quieter joy. I ask Mian's companion to put on a cassette of Pakistani music and when the hit "Kabhi, Kabhi" comes on, my two passengers rock along in their seats. Incidentally, I have to pay for this whim of mine by having to listen to three and a half hours of such pop-music, because after dropping off Rani and Cheti, I don't have the heart to say: "turn that row off!" As we enter Lahore I almost know the songs by heart. Our journey ends far too soon as we arrive at the corner in Gogera where the tongas depart. I buy a farewell round of soft-drinks, and this time I don't care if it is the custom here for ladies to execute such transactions from the back seat of the car. I stand with Rani and Cheti at the refreshment stall, and then Mian takes them both across the street to their carriage. Amidst all the inquisitive stares Rani and I on parting just look deeply into each other's eyes. Then the two girls return home to Thatta Ghulamka, and I take the opposite direction and travel back to my life which is so different to theirs.

Thatta Kaidona, The Village Of Toys

DOLLS AND PEOPLE

A little Pakistani girl is silting in front of me. She has long black hair Plaited into two thick bunches, a round, brownish face with large dark eyes under long eyelashes, a delicate little nose and a small and pretty mouth. Around her wrist there is a label with her name: Farzana. Farzana is 25 cm. tall. She is a doll and comes from Thatta Kaidona, the village of toys.

Technically speaking Thatta Kaidona is a "village development project" -a scheme with the goat of helping to provide the female village inhabitants in southern Punjab with an income, so that they can create a better living standard for themselves, for their families, and ultimately for their villages. An idea of a designer from Berlin was to produce cloth-dolls and other toys in the village environment using local materials and to sell the products in Pakistan as well as abroad. How she began to realize this plan in the mud-hut village of Thatta Ghulamka is a story I told not long ago.

Senta is, in spite of her self-effacing modesty, a creative woman full of vitality and practical human kindness. Whoever meets her is aware of this, and many decide to give their assistance in some way or another. This is how an amazing network has been set up as people from the most diverse walks of life unknowingly reach out their hands to each other. And this means that in Thatta Ghulamka fifty gifted and hard-working women can change their lives with the work of their hands.

For example, there is Irene from Switzerland, whose husband is a dairy-company engineer working for one of the biggest employers in Pakistan. The family lives in the provincial capital, Lahore, in a spacious house pleasantly situated in the St. Johns Park area. Irene has set up a sales room there for the dolls and other toys from Thatta Kaidona; if you phone and make an appointment, you can come, have a look and buy.

Another example is Ahmed Ghul who scrapes a meagre living as a motorbike rickshaw driver. He transports the doll-maker on her hour long purchasing trips through the streets of the old town and the maze-like new shopping centres of Lahore. It is oppressively hot and dusty; the packages pile up in the cramped vehicle while Ahmed Ghul stands by and guards them with a patient smile. Meanwhile Senta rushes from one of her benefactors to another. She collects either for a little sum or for free the materials for the doll production: textiles, filler, leather remnants, wool and thread, buttons, sequins, glass beads and coloured braids.

FASHION FOR DOLLS AND PEOPLE

Only local materials are used which are adapted in shape, colour and combination as closely as possible to Pakistani concepts of beauty and fashion. The stretchy tricot material, which has been pulled over my little Farzana's body, gives her a distinctly darker skin colour than that of a European doll-child' and from the tightly embroidered black cotton thread around her head emerge the traditional plaits with a funny fringe over the forehead. Of course, like her living sisters, big and small, Farzana wears a pantaloons outfit-- admittedly, one which reveals the guiding hand of the Berlin designer. The Shalwar, the ankle-length pantaloons, is made of "Sushi", a hand-woven cotton material of a basic red colour with fine white and.

black stripes. Over it my beauty wears the shirt known as the "Kamis".

The way the shirt is combined with the pantaloons-- contrasting or shade in shade, mixed patterns or uni-colour, wide or tightly fitting, knee-or ankle-length, a profusion of different sleeve or neck-line shapes- this endless catalogue of variations on a theme sets the fashion in Pakistan. It takes a foreigner years to notice the details which determine whether a certain combination is "in" or "out". Only then can you understand why your local friend stares at the array of trouser-shirt sets in her wardrobe at the beginning of the season and declares that she has "absolutely nothing to wear".

Little Farzana is fashionably up to date. Her "Kamis", which is gathered at the waist and sleeves and is buttoned at the back, is made of starched white cotton cambric. The underlying red shadow embroidery of the top harmonises delicately with the basic tone of the open brocade waistcoat which Farzana wears instead of a shawl. White crochet shoes and the pompons on the plait-slides provide the finishing touches.

Incidentally, I know the woman whose hands created my doll-child. Farzana was one of Senta's first co-workers and in the meantime she is an assistant in the village of toys. She hasn't been back in Thatta Ohulamka for such a long time: her parents had moved to Lahore where Farzana and her five brothers and sisters went to school. In the meantime one brother has become an editor at the radio broadcasting station, "Deutsche Welle" in Cologne, one sister has her diploma in chemistry, while another sister is studying psychology. It is possible that Farzana, the eldest, had other wishes than to return to her mud-hut village home. Yet it is the rule in Pakistani families that younger children can only marry when the elder sister has found a spouse. Therefore, Farzana complied with the decision of the family elders for her to marry her cousin in Thatta Ohulamka. And in the meantime there is Asmaar Ahmed, Farzana's lively little son.

THATTA KAIDONA – A NETWORK OF HELP CUM SELF.

It is difficult to say whether Farzana was a stroke of luck for the village or vice versa. Whatever, this young woman was the only one who the doll-maker could entrust with a task which right from the beginning proved to be imperative: school lessons for the women and girls on the doll-making course. Until then none of them had learnt reading, writing or arithmetic. How could they have? There was no girl's school in the village.

Of course, that will also change soon. In August, at the beginning of new school year, a teacher employed by the provincial government will take up her post in Thatta Ghulamka. Benazir Bhutto, who has been appointed minister president for a second term, has given education and health care for girls priority status in her government programme. Admittedly, this declared political will must cope with the reality of a government in a lamentable financial situation, which spends more than seventy percent of its budget on the military and on servicing debts.

In view of the tens of thousands of villages in the country which are waiting for a school and a sanitation unit, a mud-hut village far from the road and electricity network needs a loud voice in order to be heard. It needs a lobby. In the network for Thatta Ghulamka and its village of toys there is a strong link which reaches as far as Berlin to the "Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Forderung der Kultur e.V." This programmatic name stands for a group of friends who have combined their spiritual, material and humanitarian strengths. People like

Senta, who see in cultural development an essential precondition for an effective improvement in the quality of life. In project work they would like to emphasise: sensitivity and respect towards cultural achievements regardless of material poverty, a willingness to live the life under local conditions, caution when introducing new ideas and technological innovations, and last but not least, in contrast to state development aid, the carefully considered use of modest sums of money. In this way projects like Thatta Kaidona, the village of toys, come into being.

