
“MILAAP: WHERE SALT MEETS THE SWEET WATER” LEARNING FROM INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIAL SPATIAL JUSTICE WOMEN/WATER/LAND/FRACTURED RELATIONS

ABSTRACT — *Milaap* is a documentary film that tells the story of three women and how their lives are impacted by negligent urban and rural planning and its consequences on the river and the sea. “*Milaap*” is an Urdu word that translates to “union.” *Milaap* is an ode to continued struggle, learning from the knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples from the Indus River, who call themselves residents of the water and have a distinct language, script, and culture. *Milaap*, conceptualized and researched by Marvi Mazhar and Abuzar Madhu and directed by Zohaib Kazi, documents water prayers, poetry, and songs from different geographic coordinates along the water terrain. The film focuses on three locations and three stories near the river and the sea of activist fisherwomen who explain environmental toxicity between urban and rural development. My activist practices are rooted in the understanding that environmental, social, spatial, and infrastructural justice is urgent. They emerge from a contested atmosphere as I am learning from allies and companions of the Women’s Rights Action Forum, the Aurat March, and the Climate March, whose public statements give a sense of freedom and hope.

KINSHIP AND SOLIDARITY IN A FRACTURED LANDSCAPE — The Aurat March (Women’s March), held since 2018, is a recurring political demonstration organized by local feminists in an effort to raise issues relating to women and reshape political discourse. The Aurat March has made waves on Pakistani social media and gained virality for the slogans they have raised highlighting women’s concerns relating to self-determination and consent. Over the years, the march and its organizers have had to face cyberbullying for raising their voices in a way that has been deemed uncivil by the conservative ulema¹⁾ and celebrities. The Aurat March’s Lahore chapter wrote on a public platform: “the feminist movement is as strong and vibrant as ever, pushing past fear and hopelessness to make way for resilience and defiance. We carry the history of our foremothers forward to the tune of our own beat. Thank you for everyone who marches with us [...] in 2024, and to those who couldn’t – we marched for you. Thank you to all our performers for lending language to the movement and donating time. You are the

1)

Conservative ulema are religious Islamic Sunni scholars who base their case arguments on the Prophet’s sayings and politicize between religion and the state.

soundtrack to resistance. *Jab tak aurat tang rahay gi; jang rahay gi, jang rahay gi*” (So long as the woman is agitated, the fight will continue).²⁾

— With slogans like “These are my streets too,”³⁾ the Aurat March has become an agent in a wave started by the women of Pakistan to reclaim public spaces. The fight against the control of the movement of marginalized bodies has also been a central focus of mine. From successfully petitioning the state to end the development of fences around Frere Hall to organizing weekly walks to unearth the legacy buried in the Old Town, I have always fought for the principle of unobstructed movement.

— My work as a feminist architect/advocate and practitioner in the past decade has been largely focused on one question: How might paying attention to the built environment – really paying attention to it, its development, maintenance, and preservation, its relationship to the environment and public infrastructure, and how it organizes itself and other bodies – open up into a different kind of imaginative space, perhaps disrupting existing foundational concepts and beliefs that have been inherited through colonial legislations and politically motivated policies. I find kinship and solidarity in the Aurat March and bring this feminist attention and energy from the “politics of the street” to the politics of water (Butler 2011). This made me think a lot about the watery edge and its relation to land, as Astrida Neimanis observes: “I have been wondering if I think *with* water rather than *about* it, and if I invite water to be a collaborator or an interlocutor in how I imagine or theorize the world, might I also treat water better?” (Neimanis 2012).

— The floods of August 2022, monumental in the scale of devastation and human suffering, were difficult to understand and digest. The ecological and human damage caused by floods in Pakistan was estimated at \$14.9 billion, equivalent to 4.8 percent of the GDP. As a direct consequence of the floods, around 9 million people had likely been pushed into poverty. The most heart-wrenching aspect of the floods was that they weren’t entirely unprecedented. Pakistan experienced flood disasters in modern history just 12 years ago. This devastation and years of experiencing fractured systems in the governance of land ownership and the distribution of power led me to develop the project *Milaap*. It is an emotional journey that allows a global public to learn and celebrate the sea’s union with the fresh river water in the delta region; listening to songs, folklores of the water, and historical

2)

A slogan for continued struggle from the Aurat (Women’s) March 2024.

