

THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC VALUES ON NOMADIC LIFE OF CHOLISTAN AND THE STRUCTURAL STUDY OF BAHAWALPUR

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Abstract:

"Rohi" which is the well-known and normal name of the Cholistan Desert and this desert is a huge desert in the southern part of Punjab, Pakistan that structures share of the Greater Thar Desert, which stretches out to Sindh territory and the Indian province of Rajasthan. It is one of two huge deserts in Punjab, the other being Thal Desert. The name is acquired from the Turkic word chol, signifying "sands," and istan, a Persian addition signifying "place that is known for. North of 400 Harappan locales had been recorded in Cholistan during the 1970s, with a further 37 added during the 1990s. The high thickness of settlements in Cholistan proposes it might have been one of the most useful districts of the Indus Valley Civilization. In the post-Harappan period, Cholistan was essential for the Cemetery H culture which developed as an enduring territorial variation of the Harappan Culture, which was then trailed by the Painted Gray Ware culture. The life and the religion of the Cholistani people are different from each other. There are from different religion, life style, thoughts but they lived together happily.

Keywords: Rohi, Cholistan, Thar, Harrapa, Civilization

Introduction (Brief History of Bahawalpur):

The regal territory of Bahawalpur was established in 1802 by Nawab Mohammad Bahawal Khan II after the separation of the Durrani Empire, and was situated in the city. In 1807, Ranjit Singh of the Sikh Empire laid attack to the fortification in Multan, provoking displaced people to look for wellbeing in Bahawalpur right after his pillaging powers that started to go after the wide open around Multan. Ranjit Singh in the long run pulled out the attack, and skilled the Nawab of Bahawalpur a few gifts as the Sikh powers withdrew. Bahawalpur offered a station of security following disintegrating Mughal rule and declining force of Khorasan's government. The city turned into an asylum for conspicuous families from impacted locales, and furthermore saw a flood of strict researchers getting away from the solidification of Sikh power in Punjab.

Dreading a disturbance from the Sikh Empire, Nawab Mohammad Bahawal Khan III marked an arrangement with the British on 22 February 1833, ensuring the freedom of the Nawab and the independence of Bahawalpur as a regal state. The arrangement ensured the British well-disposed southern outskirts during their intrusion of the Sikh Empire. Shipping lanes had moved away from Bahawalpur by the 1830s, and British guests to the city noticed a few void shops in the city's market. The populace as of now was assessed to be 20,000, and was noted to be made up principally of low-position Hindus. Likewise in 1833, the Sutlej and Indus Rivers were opened to route, permitting products to arrive at Bahawalpur.

By 1845, recently opened shipping lanes to Delhi restored Bahawalpur as a business community. The city was referred to in the late nineteenth century as a middle for the development of silk merchandise, lungis, and cotton products. The city's silk was noted to be of greater than silk works from Benares or Amritsar. The 1866 emergency regarding progression to the Bahawalpur high position particularly expanded British impact in the royal state. Bahawalpur was established as a region in 1874. The city's Noor Mahal royal residence was finished in 1875. In 1878, Bahawalpur's 4,285-foot long Empress Bridge was opened as the main rail getting over the Sutlej River. Bahawalpur's Sadiq Egerton College was established in 1886. Bahawalpur's Nawabs praised the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887 in a state work at the Noor Mahal castle. Two clinics were laid out in the city in 1898. In 1901, the number of inhabitants in the city was 18,546.

Sufism in Bahawalpur State:

Bahawalpur emerged as a point of convergence of Chishti Sufism following the underpinning of a khanqa by Noor Muhammad Muharvi during the eighteenth century. Most occupants are Muslims with a little minority being Hindus. According to the instructions of Islam, obedience to Islam is equally important for both men and women. Women have no gender base restriction for understanding and implementation of Islam. Rather Islam emphasises on acquisition of religious knowledge for all Muslim and made them responsible for their own deeds after assigning them the duty to follow Islam. Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه)

(وسلم) declared it important that made gaining knowledge is responsibility of the entire Muslims irrespective of being men or women. It we take about “Uch, Land of the Saints”. The Tomb of Bibi Jiwindi, Baba al Haleem and Sheikh Nuria. The land of Saints because there are many tombs of saints. The mediaeval buildings of Uch are an important source of information on the history and development of Sultanate period architecture in Pakistan, and the influence that tenth and eleventh century central Asia had on style, building material, and facades. This style emerged during the Tughlaq period in central Punjab, aftr being adapted to the local environment and traditions. It became immensely popular and persisted until the beginning of the Mughal period.