What makes this project so special is the network; the German providers of money and ideas form, as has already been stated, only one part. Other connections should also be taken into consideration. For example, the philanthropic ophthalmic surgeon who runs an eye-clinic in a country town north of Lahore. One day he got to know Senta at a friend's place and offered to give surgery free of charge to patients from "her" village. Or there is Asma Jahangir, the lawyer and human-rights campaigner known throughout Pakistan who recently said to me in Lahore: "if there are any problems with tuberculosis in Senta's village, please let me know... I can help." Of course, there are many cases of open tuberculosis... Or there is my friend, Tehmina Durrani, author of a marriage story which in the meantime is also successful in Germany ("Mein Herr und Gebieter"). When I told her of Rani, the little girl who sneaks into Thatta Ghulamka's boys' school, her reaction was spontaneous: "Let us fetch the child to Lahore. I'll take her in and pay her school fees..."

A further example is Nurjihan, a fashion designer and artist who is also successful outside Pakistan. She is a leading expert on traditional Pakistani textile art and design, which she wants to preserve with economic support for the few remaining handicraft workshops. Nurjihan's creations take shape in her studio in Karachi, where the silk and cotton material is printed and dyed by hand. The remnants left over after cutting go to the village of toys where they are turned into the most beautiful dresses for Senta's doll-children.

In future Nurjihan will bind herself more intensively to the network for Thatta Kaidona. Together with her husband, an architect much in demand in Karachi, and with other artist colleagues, Nurjihan, the designer, runs a private college, the "Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture", from which the first class of architects and designers graduated recently. Students and professors intend to submit a design for a new construction for the village of toys in the coming autumn.

The house in the middle of the mud-hut village where Senta works along with her fifty doll-makers also contains her modest little room on the sun-roof. This house, which has until now been provided rent free, will be returned to its owner next year. Meanwhile the village has promised its benefactress a nearby plot of land; this is the site for the new centre with workshops, schoolrooms and a few rooms for visiting colleagues. What is special - or rather, if you adhere to the philosophy of the "German Society for Cultural Development", what is natural: the new building is to be made of the same materials as those used by the inhabitants of Thatta Ghulamka for the construction of their own homes - bricks dried in the open air, wood and brushwood, everything plastered with clay. The architect students from Karachi are not the only ones invited to submit ideas for the planning competition; they will be joined by architect classes from Lahore. An interesting condition for all designs: they should use in addition to the traditional materials also the techniques known in this area since ancient times in coping with the severities of the climate: extreme heat in summer and cold although frost-free winters. Recent excavations have shown these techniques to be thousands of years old. Architects from Berlin together with colleagues from Karachi and Lahore have made

exciting discoveries in Harappa which along with Moendjadaro is a further noteworthy town of the old Indus-culture. And so another link in the network for Thatta Kaidona come into being.

Farzana, the doll-child, is sitting in front of me. She is sitting on a Kelim among embroidered cushions which display typical warm red, blue and brown hues. And If I could, I would make myself as small as she is; I would sit next to her and drink tea. In the few months since its founding, the doll and toy project has been extremely successful. At sales exhibitions in Pakistan and abroad people have scrambled for dolls like Farzana, for cuddly bears with floppy ears, for the mini-dolls and for Senta's special favourites- the traditional witch-dolls. At the sight of these dolls even Pakistani men have spontaneously cried out: "I played with one like that when I was a child," and then they add in astonishment: "...and they're still around!"

Senta listens and smiles in her own friendly and knowing way. Her plan is to spend some four years on the doll-project. She alone knows what that means. Four years of her life for Thatta Kaidona, the village of toys.

A Village In Southern Punjab

In Thatta Ghulamka, nobody complains about "load-shedding", painfully long powercuts decreed by the state-run electricity company. There is no electricity in Thatta Ghulamka. The village of 1600 inhabitants, situated three and a half hours' drive from Lahore in the Southern Punjab, is not connected to the national grid. Westerners should consider for a moment the implications: Water is brought up by the handpump that every family has in their backyard; to cook and bake - above all the thin, crisp loaves of bread three times a day - firewood and shrubs have to be gathered. On chilly winter mornings, warm water or a little heating are unattainable luxuries, just as there is no refrigerator or fan in summer - a summer when, in the shade, temperatures can reach fifty degrees. First and foremost, how-ever, life without electricity means that after sunset, eight o'clock in summer and six in winter, it is pitch dark in Thatta Ghulamka. Few of the villagers keep candles or kerosene lamps, and, even more rarely, a battery-run torch for emergencies.

Evenings in Thatta Ghulamka are quiet. Few sounds from humans or animals - cattle, mainly buffaloes, the wealth of rural Punjab, are kept on a ranch outside the village. From the nearby fields comes the tapping, strangely melodious sound of a diesel pump bringing water to the surface. The village Imam, for his summons to evening prayers, has to rely on the power of his own voice. And mothers who keep the gnats and flies away from their children drifting off to sleep, ceaselessly turn the wooden handle of a leaf-shaped fan called punkkah.

The children having gone to sleep, grown-ups may still sit in their courtyards for some time. Once in a while, their eyes turn to the neighbouring roof where a light, a real lamp has been shining every night, since last autumn. That's where the foreigner lives. Looking across at the light, women and girls say quietly: "There she sits, working for us, Senta, our doll-maker."

Senta first came to Thatta Ghulamka two years ago to visit her daughter, Leila, born almost thirty years ago in Lahore when her father was working in Gujranwala as a German expert. Returning to Pakistan as a young doctor, she chose Thatta Ghulamka to do research work. Out of gratitude for the hospitality she had received for a whole year, she set up a basic health unit and trained a young woman who has been in charge since Leila's departure.

People in Thatta Ghulamka, remote from the luxuries we take for granted, live off the land: Wheat, rice, sugarcane, some fruit and vegetables and the milk from their buffaloes. Their houses are built of sun-dried bricks, walls and floors are plastered with clay. Even the roofs are made of clay spread over a layer of shrubs and branches supported by rafters. As a whole, these houses are remarkably well adapted to the extreme temperature changes: In winter, the mud walls retain the (lay-time warmth, and, in summer, it is noticeably cooler inside the houses than outside.

For Senta, an art teacher and designer from Berlin, the traditional mud village was a fascinating discovery. Surrounded by mud—walls, the houses with their inner courtyards seem to have grown out of the ground: there are no sharp angles because the walls smoothed by hand meet in well—rounded edges. Some of the tile roofs carry a hump-like structure, a penthouse-room with a verandah to which leads a flight of stairs from the courtyard.

The courtyard is a place for living, for work and rest. Here, PeoPle seek the warmth of the sun's rays in winter, and in summer the cool shade of the mud and brick walls. In each courtyard, there is a water-pump and a "tandoor", the oven sunk into the ground where the flat loaves of bread are baked. In a wind-sheltered corner there is a stove for one or two pots, and in another the chickens are kept in multistoried coops built of clay. Finally there is a round fireplace called "hara" with a sungly fitting clay pot sitting on it. It serves a special purpose: well-covered but with an opening in the lid to let the steam escape, buffalo milk is made to simmer for long hours over a slow fire. Thus thickened and evaporated, it will be easier to preserve and to transport to town for sale.