3)

A slogan for reclaiming public spaces from the Aurat (Women’s) from March 2017 onwards.



// Figure 1

Still from the film: Mai Mukhtyar from the Punjnad Canal, where five rivers meet (Siraiki Waseb, Pakistan), declares rivers as nurturers, as embodiments of wisdom and love.

knowledge of the moon cycle with the women of the village but simultaneously questioning this *union* which is disrupted and has destroyed the ecosystem through man-made disorder, resulting in a broken, unequal, and toxic promise for the future generation.

LISTENING AND LEARNING WITH FIELD NOTES — The Women of the River: Mai Bashiran,⁴⁾ Mai Mukhtyar, ⁵⁾ and Ammas of the Hindu Village⁶⁾

— The documentary film *Milaap* (30 min., 2023)⁷⁾ attempts to learn from powerful women and caregivers of the river: Mai Bashiran, Mai Mukhtyar, and the Ammas of the village. The opening sequence is a form of visual investigation to open questions about the significance of land and water protection in times of climate crisis. It moreover provides a deeper insight into the rich, locally shared, inherited knowledge that continues to advocate for living with water, as an ally, in a counter push back towards external development decisions as a form of the future. In this essay, I will build upon stories of three activist fisherwomen from three locations near the river and the sea who will talk about environmental degradation, land rights, and human/non-human epistemologies through poems, songs, and inherited knowledge. The project builds upon existing collaborations with the agricultural land activists and the community-allied fisherwomen.

— Learning from field notes and conceptualizing the script of the film *Milaap* (Union) is an attempt to learn from the critical knowledge of the women through their lived experiences of action-based, social spatial justice and ecological practices and to understand climate policy from a gender ecology perspective to address the climate crisis. Today, we desperately need new methods for imagining the relationship between humans and nature. *Thinking with Water* (Chen et al. 2013) narrates the ecological breakdown through women living on the fractured watery landscape. Today, wetlands, mangroves, swamps, bogs, marshes, and mudflats have been drained to “improve” land for centuries, be it to impose monoculture farmland, create real estate, displace “fugitive” people, and impose state control through surveillance.

— Coastlines (islands, coasts, rivers) exist today perhaps in one of the most fragile ecosystems. Investigating the ecological epistemologies of the spaces between land and sea, witnessing the surveillance between the mainland and the islands, the ecological deterioration of the estuary and aqueous terrain – the coastal

4)

Mai Bashiran: River activist and fisherwoman of the *Mohana* community residing in Kot Addo, Siraiki Waseb. She is an influencer of the area, spreading awareness of water rights.

5)

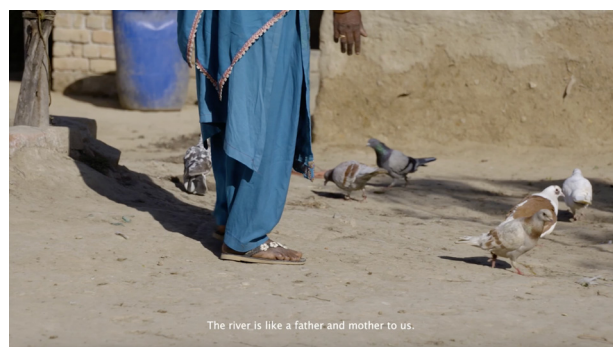
Mai Mukhtyar: The only boat driver of the Punjad Canal, Siraiki Waseb.

6)

Ammas of the Hindu Village: The mothers of the Hindu village in Mirpurkhas, Sindh.

7)

The documentary was produced by Marvi Mazhar, directed by Zohaib Kazi, and researched and developed by Marvi Mazhar and Abuzar Madhu. This project was an extension of the previous grant from the British Council, *Sahil ki Kahaniyaan* (Stories from the Sea) (2021) merging with the Gender Ecologies Grant (2022–23).



The river is like a father and mother to us.

// Figure 2

Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): Mai Bashiran shares an intimate moment of her relationship to the river.

periphery – within the complex layers of the vast urban metropolises’ unethical development, industrial, and infrastructural waste directly impacts and affects the vulnerable rural lands resulting into toxic soil, a disturbed water table, and compromised air quality.