Influence of Islam in life of Cholistanis People:

Religious Knowledge of Men and Women in Cholistan is very poor. Besides, there was contraction in the claim and on ground practices of the Islamic set of prayers by the women in the Cholistan. As discussed earlier, Islam is complete code of life and it surrounds all the walks of human life rather than mere declaration and claims. Islam begins with and gives guidance for the complete life of its followers; Contrary to this, Muslim women in Cholistan were not aware of even basic pillars of Islam. Most of them were aware of offering prayers, observing fasts and performing hajj but most of them were not even aware about Zakat as basic pillar of Islam. Likewise, most of the women who were aware of obligatory prayers were not aware about how to perform this obligation. They were aware of fasting and hajj as religious activity but most of them did not have knowledge about them as basics of Islam. It reflects that they were not aware about basic teachings and obligatory practices of Islam. There are several reasons behind this unawareness about basics of the Islam in the Cholistan area. First, this area is lagging behind in religious education and awareness due to several reasons. There are no sources of formal religious education like madrassa, religious seminaries, *Imam/molvi* and access to modern communication in the Cholistan. The problem becomes deeper because geographical conditions of the Cholistan prevent the outsider religious teachers to stay in Cholistan for imparting religious education and leading prayers. Lack of basic amenities of life, aloofness of the area from the rest of the country, poor transportation facilities and hard climatic conditions are the major factors for deprivation from religious education. In the absence of formal education and awareness through other sources such electronic and print media, there is poor awareness understanding religion in the Cholistan. Such geographical and economic condition limits educational opportunities for both men and women.

Bahawalpur’s Fort and Fortress Palaces:

“Bahawalpur’s Fort and Fortress Palaces” is the history and the science of fortification. Today, the forts of Cholistan are among the last traces of mediaeval civilization and architecture in Bahawalpur. Years of neglect, looting, and natural decay have cost them all but their original character and regrettably, their present owners have done little to conserve them as they should. The history and archeology of Cholistan forts. Here, we briefly describe the Derawar Fort, Derawr Mosque, Derawar Graveyard, Marot Fort, Maujgarh Fort, Phulra Fort, Jamgarh Fort and Islamgarh Fort. If we tell the “The Abbasid Palaces” here we found the central hall of Durbar Mahal. The Abbasid ameer ruled over the state of Bahawalpur for over 200 years.¹ Under their rule, the state developed an impressive architectural legacy, from the first simple residential palace, Chau Dari, to the foundations of the town of Allahabad. As the state grew, so too did its architecture, with the building of forts, palaces, and mosques. After Allahabad, the ameers made Derawar their capital and developed it accordingly. Later, as the city of Bahawalpur emerged as the Abbasids’ new royal capital, it became the heart of Abbasid architecture in India. In fact, the ameers did not confine themselves to building within their won territory. In planning and design, local environment was a primary consideration. The long hot summers meant that palaces had to be designed to allow the free circulation of air and incoming natural light. The Abbasid ameers developed a style of architecture that cleverly blended both local and foreign traditions-Delhi Sultanate, Mughal, Sikh, and even European. The Nur Mahal and Gulzar Mahal in Bahawalpur and the Sadiq Garh palace at Dera Nawab Sahib. Abbasid built cities- Bahawalpur and Derawar among them- were protected by fortification walls and entrance gates. Walled cities were common at the time, particularly so in the Muslim world. Chau Dari (building of four doors) was reputed to be the first of the Abbasid palaces, the residence of Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan-I (1723-1746).² Long since faleen, there are no remaining traces of this building. Among his early royal buildings, the Shish Mahal and Daulat Khana palaces are the more notable. The Shish Mahal was located near the present Jamia Mosque Al-Sadiq,³ where the ameer would hold court and attend to state guests. In 1787, forty years after the construction of this palace,

¹ Auj, Legacy of Cholistan, p.130

² Mirza Muhammad Ashraf Gorgani and Muhammad Din, Dadiq ul Tawareekh [Historis of Sadiq] (Bahawalpur: Sadiqul Anwar Press, 1899), p. 150.

³ Mirrat ul Ghafuria, Unpublished Persian manuscript in the collection of the Central Library of Bahawalpur, p.165.