Under a roof leaning from the courtyard wall stand a row of man-sized containers made of caly like giant jugs. They are used to store grain. Once a jug is filled, a lid descends which is sealed with clay. Wheat is taken out by making a hole at the foot of the container, which, in turn, is carefully sealed again with clay. Another pot, more rounded but much smaller, is used for short-term storage.

Who thought of decorating the big jugs with crowns that make them look like kings or queens in a giant game of chess? Or to place on one of them a burnt-out light bulb neatly covered with mud in order to give the lid an elegant -looking handle? Who decorated the chicken-coops with a pinnacle, and added a lace-like parapet of white-painted clay to the window-sill? Who created the mosaic of climbing plants and flowers on the smooth clay wall?

KEEPING A PROMISE

Surprisingly, people in Thatta Ghulamka find the time and energy to add beauty and meaning to things of daily use. This, I think, must have won Senta's heart. Who in the village, she inquired, was doing this kind of work? "Women - who else?" was the answer that triggered an idea. The project idea of a philanthropist and designer which in the meantime has attained the stately dimensions of a village: Thatta Kaidona, the village of toys.

And this is how it started: when Senta returned to Berlin from her first visit to the mud village, she left a promise behind. "See for yourself" the oldest woman of Thatta Ghulamka had told her, "how we live: no electricity, no sewerage, no road. Those who can just leave. And for those left behind there will soon not be enough to live on. Don't you know of something which can give us women hope again?" - "I'll come back" Senta had said at the time.

In November 1993 Senta was back again and began to put her ideas into practice: The making of rag dolls in traditional forms and materials. It was a kind of training on the job with an initial group of twenty-five women and girls from the village. Each one brought along her skills in sewing and embroidery - Senta was responsible for the design and the choice of materials. Her previous teaching experience enabled her to give each of her pupils a task which they could master.

In order to make a proper doll, the different steps of the process have to be learnt one by one. This is done by training on the job, starting with smaller toys and decorative objects. The beginners, for example, are busy making earrings or pins, bending wire into miniature figures of mother and child, or even a bike-riding family, a scene taken from everyday life: Father pedaling, with one child in front, while mother and baby travel on the luggage rack. In

embroidery, a technique typical of Southern Punjab, something that looks like a combination of crochet and cross-stitch is used to great effect for decorating pin cushions and colourful pendants. Dolls' dresses and the small chequered overalls for the funny stuffed bears which are locally called "Bhalu", are sewn by machine -manually operated sewing machines with flywheels as can be found in most rural households.

The principal aim of this cooperative venture is to make money, and it is because of this prospect that girls and young women get permission from their men-folk, fathers, brothers, husbands, to leave their homes at fixed hours daily, for training and work with Senta. Along with this freedom of movement more new possibilities open up: Meeting and working with like-minded people outside the family, getting to know each other while sitting at work together, talking about the amount of money to be made, planning activities and discussing new ideas for the village of toys.

Senta is keen to share the business side of her project not only with her three future assistants whom she is training to take over the production and marketing of the toys. For her, it is important to make the financial realities transparent to all those involved, so that they develop a realistic understanding of the value, of their work and of the costs involved. Only then will they see the reason why their wages cannot exceed 30% of the proceeds from sales; costs for material, transport and marketing amount to 30%; and a further 30% are set aside for the construction of a new training and manufacturing centre. Ten percent are reserved for a contingency fund.

A second training course was started last March, and another this autumn. In shifts of twenty-five the future doll-makers sit on mats, working and studying in turn. The centre's courtyard doubles up as school-room, with almost all the women attending the literacy classes conducted by a young girl from the village who has been lucky enough to study in the city. The others have never been to school before. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and earning their own money-more than fifty women from the mud village of Thatta Ohulamka have found new hope. Senta, the doll-maker from Berlin, has kept her promise.



PART 3

Toys and Dolls of Pakistan

by
Senta Siller

Foreword

Following the kind invitation of the Senior Director Mazhar ul Islam and the Director Lok Virsa Mr. Khalid Javaid, it is a pleasure for me to report about toys and dolls that crossed my way or were invented in cooperation with artisans. Years of design consulting and coaching with much patience were invested in a Village of Toys – so I am able to give back a little to the wonderful people of Pakistan.

Introduction

Toys and dolls are invented by artists for multiplication, selected by educators, made by loving parents to entertain their up springs with happiness. Games are heritage and can be reinvented or modified by the children and can differ from place to place, from year to year.

Memories

Children of the first generation in Pakistan enjoyed the games with things alive and kinds of competitive sports. The to-day middle age men remember more their training of animals for competitions than readymade given toys. They enjoyed to train pigeons, dogs, oxen for fights and rallies. Karbuttar contests and dogfights with betting, or the oxen runs in the villages of Punjab are still en vogue. Goulee Denda is a legend. It was the boy's favorite sportive exercise, played with two sticks, one round beater in the length of 2,5 to 3 feet, the other formed like a pointed cone of only 6 inch. Possibly the game was a predecessor of the sophisticated Cricket, with speed and catch. Kites earlier were made of rough wrapping paper, very simple and much cheaper than nowadays in Lahore – there was not the variety of shapes, colors, or any glass powder to coat and cut the lines of best friends in the spring days of Basant.

Elderly village women think back to their own childhood, when the grandmothers used to create fairylike rag dolls of white cotton material and sewing thread. Mostly it had to be a couple, the girl dressed in red, the boy in white. It was wonderful to play 'doll wedding' and to arrange marriage parties for all the girls in the house and around in the neighborhood.

Discoveries

1990 the handmade dolls had disappeared in the families. Ugly plastic dolls, mass fabricated in Karachi, appeared for the price of only 20 Rupees in all the bazaars of the country. The body, arms and legs were in one piece, therefore the doll could not be dressed and undressed. The ready doll was joint together of two halves, pressed in moulds for the front and the back, the skin color is pale pink, the hair spayed on in henna red, the eyes in blue.

Luckily villagers could not afford this attraction – so 70% of girls in Pakistan stayed to their old games and made their toys by themselves of clay. They formed and baked choulas, the herds for cooking in the open yards, kitchen utensils and tiny pots in the bright sunshine. They modeled small houses for firewood or rabbits, hens and cattle – all prepared as a small scale imitation of the adult world. It is at the grass-roots level, in the remote countryside, where traditional cultures still thrive, that resources are redefined and can be used in projects of selfhelp.

Since centuries the silver smiths create jewelry for new born babies – bangles and foot rings with tiny tingling silver bells. In Peshawar's silver street one can find hollow rattles for tiny fists, made of a polished ball set on an elaborate decorated slim handle of the precious metal. A cheaper version the nomadic women still know how to make. They prepare rattles of straw with feather decoration and sell them in the villages of the flatlands, at times in Melas at the worship places of the Pirs and Sufis.