— “Slow violence” (Nixon 2011) is delayed violence, and its effects are only visible after a while. The sacred geography of the urban/rural estuary where the river (sweet water) meets the coast (salt water) is constantly changing. The extraction of natural resources, capitalistic pursuits, and environmental degradation decrease the amount of water flowing down the Indus River. This prevents seawater from intruding inland by creating a raised shoreline. The film investigates the effects on Indigenous life-making projects, in particular, the impact of extractivism on the delta. *Salt* is understood under the following two aspects: man-made salt pans and the global crisis of the rising sea water level, leaving the wasteland in the delta with a high saltwater table in green pastures. We locate ourselves in between the Indus Delta and Saraiki Waseb (South of Province Punjab) to understand *salt* and its relation to the land and water through an ethnographic exploration.

— I relate infrastructural imagination through the concept of the “fish,” which represents the fishermen’s community. *Palla* is the local name for a river fish, otherwise known as *hilsa*.⁸⁾ This fish is the *samandari badshah* (King of the Sea), a monsoonal species that inhabits the ocean’s coastline, at the apex of the delta. The *palla* spends most of its life in the ocean and migrates to the rivers of the delta to breed – a spawning migration from salt water to sweet water. Here, the fish, a non-human entity, is victim to the slow violence occurring in the Indus River, starting from the coastal ecological disposal of industrial waste to delta salinity issues leading to dry land, barrages, and dams.

— It is important to tell the story of saint Khawaja Khizr, the ultimate guide of the coast, who safeguards the fundamental ecosystem. Khizr’s presence is found in various locations along underdeveloped areas of the coast and the river. His presence is celebrated at various geographic locations – some physical, some imaginary, but his ultimate resting space is in the upper Indus River, in Sukkur on a small island.

Today, the *palla* suffers from traveling to its patron in the Indus River due to infrastructural zoning, irrigational interventions, and unethical fish farming that has resulted in a shortage of *hilsa*.

— Here, the fish becomes the analogy of the fishermen

8)

Monsoon Assemblages Exhibition/
Changing Hilsa Waterworlds. “Hilsa used to migrate to the Upper Sindh section of the Indus River, but recently their range has been drastically reduced, and this mobilizes patterns that are an indicator of shifting human-nonhuman relations,” see <http://exhibition.monass.org/>.



The saint's power keeps the indigenous communities together on sacred geography

// Figure 3

Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): A drone shot of the tributary in Saraiki Waseb, where we discuss the river saint Khawaja Khizr’s presence and its relation to water.

community which is vulnerably residing on the periphery of the coast, or the islands which are constantly affected by real estate agents/developers putting precious wetlands and the fishermen living around there at risk, or military agencies occupying land in the name of security and making the movement of fishermen tedious. Mai Bashiran speaks to us gently about her relationship with Khwaja Khizr, a direct conversation between her and the saint/*darya* (river). She claims that when the river is at its peak in a state of intensity, it is the time for *manat* (time for making vows) and she negotiates her request through constant *sewa* (service/care) of the river.

— The sacred geographic coordinates are marked by shrines, trails, alignments, and archaeological sites. Throughout the research, I have highlighted several shrines that are important along the contested shoreline of Pakistan. The saints' power keeps the Indigenous communities together on the land and the sea. Believers interact with *sacred thresholds* through offerings, by narrating stories about them, and by communities celebrating saints' powers from catastrophes. These beliefs are not materially marked, but the architecture brings the communities together either weekly as part of paying respect or yearly festive events, *urs*. Yet these *sacred thresholds* keep changing their shape and position continuously because of dynamic environmental conditions and constant, man-made, external interventions, especially the appearance of real estate agents. They develop and redesign the geography for investments or the military creates check posts and bureaucratic urgencies like non-objectionable certification (NOC) to commute to and from the island to the mainland. Today, liquid grounds are controlled by man-made infrastructures, and land is controlled for speculative development.

— It is important to observe different developing spatial temporalities of everyday growing landscape in built environment. For example, it is critical to understand the land's relation to the sea, saline water meeting fresh water in the estuary, creating ecological balance, but the developers keep conceptualizing real estate extending outwards beyond the coastal edge as a form of reclaimed land, where fishing grounds have been converted into grid-based housing societies. This makes one analyze coastal capitalism and review archival maps to understand the act or politics of making a land or the process of reclaiming land as a political extension of a state's power and economy. As a result, the ecology gets affected and Indigenous voices disappear.