Sardar Ahmad Khan Nurazi, a warring Afghan general attacked Bahawalpur and plundered the city.⁴ The Rageel Mahal or Mahal-i-Qadeem was constructed by Amir Muhammad Bahawal Khan III (1825-1852) at a specially selected site about 4 km south of Ahmad pur Sharqia, on the way to Derawar. The palace, which also has a basement, became known as the Rageel or Rangla Mahal because its façade was decorated with sprinkled paint. The palace walls were made of Lahori brick set with mud mortar, and painted with colourful floral patterns.⁵

The Daulat Khana is located on Durbar Roar, connecting the Bahawalgarh palaces on one side and the old Islamia University campus on the other. It is one of Bahawalpur's oldest palaces, rebuilt by Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan IV (1866-1899) in 1881 at a total cost of 0.2 million rupees. The palace is enclosed by a high, thick fortification wall, and the main entrance is through a large, wooden arched gateway that opens to the north. Rectangular in plan, the palace has a circular lobby in the British style at the front and a double row of rooms at the back. The rooms have extraordinary high ceilings and flat, trabeated roofs.⁶ Nur Mahal stands amidst rolling emerald green lawns. After the Sadiqgarh Palace, it is the largest and most beautiful of the Abbasid palaces. It was commissioned by the governor of the Punjab as a residence for Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan IV, popularly known as the Shah Jahan of Bahawalpur for his passion for constructing beautiful buildings. It was designed by Muhammad Husain, an architect from the Chief Engineer's Office in Lahore, and its construction supervised by a state engineer named Haenenan.⁷

Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan IV resided in the palace for a short time, but soon shifted out, possibly because of his apprehensions concerning its proximity to the graveyard of Maluk Shah. Later on, the palace was reserved solely for court functions. One of the most important events to be held at the Nur Mahal was the coronation of Ameer Muhammad Bahawal Khan V on 12th November, 1903.⁸ When we look on the construction of the Nur Mahal, we find the rectangular in plan. The Nur Mahal consists of square, double story rooms at each of its four corners, crowned with square domes. The central dome is octagonal, arching towards the center. It stands out as impressively with white pillars and domes that provide a contrast against the brick construction. The porch has a unique triangular face and bears the official state emblem.⁹ The palace was handed over to the Pakistan Army in a very poor state and was subsequently renovated with special emphasis given to conserving the original character of the building while enhancing its outstanding features. As a result of this renovation the palace is now well worth visiting, especially at night when it is beautifully illuminated. Durbar Mahal, originally known as Mubarak Mahal¹⁰ after the real name of Ameer Muhammad Bahawal Khan V, was purpose built to accommodate the central offices of the state. Later, when Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan Abbasi V introduced a democratic system in the state in 1947, the palace was used to house minister's offices and conduct state assembly sessions. Thereon, it became known as the Durbar Mahal.¹¹ Further, he elaborates the structure of Durbar Mahal. Its design in square plan and symmetrical, the palace stands on a four foot high platform. It is a double story building constructed of burnt brick set with mud mortar. The point load structure of the palace is enclosed by an arcade decorated with multi foil arched openings and blind multi foil arches. The palace has four main entrances built on massive platforms with double return stairs that lead through to the central octagonal transit hall. The entire roof of the palace is treated; apart from the dome of the bastion at its top, which is vaulted. The central corridors on the first floor are roofed with wire gauze to let natural light in, and holes for ventilation.

The Durbar Mahal still bears some decorative traces-engaged columns, pillars, and floral and geometrical designs created through carving, moulded brick, or stucco in relief. A hanging wooden circumbulation decorated with motif gauze of fastened bracket supports in the octagonal hall, is worth examining. A comprehensive conservation project executed by the Pakistan Army has helped substantially in conserving the palace. Named after a wife of Ameer Muhammad Bahawal Khan V, this palace lies between the other two palaces in the compound.¹² Its construction was initiated by the Ameer as a royal residence in 1905, and completed along with the other palaces in the compound in 1911. Square in plan, the palace stands on a raised platform with a raised terrace to its east and west. It is smaller in scale and height and different from the other palaces in the compound in design and plan. The whole palace is built of country brick and its

⁴ Quddusi, Tarrkh-e-Sindh, p.546.

⁵ Auj, Legacy of Cholistan, p.129.