See Photo Page ? : straw rattle

At the roadsides of Gulberg and in front of the main zoo gate in Lahore one can meet sellers of fancy toys. There are hand puppets, mostly crocodile like monsters with fluffy ears, round eye balls and with a big mouth full of frightening white plastic teeth. This toy is made in quantities. The material is felted cloth of black, grays and blues, possibly cheap leftovers of the industry. Constructed like a mitten the monster has to be played for own enjoyment or for an audience with one hand inside.

In Clifton Karachi or in the Blue Area of the capital the lucky meets occasionally boys who sell paper craft, dragons and snakes on a stick with a string. These toys are folded of bright colored waste paper. With the streamline meter long body and the gentle movements they are a delight for the playful.

Near Liberty roundabout in Lahore sometimes - next to the sellers of plastic balls and inflatable swimming pools - villagers sit to offer a traditional folk art toy in unique variations. Wonderful decorative horses with long elegant necks stand on four simple wooden sticks and are made of waste paper. Most exiting the long, bushy tails made of recycled ledgers. In height they differ from 30 to 100 centimeters. Many years ago this horse type must have had inspired the artist, who designed the signet of Lok Virsa Museum.

See Photo Page ? : horse

Cooperation

Around 1965 a Sialkot based factory for cricket balls manufactured, as a side product, toys of wonderful polished shisham wood. In the program were camels, horses, elephants and dugs. The animals on wheels, constructed with a nicking head, were of no good use for a toddler to pull, as they were not exactly balanced and had the trend to fall head over heels. In cooperation with the woodworkers and craftsmen these products were improved and in the coming years new designs added. Following the trend of European Educational toys for youngsters in kindergarten age the new program included:

1. Stick horse of light colored natural wood with two wheels, the head with two black wooden buttons for the eyes, finished with fringes and ears of soft red lamb leather, finished with two handles to hold the toy
2. Rocking horse, which consisted of four parts to be assembled easily with wood plugs
3. Wooden case, filled with building blocks in three natural wood colors of shisham
4. Carriage on four wheels to pull, filled with wooden bricks
5. Set of children's furniture in the form of a wooden train on large red wheels, connected with wooden sticks and pieces of strong rope. The locomotive driver's cabin had a roof lid, so that doll or teddy could be put in. The tenders could be used as toy containers and, when closed with their lids which were upholstered with removable cotton cushions, they made the comfortable furniture for the children to sit.
6. Set of turned wooden whirls with string and a small whip

The first sales were done 1967 in the International Toy Fair Nuremberg, Germany, with best response and the design number 5 was awarded with the German Seal of Excellence 'Spielgut'. In 1990, only 23 years later, there were no wooden play goods of excellent craftsmanship found in the bazaars of Lahore. Only roughly turned, careless painted kitchen utensils for little girls were offered in the local market for a very low rate.

In 1967 one of the entrepreneurs in the newly founded Small Industries Estate in Gujranwala asked for designs to produce inflatable swimming toys for children. A large number of designs, most in animal shapes, were given, but it is not reported, whether any was produced accordingly and used by children in Pakistan.

Statements

Toys and dolls have always been there. Proof of this is found in the excavations in Japan, South America, Greece, the Subcontinent, and other sites all over the world. Pakistan has the best proves in the excavation grounds of Harappa, where the most ancient movable play goods were found, published and remade by well trained potter families.

Ancient findings, exhibited in the museums, are made out of a number of materials like wood, wax, clay, and cloth, were not only a toy, but used also as religious symbols and cult items – for example as miniaturized images of animals, human idols, and goddesses or gods. Until today miniatures are used by many people as a fetish for good luck or for protection against the evil eye and to chase away bad spirits. The experts are not sure what was the first purpose of the dolls. Was the image a toy, out of which the cult figure developed or was it the cult figure which became a toy?

Over and above their value as toys with educational values, dolls are realistic documentation of past and present times and therefore a source of our knowledge about the games, life, living and work conditions and economy. They are important source cultural carriers.

Doll making was one of the oldest and popular folk art in the Subcontinent and still has respect in modern Pakistan. Simple stuffed dolls are made for children particularly in rural areas, where people are still striving for the attainment of basic needs. Decorative dolls on stands, dressed in the attires of the adults of all provinces of Pakistan, are made in sizes from 15 to 40 centimeters in large quantities. These are offered to buyers in souvenir of shops of noble city plazas, hotels and airports.

Indigenous handicrafts, like century old embroidery skills and color schemes, are a history of the large country with varied traditional culture. With their vanishing, heritage items are becoming rare. Cheap mass products have conquered the local market – the interest in handmade toys and dolls has at the same time decreased like weaving and embroideries - and results, mainly among the buyers in the cities and semi urban areas, in the loss of cultural identity and awe for indigenous artwork.

Thanks to responsible observers in the late eighties of the twentieth century awareness was spread about increasing poverty, environmental degradation, scarcity of jobs, altogether resulting in the underdevelopment of the remote rural areas of Pakistan. In addition to the existing embroidery and stitching centers of Apwa and Behbud, organizations of public interest – to name only some: Al Falah, Better Tomorrow, Sungi – Jisti, Threadnet - were founded, in order to train the deprived and enable them in sustainable use of their resources, with preference to indigenous arts and crafts. A network of efforts and good will exists to day to benefit rural women and male artisans - in one case only related to toy production - for income generation and against migration to the big cities. Since 1994 Lok Virsa helped to market toys and dolls of the needy villagers with exhibitions and events like 'Artisans at Work'.

Help for Selfhelp

In the past decades there has been much talk in national and international organizations as well as in smaller discussion circles about the support of women living deprived in the rural environment of Pakistan. The keywords for conferences like the World Women's Conference in Beijing were gender training, empowerment of women, equal rights etc.

Educated women lawyers and writers in the large cities of Pakistan were involved in the movement, but nothing was done in practice for the majority of women, living under the burden of traditional non written rules.

In the district Okara, in a little village with the great name Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka, the local NGO accepted female members as one of the first. The NGO searched for advise and partnership and worked practically on the small things to improve the situation of the village women rather, than leading discussions about issues from the mighty. In the NGO meetings both, men and women, discussed the problems of their own community, like how to get a public school to the village to provide education to all the children, how to find an ear of the politicians to connect the village to the road, how to get supply of electricity after twenty years of petitions, how to employ the traditional embroidery skills of the women for cash flow, how to manage waste and grey water, how to find health care with free service of the invaccinator. Step by step – with many applications and visits to the concerned authorities – practical improvements of life have been implemented. Today the Women's Art Centre is famous for the handcraftes toys and dolls, but only one of twelve other projects, in which the villagers are working together with designers, scientists and other voluntary workers. It is a small wonder and would give a sample for step by step improvements, for help for self help to other needy groups.