// Figure 4

Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): As we stood next to the Taunsa Barrage in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan, we witnessed the river edge taken over by commercial developers, real estate agents, and militarized control.

— Mai Mukhtyaran emphasizes countless times of living with *bo*, physically experiencing the toxicity through the rotten smell of the river and the fish. She says “river,” which is a metaphor for life, and then questions whether it is possible for rivers to carry that stench. It felt as if Mai described the cruel, patriarchal, and capitalistic system using the metaphor of *bo* (pungent smell). The system has filled humans with greed and lust, a stench of being *behis* (apathetic), with human and industrial waste contaminating the ecology, but this *bo*, a man-made disorder, has invaded our internal soul.

— Mai Mukhtyaran continues and explains “power.” She questions patriarchal infrastructure through the analogy of gender captivity and explains women’s rights through dam gates and control. Listening to Mai, the attention turns to the huge concrete structures of the dams and the iron gates of the barrages. Built with loans from the World Bank and major powers in the billions, this inefficient and discarded technology is no longer used anywhere in the world. And how these dams, built at the cost of billions, are slowly causing danger to the river and the earth. Mai Mukhtyaran knows that walls are built so that a free entity can be used for its own interest and purpose. It is no secret that the water of the river does not reach the delta, which has been the course of the river for thousands of years. Who is in control? Where is the river itself? Where is the river’s path? That is why Mai was saying that if the *darya* (river) is free, then we women will also be free.

— In the past decades, however, these liminal landscapes have been legally recognized for being important biodiverse habitats, crucial migratory bird stopovers, water-filtering zones, and invaluable buffers against sea flooding and storms, contributing to overall climate resilience. Located in the lands of the community, megaprojects have rezoned the area from rural to urban, draining the wetlands and fragmenting the grazing commons as a side-effect.

ECO-THINKING THROUGH SONGS OF THE SOIL AND THE RIVER —

Literature on the climate does not account for ecofeminist theories nor does it address the interrelations between postcolonial and ecofeminist theories. Ecological studies have largely ignored women’s relationship to the land and food, despite largely being associated with more domestic jobs, again conforming to the binary whereby women are seen as separate from nature, or more specifically, the



// Figure 5
Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): “It is critical to understand that to colonize water is to colonize certain forms of knowledge and the ability to know differently.”

climate and the injustice it poses. Rehman claims that to some extent the lack of female land ownership can account for this gap.

— According to Rahman, “Environmental justice is inextricably bound to social justice everywhere but especially in places such as Pakistan, where the effects of climate changes are compounded by issues of patriarchy and the landowning class structure” (Rahman 2017: 5). The documentary is an academic study, as well as an archive of various water prayers and songs from different geographic coordinates along the water terrain. The women in this section share their intimacy and beloved relation to ancestral lands and the ecology through these prayers.

“Indigenous peoples have deep spiritual, cultural, social, and economic connections with their lands, territories, and resources, which are basic to their identity and existence itself. Their tradition of collective rights to lands and resources – through the community, the region, or the state – contrast with dominant models of individual ownership, privatization, and development. There is growing recognition that advancing Indigenous peoples’ collective rights to lands, territories and resources not only contributes to their well-being but also to the greater good, by tackling problems such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity” (UN Development 2018).

— “O Keenjhar Wari” is a song set in the story that appears in the *Shah Jo Risalo* (a book of poems by Sindhi Sufi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai transmitted orally during his lifetime and compiled after his death as Poetry of Shah) and Noori’s story forms part of seven popular tragic romances (*The Shah’s Seven Queens of Sindh*). Mai Bashiran sings the song lovingly in remembrance of Prince Jam Tamachi’s falling in love with the charming fisherwoman Noori. The poetry is set in between three freshwater lakes: Lake Manchar, Lake Jherruk, and Lake Keenjhar in Sindh. Mai Bashiran explains that “water witnesses” the love and becomes a testimony to their beloved relationship. According to the legend, Noori was buried in the middle of Lake Keenjhar, as it is believed that the water will be the caretaker of Noori.

— Shah Latif sketches the intimacy between humans and nature in his work as a testimony that both are never separate, and the narrative has been woven together for centuries.



// Figure 6
Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): Mai Bashiran sings “O Keenjhar Wari” in the middle of the lake in Kot Addu.