⁶ Gazetteer of the Bahawalpur State, p. 357.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Aziz ur Rehman Aziz, Subah Sadiq [The Dawn of Sadiq, 2nd edn., Bahawalpur: Urdu Academy Bahawalpur, 1988], p. 172-173

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Bahawalpur Review, 2/4-5 (Jul.-Aug. 1954), p. 41

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Map of the Bahawalgarh palaces. p.75

walls plastered. The doors-some of them double doors, have colourfully decorated borders that display floral designs of possible European origin. The doors and windows all have trefoils arched and brightly painted panes, both also European in style. The white marble pillars of the verandas are carved in relief. Each room retains a fireplace, richly ornamented with stucco tracery.

Also named after a wife of the Ameer,¹³ the Nishat Mahal is a double storey building constructed on a high platform that extends outwards on all four sides. The palace has five octagonal rooms and a peculiar geometry of plan. At ground level, west of the buildings platform, is a decorative fountain of wrought cast iron. The fountain stands in a small, recently built water tank that has a raised border decorated with blue tiles. The palace is not extensively decorated, although pseudo-arches and oriel windows of red sandstone and built in relief bear traces of Mughal and Sikh influence. The keystones of the façade display a distinct floral motif that is often seen in Muslim architecture, while the receding nau motif. The Durbar Mahal Mosque is small building that stands in the center of the bahawalgarh palace compound. The mosque is built on a high platform, and has a rectangular prayer chamber with three arched openings at the front. The outer walls have a projecting mehrab in their center and a pseudo-arch crested with a taj and arched frame of red sandstone in relief, to the right and left of the mehrab.¹⁴ The prayer chamber has a minaret and canopy and a finial at each corner. Of the three fluted domes on the roof, the middle some is larger. The spandrels of the mosque's central arch are embellished with coloured tiles. The parapet wall consists of hollow oval structures. The floors of the chamber and courtyard are of white marble. The courtyard also retains a low boundary wall, its edge decorated with marbles.

Gulzar Mahal is constructed on one of the Ameer's wives named, Gulzar Begum. This palace is the plan of Ameer Bahawal Khan V, he did not live to see it completed. On his orders, construction began in 1906 and finished in 1909, two years after his death.¹⁵ It is the second state building that mirrors a more elaborated foreign influence as well as the renaissance of local architecture. It lies contiguous to the Bahawalgarh enclosure on its north eastern corner, while the Daulat Khana is some distance away to the North West. The whole palace is divided into four suites, each comprising double rooms with wooden that open into the corridor, and connecting circular dressing rooms, each with an adjoining square washroom. The main roof is bordered by a parapet, as is the rising roof of the central hall. The Gulzar Mahal was the first building in Bahawalpur to be equipped with concealed electric wiring and the system operated using a diesel generator. It is also the only site in the area with a supply of sweet drinking water. Sadiq garh palace is located in Dera Nawab Sahib, which is almost 39 km away from the Bahawalpur. This palace is built by Ameer Sadiq Muhammad Khan IV as his residential palace. It is perhaps one of the most classically beautiful of the Abbasid state palaces. Its construction started in 1882 and was completed in 1895,¹⁶ under the supervision of a committee which is appointed in consultation with the British Political Agent. This palace is best of high fortification, which is supported by buttresses built at intervals. There are two main entrances, one on the southern side of the palace and the other on the western side. The façade of the southern entrance is decorated with delicate fresco work and mural panels. Its huge wooden gates were probably used only by members of the royal family, the western gate sufficed for ordinary subjects. An avenue of bottle palms and decorative light pillars of cast iron lead to the palace's massive porch, which has an Anse de Panier and ogee arch, supported by neoclassical and composite order columns and two hanging chandeliers. There is an elaborately decorated, octagonal gazebo in front, built of red sandstone and white marble. The gazebo bisects a trench that contains a row of sprinkling water fountains. The imposing main hall has three huge mirrors that were imported from Britain.¹⁷

Conclusion:

Cholistan has a great land in Pakistan which has different kind of thoughts but they live together. Their life is too simple and unique. They are still living with old traditions and we can say that they are trying to animate their traditions and transforming it to their new generation. Bahawalpur is well known for its Forts, Palaces. These places are the monuments of Bahawalpur and also of Pakistan.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Site plan of Durbar Mahal, p.80

¹⁵ Aziz, Subh Sadiq, p.176

¹⁶ Gazetteer of the Bahawalpur State, p. 360.

¹⁷ Shabh, Sadiq Nama, p. 135

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