1990 the toys and dolls adventure started in a village, that had no good perspectives for the future. It is situated in the remote plains of river Ravi, between Multan and Lahore. Guests from Germany were invited for a cup of tea and a discussion, which never ceased until to day. The invitation of a former student from pakistan resulted in an participatory approach to the problems on volunteer basis. 1993 from the very beginning of women's training a successful attempt was made to generate income for the participants and their families.

Design Roots and Innovation

Dota

Here in Ravi Punjab the 'Dota', a traditional decorative wedding present, used as a mobile, is prepared with needle and thread and given by the girl friends to a village bride. In the center of an umbrella like cushion a chain of assembled stuffed ornaments is fixed. Embellished with beads, mirrors, bells and tassels it is a well wisher for happiness to the bride in the house of her husband, where she will live in future. The year after the marriage the same dota will entertain the new born child. Then the pendant, fixed above the baby's swinging bed, turns out to be an educational toy.

See Photo on Page?: dota embroidered, long chains of dotas

As soon as the women in Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka were provided by the NGO coach with quality fabric pieces from the tailors of Lahore and pure wool leftovers from the carpet makers for stuffing, the modest village product began to bloom and entered the houses of the rich. The firmly stuffed little triangles and birds - partly hand embroidered, partly joint from real brocade in all colors - attracted locals and foreign buyers. Each mobile is a variation of the folk art theme – often repeated over the years, but still an unique piece of applied art.

In 2004 a silk painting workshop was attached to the Women's Art Centre and the watercolor technique taught to a group of women. The trainees were able to transfer the ancient concept of the dota into a high class gift item made of precious silk.

See Photo on Page?: silk dota with birds

Churail

It is possible, that the memory of the rural woman goes back to the 4000 years ago existing mother goddess of the Indus Valley Civilization. Later coming male dominated religions may have changed the adored mother goddess into the witchcraft character 'Churail'.

See Photo on Page?: small Churail

She is the legendary witchcraft ghost of many folk tales in Pakistan. To the village rag doll with the archaic features alike those of Harappa idols happened a revival in the Women's Art Centre. It found great acceptance by ethnological interested buyers. Since 1994 the Churail is produced in small numbers and three sizes of 12, 30 and 50 centimeters. For exhibition purpose in Lok Virsa Art Gallery even larger dolls were made for decoration purpose.

See Photo on Page?: large Churail

The type of the flat rag doll, in Thatta Ghulamka known as Churail, was the basis for the invention of a series of small wire and wool dollies. They are used to make jewelry, broaches and finger puppets of the smallest kind, mini dolls with a loop of golden thread as little angels and mothers with one or two babies in the arms to ornate the Christmas tree. These tiny gifts became the bestsellers of the doll makers.

For small children cushion toys like bears and rabbits were made in the old fashioned technique of the ragdoll, but dressed in glooming attires. Recently hand puppets with charming oriental faces were developed, but not yet released.

Waldorf dolls

After 1998 another technique of doll making, following the educational issues of the Waldorf Schools, was taught to a group of women. The trainees were enabled to launch a series of roundheaded dolls with attractive hairstyles. These safe stuffed toys, made without any plastic, wire or beads, are meant for young children of the age group six months to four years.

With round heads the NGO offers also an ethnic dressed pair of dolls from Pakistan, called Shezada and Shezadi in 35 centimeters size with different outfits to change.

Many different characters of larger finger puppets with round heads, became the favorites in sales during the Puppet Festivals in Ghadafi Stadium and in the events of the Global Village in Dubai, UAE since the year 2000.

See Photo on Page?: finger puppet large

Following this idea of a low cost doll, recently the Women's Art Centre prepared a movable 'Surprise Putli' on a stick in a decorated cardboard cone, mainly for the initiators and guests of the International Puppet Museum in Green Acres, Lahore.

See Photo on Page?: putli

Creativity in the Villages

Reflection of the environment and the daily life can be noticed in many of the unique designs of village women. In the dessert of Sindh and in the Southern parts of Punjab bright colored acrylic threads are used nowadays for embroideries and for decoration pieces and toys. A doll with movable long arms from Cholistan was donated to the collection of the International Dolls Museum Flateyri, Iceland.

In Karachi Clifton a doll pendant in bright red attire was shown in the Gallery Koel.

Strings of ornaments and birds or camels, very similar to those of Rajasthan, are exhibited for sale in the festivals of Lok Virsa, Islamabad. The organization 'Save the Children USA' adopted folk art images and produced with 70 different contractors such toys in large quantities in Pakistan.

In Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka and the adjacent villages some women talents like to reflect ancient old memories. The mixed figures of a birdlike creature with breasts and a girl's face may come from Buddhist times of the country, when the bird Garuda with strong wings was believed to be the airplane of the gods.

Photo: Garuda

Another attractive art piece in the collection of Thatta Kedona Showroom Lahore shows Burakh, the muslim version, with the body of a strong horse and the lovely face of an angel.

There are also birds with two heads, born by fantasy in the hands of an artist. Possibly that image finds explanation in religious tales of times with Hindu neighbors. Or is it the misunderstood bull's head from Indus Civilization, found in the seals of Harappa?

Marriage, Islam, Family

Special events are reflected in three dimensional models made of wire and wool. A wedding scene from Dri Chak with bride and groom on the large wedding bed and two buffaloes as the dowry, altogether fixed on a fabric covered tray, are exhibited in the First Museum for the

Child in Izmir, Turkey.

The same artist, a mother of eight children, enjoys to make of wire, fabric and wool scenes like the Muharrim Procession with the child on a white battle horse the stallions of Pir Moshkur Gilani of Sheiku Sharif and worshippers, who come from far to bring their offerings.

Photo: Muharrim horse with rider

Photo: two men with the load of offerings

Mela Enjoyment

a merry go round with birds as seats, a baby in the swinging cradle, Pathan camel people and farmers with their women and all kinds of domestic animals.

Photo: farmer's family

Years later the country side merry go round inspired the men, who earn a side income with toys made in the Technical Transfer and Training Centre of the NGO. They transformed the wire and wool model in a movable tin toy. Assembled of tiny parts by soldering and hand painted in the style 'Art on Wheels' it became another attractive toy, which reflects the simple entertainments in the villages. At the same time it is useful for income generation.

The swinging bed idea was given to a master wood turner in Lahore, who made a replica in rosewood for the toy project. It is completed by the women with quilted bedcovers and a pillow in bright cotton colors. This lovely quality furniture is made for dolls up to 20 centimeters.

Nomads

The last wanderers, nomadic traders from Afghanistan, Iran or Middle Asia, are called by the village people 'Pathans'. They attract the fantasy of the women artisan. The wonderful ornate camel is strong enough to carry a big load of goods and its raja, who sits comfortable and enjoys his journey. In the Heritage Museum Lok Virsa Islamabad one of such camel nomads is on display.