— The two songs, “O Keenjhar Wari” and “Wahnde di man tae,” extend the idea of the co-witnesses’ feeling by a shared lens or produced in and by relationship between human and non-humans (Youatt, 2017). Shela Sheikh says that non-human forms of life can actively register environmental conditions and form parts of multispecies’ world-making practices, as well as provide us with alternatives to representational schemas. She further expands by using Givoni’s framework, in which witnessing holds a distinctive form of ethics and politics. In these two songs the women emphasize to contest individualism, especially the contemporary neoliberal governing mentality.

— The folk song “On the bank of the flowing river” beautifully portrays a profound relationship between two individuals who find love and belonging in the presence of the flowing river. The river serves as a witness to their affectionate bond, with its continuous flow symbolizing the enduring nature of their emotions. Their love is intrinsically tied to the river, as its tranquility and continuity inspire a sense of unity and harmony. The repetitive line “On the banks of the flowing river” reinforces the river’s significance as a catalyst for their love, highlighting the inseparable connection between their affection and the river.

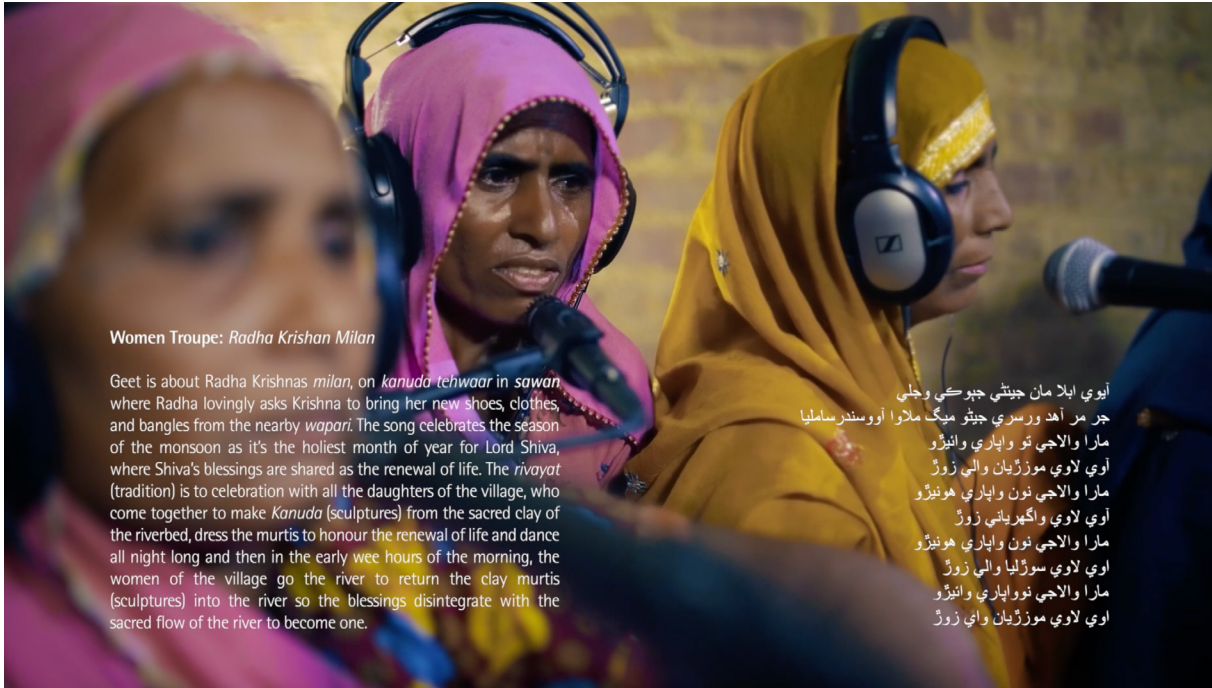
— The last song, “Radha Krishan Milan,” beautifully rendered by the mothers of the Hindu⁹⁾ village, is about Radha Krishna’s *milan* (coming together) on *kanuda tehwaar* (a religious festival) in *sawan* (spring), where Radha lovingly asks Krishna to bring her new shoes,

// Figure 7

Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): Mai Mukhtyar sings “Wahnde di man tae.”

9)

According to the 2017 Pakistani census and the Pakistan Hindu Council, Hindus make up 2.14 % of Pakistan's population, or about 4.4 million people.