Photo: camel with raja

Animals

The wool animals were taught to many girls, who attended training in the Women's Art Centre and can be used as toys to build a village scene around a mud house of the local style

Photo: birds

Vehicles

The love for rides on river Ravi, which none of the women has ever experienced, is reflected in a model of the same kind. The construction is made of wire and acrylic wool and over and over adorned with strings of golden beads and small silver colored bells. Two noble ladies, dressed in traditional ajrak attires, enjoy to be led by a boats man with a long stick, while a water turtle stretches the long neck. The artist is part of the network of the village women artisans. She surprises with every artwork the buyers because of her choice of strong expressionistic colors and the gift to form what she wants. She likes to invent one by one - it is hard to get from her something by order.

Photo: boat with passengers

There is a variety of different boat models on sale in the events of Lok Virsa in Islamabad.

They are made of reed sticks, dried banana leaves, peeled bamboo and are the delight of collectors of all ages. Probably these boats are made by men, who live on river Indus in the hottest area of Pakistan.

Photo: boat with flags

A family of three to five on a motorbike shows the desire to be close to the ones who belong to you and at the same time it is a mirror of what is noticed, when a girl from the village comes for the first time to a town. To have a motorbike for the family is a status symbol. The woman, who invented the first model in wire and wool is a Mussali and dreams of such wealth, which her husband never will be able to afford.

The same artisan started in 1996 to make a helicopter, different trucks and busses in a fragile manner from cardboard and textiles – they are curiosities and can be used only as decoration pieces. The Heritage Museum Lok Virsa Islamabad owns a group of these vehicles.

Photo: beaded truck with cardboard wheels

Photo: helicopter

Two young men of the area Gogera were admired by their friends for making vehicles of sun dried clay. Samples of a tractor and a bus were presented to the coach and are now kept in the office of the NGO. The one master, an illiterate farmer, was encouraged to use more durable materials for his tractor models and to make toys for the children. But he did not like the idea to use tools and work with wood or metal. He did not want to sell his artwork, as his father is a landowner and can afford to grant him a hobby.

Photo: tractor of clay

The other is a student and was keen to learn how to make his vehicles more durable and useful as a toy. He came to workshops of the Technical Transfer and Training Centre and learnt how to cut his models from tin sheet, how to use tools and solder wire.

Photo: bus of clay

Independently of the women now a group of men is making the most delicate miniature tin vehicles one by one. Since 2000 vehicles like riksha, truck and bus are made with highly developed skills and hand painted with varnish. The large trucks and busses, the traveler still can admire for their beautiful Art on Wheels decorations on the G.T. Road or on K.H.W. soon will belong to the past, however these little toys – their little brothers - will be in the collections of many diplomats and expatriates, who lived for some years in Pakistan.

Photo: tin vehicles

Photo: large tin tanker

Thatta Kedona

Women's Art Centre has started in the courtyard of a mud house in 1993. When asked to give their products a name, the first twelve trainees in dollmaking, illiterate village women, invented the trade mark 'Thatta Kedona', which is in spoken Ravi Punjabi the combination of 'Village' and 'Toys'. Educated people read it in English as 'Village Toys' and in Urdu from right to left as 'Toy Village'. The name was prosperous. After five years of participatory work the women had their own spanking new building and one of the largest solar energy facilities in Punjab on the roof. The development brought a functional health center, educational services and tourism facilities as a part of the holistic village development efforts of the local based NGO Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama.

The village Thatta Ghulamka Dhiroka has about 1200 inhabitants, settled in 80 family compounds and seven cattle station homes around the village. The farmers established their NGO in 1991, which cooperated since with the German Society for Promotion of Culture and network with six other women's groups in the country.

The Governments of different countries (Germany, Canada, Japan), friends and wellwishers were supporting the Anjuman of the 'Village of Toys'. By purchasing the handcrafted toys and dolls each buyer supports not only the income generating measures in the remote Punjab region but also contributes towards maintaining the rich cultural heritage of the area.

Since 1995 ethnological research was done by the coach in the four provinces of Pakistan, among minorities and in the Northern Areas. As a result handcrafted dolls in authentic attires of the specific tribes and communities tempt tourists and diplomats. They collect the dolls as a souvenir of the time they spent in Pakistan. During the years after 1995 the ethnic dressed dolls have traveled in suitcases of the buyers to 40 different countries. Thatta Kedona dolls sit in the ambassador's residences not only in Islamabad, but accompany them to the next and second next posting. One can meet Thatta Kedona dolls in the Japanese Ambassador's home in Jakarta and also in the German Embassy in Damascus.

Thatta Kedona is a project of the first Pakistan international NGO network in rural area where handmade quality dolls and toys are crafted using all indigenous material and traditional designs based on cultural and folklore themes. The workmanship of the products has acclaimed international recognition and clientele through the participation in numerous events, exhibitions and fairs. The dolls made in the village are on display in the International Doll Museum of Flateyri, Iceland, prestigious Galleries and showrooms in Pakistan and abroad.

The toys and dolls from the NGO artisans were displayed in EXPO 2000 in Hannover, Germany as a sole worldwide project from Asia. The village doll project was one of the 767 worldwide projects presented in the 'Themepark'. It was recognized as 'exemplary' for the twenty first century. Last year the dolls and toys were displayed at EXPO 2005 in Aichi, Japan in the Pavilion of Pakistan.

Part of the artists go wherever the dolls go. Each doll has a small label attached to the wrist

carrying the name of the doll maker. These dolls are made as a real toy out of cotton and wool, real hair and not poisonous colors for the paint of the human like faces and can be used for dressing and undressing. The bodies are made - according to the people they represent - in three tans of skin color. Light tan for the Kalashi, medium tan for the Punjabi, and dark brown tan for the Makrani dolls. They are made in 20 and 45 centimeters sizes.

The women village artisans work not on full time basis but in a traditional way so that family and field work is not compromised and festivals of different types can be celebrated like usual. Training lessons were given measured to the time frame of the women. The speed of training is culture-friendly and still economic. Awareness of quality work and care for social needs was created and confidence built among the villagers – especially the unmarried adult girls benefited. The population of Thatta Ghulamka and five nearby settlements is strongly motivated by the benefits. The motivation came by doll making and is now for them the proof, that Pakistan is a rich country with traditional, cultural, natural and social resources.

For the efficient way of income generation in small steps but long-term process of doll making the villager's NGO allowed people from outside to help towards self-sustained development. Results are the discouragement of urbanization as well as migration and a revival of Fabric design, old embroidery skills and types of clothing.

Photos: Ethnic dressed dolls

Like minded Groups

Common Initiative Groups in Cameroon and a Cooperative in Colombia and one international group of women in Iceland learnt of the doll makers in Pakistan and started working in collaboration. These contacts resulted in a network for the project 'Dolls of the World'.

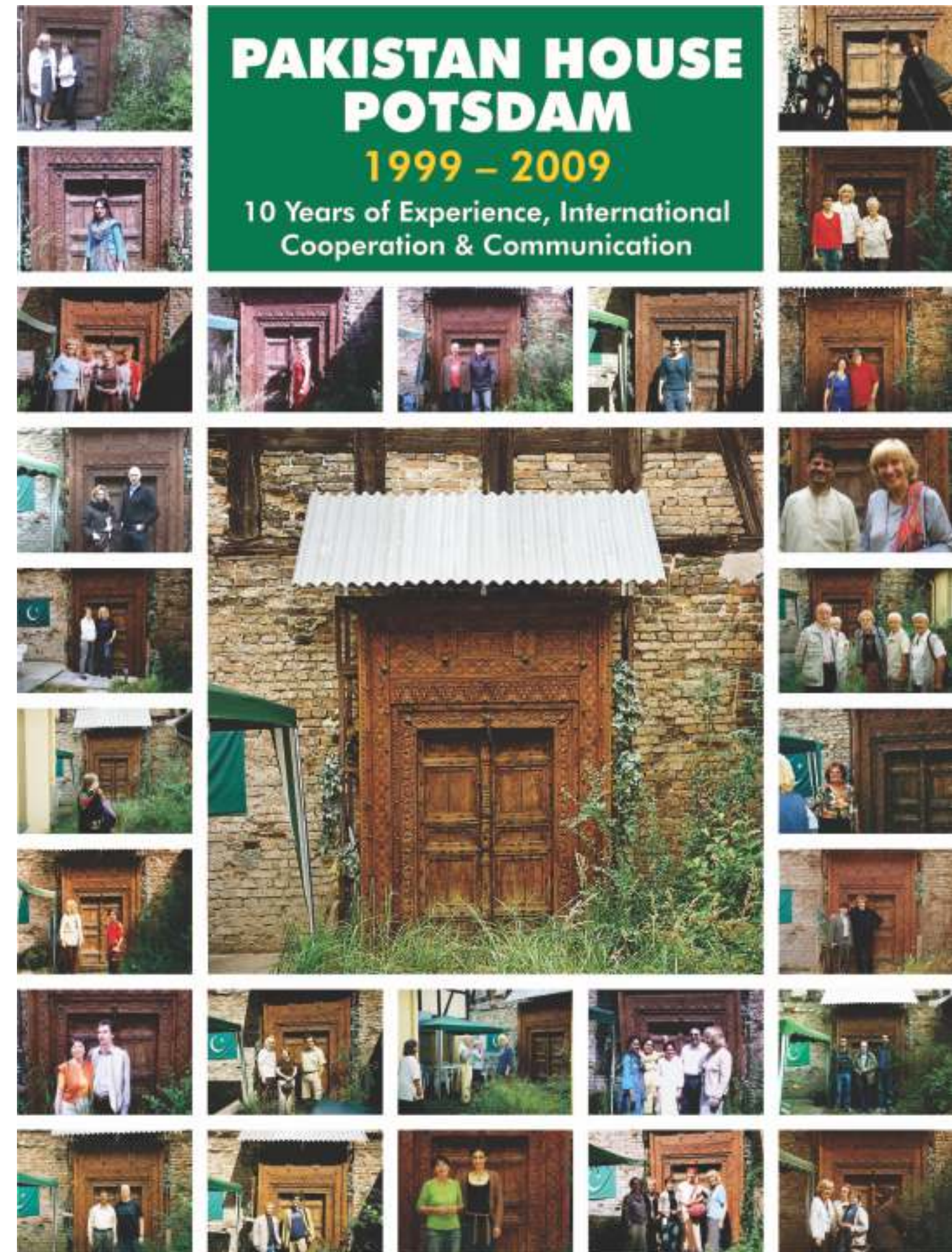


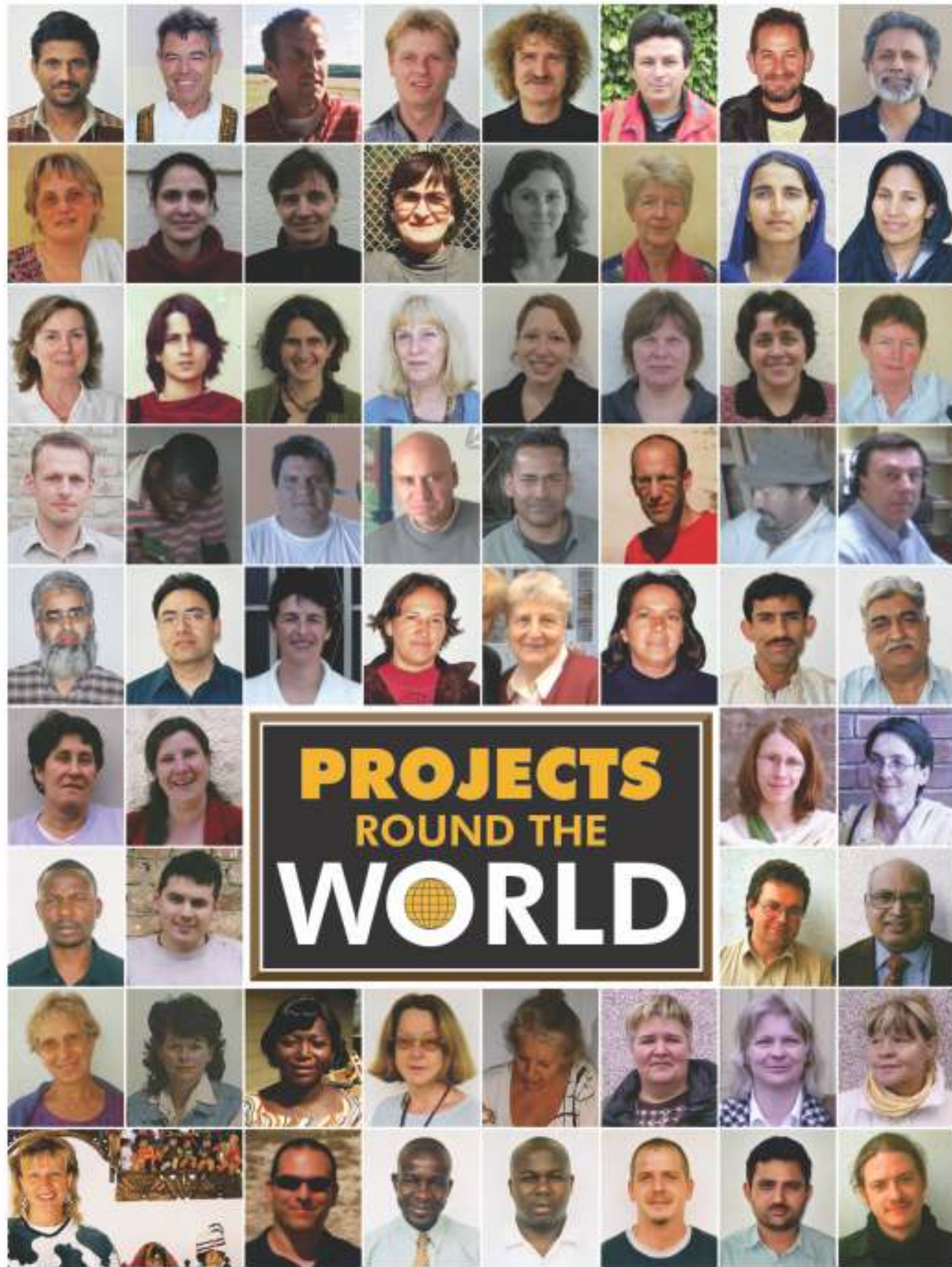
ANNEX

VOLUNTEERS





















Juniors 16 (33)	WAC	TTTC	BHU	EDUC	MISC.
Tobias (10)		✓		✓	
Leila (6)*			✓		
Gitte	✓				✓
Isabel	✓			✓	
Nadine	✓			✓	
Zephanja*		✓		✓	
Melanie		✓			
Alexandra				✓	
Sophie (2)				✓	
Jane				✓	
Marleen*				✓	
Joachim (2)					✓
Pivo					✓
Simon					✓
Roman (2)					✓
Uwe *					✓
Middle Age 12 (21)	WAC	TTTC	BHU	EDUC	MISC.
Karl*		✓			
Ursula (8)	✓				
Barbara*					✓
Renate (3)	✓			✓	
Lutz		✓		✓	
Rainer		✓			
Helga	✓				
Sabine	✓				
Christa	✓				
Klaus-Peter					✓
Cabbie	✓				
Norbert (x)*		✓		✓	✓
Seniors 13 (35)	WAC	TTTC	BHU	EDUC	MISC.
Karola (9)			✓		
Marlies			✓		
Werner		✓			
Gundula			✓		
Erika			✓		
Gertrud				✓	✓
Rotraud	✓				
Renate	✓				
Monika (9)	✓			✓	
Uta (4)	✓				
Bernhard (4)		✓			
Inge	✓				
Senta (x)*	✓			✓	✓





**PROJECTS
ROUND THE
WORLD**

 Tin Toys Original Handicraft from The Punjab	 Regional Dolls Original Handicraft from The Punjab	 Pottery Original Handicraft from The Punjab	 Stationary Embroid. Cards Original Handicraft from The Punjab
 Block Printing Original Handicraft from The Punjab		 Needle Work Original Handicraft from The Punjab	
 Wool & Wire Original Handicraft from The Punjab		 Camel Skin Original Handicraft from The Punjab	
 Stationary LetterPad Original Handicraft from The Punjab	 THATTA GHULAMKA DHIROKA Star of the Punjab	 Shoe Making Original Handicraft from The Punjab	
 Lacquer Work Original Handicraft from The Punjab		 Dolls Furniture Original Handicraft from The Punjab	
 THATTA KEDONA is a help for self-help project for village development www.thattakedona.com	THATTA KEDONA Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aman NGO Showroom Lahore, Cantt. 11/7 Allauddin Rd. Mr. Ilyas 0092-301-84 56986 thattakedona1@hotmail.com www.radiotv-thattavillage.com	 DGFK saac www.dgfk.de	

TGD Success Story

Dolls of the World | International NGO project |
Income Generation for Women in Rural Areas

AWARDS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

1990 First contact with TGD
 1991 Movie Production
 1992 Start of a small and private Basic Health Service
 1993 Start of Women Art Centre
 1996 First Award from Lok Virsa, Islamabad, Pakistan
 1996/7 Grant from Japanes Government for Solar Power Unit in Village
 1997 50 years of Pakistan, Exhibition in "House of the Cultures of the World" Berlin, Germany
 1998 Export Promotion Buereau Karachi & Pakistan Embassy in Bonn, Germany:
 Handicraft Exhibition: 12 NGOs from Pakistan, Bonn, Germany
 1999 Export Promotion Bueraeu Karachi: International Toys Fair in Nurenberg, Germany