Women Troupe: Radha Krishan Milan

Geet is about Radha Krishnas *milan*, on *kanuda tehuwar* in *sawan* where Radha lovingly asks Krishna to bring her new shoes, clothes, and bangles from the nearby *wapari*. The song celebrates the season of the monsoon as it's the holiest month of year for Lord Shiva, where Shiva's blessings are shared as the renewal of life. The *rivayat* (tradition) is to celebration with all the daughters of the village, who come together to make *Kanuda* (sculptures) from the sacred clay of the riverbed, dress the murtis to honour the renewal of life and dance all night long and then in the early wee hours of the morning, the women of the village go the river to return the clay murtis (sculptures) into the river so the blessings disintegrate with the sacred flow of the river to become one.

آوي ابلان جيئتي جيوكي وجلي
جر مر اهد ورسري جيئو مينگا ملاو اووسندر سامليا
مارا والاجي تو واپاري وانيزو
آوي لاي موزريان والي زور
مارا والاجي نون واپاري هونيزو
آوي لاي واگهرياني زور
مارا والاجي نون واپاري هونيزو
آوي لاي سوڙليا والي زور
مارا والاجي نو واپاري وانيزو
آوي لاي موزريان واي زور

clothes, and bangles from the nearby *wapari*. The song celebrates the season of the monsoon as it is the holiest month of the year for Lord Shiva, where Shiva's blessings are shared as the renewal of life. The *rivayat* (tradition) is to celebrate with all the daughters of the village who come together to make *Kanuda* (sculptures) from the sacred clay of the riverbed, dress the murtis to honor the renewal of life, and dance all night long. In the early hours of the morning, the women of the village then go to the river to return the clay *murtis* (sculptures) to the river so that the blessings disintegrate with the sacred flow of the river to become one.

— This beautiful rendition, sung as a form of communal voice, highlights the importance of disintegration and working nature with care and responsibility. These long hours of interviews are an attempt to articulate the potential power of the women living next to the watery edge, sharing, and reimagining the river and ocean-based knowledges. *Pooja* (worship) and *sajda* (bowing down) are an act of submission while thinking and praying to and for river flow in an ever-shifting terrain. The activists continue negotiating for ecological rights within the statehood, capitalism, and challenging development. It is to think of decentering the conversation toward independent, alternative ways of knowing and producing knowledge that allow for empowerment and self-determination within a modern and multisite world. The songs, experiences, and inherited knowledge within the fisherwomen and farmers' community involve a knowledge situated in a specific place and space,

// Figure 8

Still from the film *Milaap* (2023): Ammas (mothers) of the Hindu village

which is oceanic, and river-based, that privileges an alternative political and ethical relationship with the surrounding physical and spiritual world.

Darya o Darya... tu sada piyo maa asa teray pungay

(River, o river, you are our father and mother, and we are your children).

ٲونگهے دريا او پاني
پونگے تيڙے اساں مان پيو اساڏا ٲون

ٲڪهڙي تيڙي ڏهپ دريا او دريا
لڪهڙي دي عمران گني لنگه وچ بيڙياں

جاني دا دل ڏسا دريا او دريا
پاني تيڙا ڪتھان ٲڪهڙو تيڙے ڪتھان

[Text in Siraiki]

— River activist Ashu Lal’s captivating poem (Lal 2015) reflects the profound river-centric relationship between the Indigenous community and the flowing waters. In just a few lines he paints a vivid picture of the river as a nurturing mother and a caring father to its fish-like children. The poem portrays the river as more than just a physical entity; it is a spiritual and emotional presence in the lives of the people. Ashu Lal questions: Where did your birds go? Where did your water go? And suggests that “we need a new Indus Water Treaty” where its people make a policy for themselves and where the river is regarded as a living entity; how it has been a tradition for many years,” as Mai Mukhtyar says. If we set Khwaja free, then we will also be free because we are in Khwaja and Khwaja is in us.

CONCLUSIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES — If there is anything our 1000-kilometer journey has taught us, it is that we need to develop more dialogue between urban and rural centers. We learned that

the rural conversation has wisdoms that date beyond the Industrial Revolution and capitalism. We learned that to lend the Indigenous a bigger voice, we need to give the rural centers more reach. We learned that irrespective of our religious beliefs, we are all connected through water.