 2000 Expo 2000, Award Best Worldwide Project from Asia, Hanover, Germany
 2001 Consul General and Commercial Counselor in Dubai: Sponsored Project on Pakistan Pavillion in Global Village / Dubai Shopping Festival, UAE
 2002 Export Promotion Bureau Karachi:
 Handicraft Exhibition: 6 NGOs from Pakistan, Import Shop Berlin, Germany
 2004 Olympic Games-Dolls from Pakistan: Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece
 2004 UN-IWSA, Silver Award, Izmir, Turkey
 2005 Expo 2005, Pakistan Pavillion, Aichi, Japan
 2007 UNESCO Award: Seal of Excellence, Islamabad, Pakistan

COOPERATIONS

Anjuman-e-Falah-e-Aama,-
 The Mother from 8 Daughters:
 Presentations, Participations

1993 Start in TGD, Pakistan	LokVirsa Museum Islamabad
1998 Cameroon	Museum Mont Febe, Yaounde
1999 Colombia	Museo Nacional, Bogota
2000 Iceland	National Museum, Reykjavik
	International Dolls Museum, Flateyri
2001 UAE-Dubai	
2002 Greece	Benaki-Museum, Athen
2003 Negev/Israel	
2004 Greenland	National Museum, Copenhagen
2005 Germany Ethnological Museums	Cologne, Leipzig, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Berlin

NETWORKING

TGD and 6 villages around TGD, 6 NGOs in Pakistan, Cooperation with the daughter-projects...

Clients in Pakistan (between 12 and 16)

Clients Abroad in Canada/USA, Europe, Australia/New Zealand, Japan

Special Clients: Collectors and Ethnological Museum, Cabbies Collectors Club for Certification of Origin

CONTACTS

- <http://www.thattakedona.com/>
- <http://www.camcatbam.com/>
- <http://www.tanto-mejor.com/>
- <http://www.id-museum.com/>
- <http://www.dy-museum.com/>
- <http://www.ac-criti-project.com/>
- <http://www.dolls-project.com/>
- <http://www.royalglobage.com/>
- <http://www.cultura-landgut-borsig.de/>



01 Photo; straw rattle



02 Photo: horse

Photographs



03 Photo: dota embroidered, long chains of dotas



04 Photo: silk dota with birds



05 Photo: small Churail



06 Photo: large Churail



07 Photo: finger puppet large



08 Photo: putli



09 Photo: Garuda



10 Photo: Muharrim horse with rider



11 Photo: two men with the load of offerings



12 Photo: farmer's family



13 Photo: camel with raja



14 Photo: birds



15 Photo: boat with passengers



16 Photo: boat with flags



17 Photo: beaded truck with cardboard wheels



18 Photo: helicopter



19 Photo: tractor of clay



20 Photo: bus of clay



21 Photo: tin vehicles



22 Photo: large tin tanker



23 Photos: Ethnic dressed dolls



Khalid Javaid



S A J Shirazi



Ulrike Vestring

DOLLS FROM

PAKISTAN



**Punjabi
Bride + Groom**