— Feminist ecologies emerge at the intersection of two progressive twentieth-century political movements: one concerned with the fight for women's rights and the other with ecological sustainability within the environment. The capacity of feminist ecologies to reveal the interconnectedness of environmental and social injustices makes it an urgent and timely field of inquiry for the current moment. These field notes arise out of the need to address the challenges of climate change, land degradation, species extinction, and the disproportionate effects of these changes upon particular communities of women and their livelihoods.

— To understand infrastructural rupture is to accept that too many regional voices are missing from this landscape when we discuss climate justice. The impacts and solutions are coming from all parts of the world – while the locals battle floods in Pakistan. One witnesses the infrastructural ruptures and disparity along the region, through various disproportionate vantage points. Pakistan is among the ten countries at the highest risk of natural disasters, according to the [World Risk Index](#). All the institutions, policies, plans, and strategies put in place to cope with emergencies are merely limited to paper. In a practical sense, the country has never taken disaster management as a serious matter. Hardly any work has been done on improving the institutions that work on disaster management.

— Pakistan has a very diverse landscape that requires different planning in different regions. It is extremely important to understand the politics of water and land through the voice of the community; their voice needs to be part of the planning schemes. It is now critical to draw cross-sectoral linkages and impacts of climate change by centering on solidarities and alliances and by accommodating marginalized communities into planning processes. In the land of the Sufis, where geography is considered sacred, and the relationship is beyond economic transaction. As an architect and infrastructural and spatial advocate, I would conclude with the query: Does Pakistan need to apply global development methodology or spatial democratic justice? In a climate-catastrophic atmosphere, it is now a fundamental function to understand the sacred geography through the lens of care management, and this, in my view, has become more urgent than ever.

———A prayer of a fish from the Chenab River written by Abuzar Madhu (a performing artist and researcher):¹⁰⁾

Ya Khizr

O spiritual guide of the water

Bless us

Our tears are flowing.

Mai is pretty, however she's sad.

The river is drying up.

Chenab is dying.

We can't breathe.

O true guide of ours, intervene for us

The lands have been divided and so have the rivers.

Reincarnate the lost lives of the river.

My beloved

Please fulfill our prayers.

10)

The poem, originally written in Punjabi by Abuzar Madhu in 2021, has never been published in book form. Coming from the artist's diary, it was used in the artist's performances. The translation used here has been approved by Abuzar Madhu.

// Field Companions

Mai Bashiran, (Taunsa Barrage Punjab, Saraiki Waseb), Mai Mukhtyar, (Punjab Canals/Panjab head Punjab, Saraiki Waseb) Mai Zainab Dholwani (Umerkot, Sindh), Shaam Bai (Tandoallahyar, Sindh), Bhagat Bhoro Lal (Chauru Bhugri, Mirpurkhaas, Sindh), Meenaxi (Chauru Bhugri, Mirpurkhaas, Sindh), Savita (Chauru Bhugri, Mirpurkhaas, Sindh), Community Welcome Song by Ammas (Women's Troupe)/Radha Krishan Milan, Shehzad Shafi, Ashu Lal, Saen Nishat, Kamran, Munir Sheikh, Sanwal Gurmani, Fazal Lund, and Dr. Farhat Abbas

// Research & Creativity Companions

Marvi Mazhar, Abuzar Madhu, Zohaib Kazi, Kiran Ahmad, Bilal Sagar, and Corinna Dean

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//About the Author

Marvi Mazhar is an architect and researcher whose practice combines visual culture, spatial advocacy, and interventions. Her present ongoing research focuses on the representation and production of Karachi's urban coastal periphery and its ecology. Mazhar's advocacy creates a dialogue between the changing footprint of Karachi's inner city through personal archives, and the visual ethnography of *purana shehr* (old town) versus *naya shehr* (new/reclaimed town). Through her practice, she continues to examine how cities grow in an isolated architectural design practice versus those in a *mohalla*/neighborhood-based one.

Mazhar co-curated the exhibition and co-edited the book *Yasmeen Lari. Architecture for the Future* with Angelika Fitz (Director of the AzW, the Austrian Architecture Museum in Vienna), and Prof. Elke Krasny (Head of the Art and Education Program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna) for the Architekturzentrums Wien, published by The MIT Press, 2023.

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