

ART AND ARCHITECTURE AS A SPACE FOR KALASH IDENTITY (A CASE STUDY OF BUMBURET VALLEY IN DISTRICT CHITRAL PAKISTAN)

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in Bumburet valley of Kalash, District Chitral, Pakistan. The key technique used for data collection was participant observation in which the researcher lived in the community, observed and documented their cultural patterns as an indicator of their traditional culture which includes religious songs, folklore, dress, art and crafts, as a basis for identity. The basic purpose of the study was to understand the role and significance of arts and architecture as a prime tool for establishing identity for the conventional people of Kalash. The people of Kalash have managed to maintain their identity through their unique arts and crafts. Tradition resists change and most often remains unaltered in a static spatial arrangement. The changes which incorporate in Kalash traditions may find their way through peripheral adjustments. The traditions in art and crafts are scanty to find and the present artifacts does not throw any light on their origin. The art and architecture available signify their unique ways, and tradition which is definitely different from the other ethnic tribes in the shared geographical arrangement. The Kalash ethnic identity has faced several challenges like colonization in the past and modernization and technological advancement and conversion to Islam in the present. The Kalash insist on keeping their self-identity as well as participating in modernity. They have maintained their centuries old traditional culture, despite the fact of current globalization, and modernization.

Keywords: arts, crafts, traditions, colours, symbols, civilization, museums, restaurants

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Introduction

Any patterned application of skill is called art. The skill may be in any field as varied as cooking, games, oratory, graphics, paintings, architecture, music, poetry, sculpture and pottery. Birds adorn their nests with gaily colored leaves, shells, feathers, stones and bits of clothes or ribbons found in the haunts of man (Darwin, 1871). The art appeals to the aesthetic sense, it conveys the message to the viewer about the artist, his inner feelings, his background and the artistic wants to convey to the viewer about his exciting state of affairs. For an anthropologist the work of art indicates awareness of social, ritual and economic framework of the traditional culture of any society. There is symbolism attached to the meanings of these artifacts. Gregory Batson describes art as a “fundamental part of man’s search for grace” (Batson, 1973). The work of art is considered as a window to the psychic complexity of the artist. The important thing is the psychic union of the head and the heart of the artist in his work of art. This personal expression of meaningful patterns based on imagined experiences accompanied by the feeling of rightness (Firth, 1992) later emerged as the space of their traditional identity. Relics and object d’art are the means of satisfaction and recognition of true inner feelings of the artist in accordance with his values. This patterning is largely symbolic having a particular meaning, a coded message, to represent some sensitive aspect of life. Patterning of art involves some complex combination of cognitive, evocative elements (ibid). Every Quixote believes his dulcinea to be the sweetest of the fair. Ask a toad what is beauty? The answer will be in the name of his female with great round eyes coming out of her little head, her large flat mouth, her yellow belly and brown back (Durant, 1995). Beauty and ugliness are biological, whatever has proved racially seems harmful and ugly (Nietzsche).

Religion and art both serve as an idealization of nature and man as the culminating point of the process of nature (ibid). Man, to end his quest to find the supreme authority carves shapes in stones to define the divine power. Art cannot be termed as lower or degrading in comparison with the artisan of other civilizations. Kalash art has its own value and importance to serve as a space for their cultural identity in the midst of another group they are coexisting with, in the region. There is no justification of comparing the art of Kalash with Greek art. It is a fact that Greek art is a mature, creative, innovative and civilized form of art and is superior to Kalash art in many fields and appears as a superior civilization. However, the art of Kalash symbolizes a lower civilization; though it reflects the best capabilities of the people’s artistic expression and aesthetics. Those Kalash

drawings are the means which facilitate the anthropologists, archeologists and paleontologist to reveal the mysterious past in the same manner as the primitive art is beneficial to understand the evolutionary process experienced by the man. In reality primitive art symbolizes a lower civilization with best capabilities of the people of its time.

Art can only be analyzed by keeping in view the elements and principles of design like rhythm in line, mass or proportion, balance, space, light, shape and above all color philosophy. These laws of designs are followed universally, but when applied to art by different people and races they generate different modes of aesthetic expression. People with sensitive mind and artistic skills are unfortunately influenced by the political, religious and racial facet. Every form of art characterized different type of people with different degree of sensitivity as required by their thought process and the medium of expression. The work created by an Aryan race when compared with Semites will be influenced by the racial politics. It is humanly difficult to eradicate the racial biases when analyzing art because of the factual reality of thoughts and creativity of the artist (Collingwood, 1958:165).

Research Site

The study was conducted in Bumburet valley of district Chitral, Pakistan. The modern state of Chitral district is located in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. This state was once an old country with its borders extending up to Badakhshan and Bashagal in the North West and the Kunar Valley in the south all the way to Bilam and Chaghasswari. Most of these areas now lie in Afghanistan. The border of the state was not permanent due to the ongoing expansion of the neighboring state of Gilgit and Kashakar. Bumburet Valley of Kalash is part of Chitral and it laid claim to a land of steep slopes, some 35 kilometers to the south of Chitral which opens towards the Kunar River. During 1959 the kingdom of Chitral was attached to Pakistan and therefore the Kalash people became citizens of Pakistan. The total area of Bumburet valley is 180 Sq. Km out of which 51 Sq. Km is habitable and cultivable. There are six main pasture units at an elevation of 3500m above sea level and occupy about half of the total geographical area of the valley. The Kalash villages in all the three valleys are located at a height of approximately 1900 to 2200m (Denker, 1981). The climate is generally semi-arid.

Research Methodology

The qualitative anthropological research technique was adopted for acquiring the ethnographic data for the research in hand. The researchers lived in Bumburet Valley, and participated in their festivals, feasts, offerings and prayers. Thus, a complete immersion in the said culture has been adopted for a very good rapport, acceptance and recognition by the society. The basic data was collected through the socioeconomic survey. The survey facilitated me to gather information about the village regarding sex, education, family system, caste, population, ethnic groups, occupation, and number of households residing in the village. The Bumburet valley is composed of 12 hamlets and through random sampling we selected few hamlets where both Kalasha and Muslims coexisted and shared the geographical space. We visited every house of the village Anish, Brun, Batrik and Karakal and conducted in-depth interviews to collect detailed information about their religion. Audio recording was used during the interviews. The secondary data for this study was collected from library by reviewing, journals, articles and documentary programs about the mythical people of Kalash. The data has been assembled in the form of photographs, maps, sketches, and floor plans.

Discussion

People of Bumburet valley Kalash are trapped in their own natural setting and are bound by their own inspirations, ideas and innovations. Applying this to any form of art the tools, equipment, grooming, guidance, exposure and above all the available facilities play a major role in developing aesthetics and artistic expression. People of Kalash are generally regarded as the descendants of the Greeks. The arts and crafts bear very vague or little resemblance between the art and architecture of the Greeks. Unfortunately, very little heritage of Kalash is available which is preserved in the Greek Museum in Burn Valley Bumburet. The vases, pottery, motifs, and carvings bear absolutely no resemblance to the Greek art in excellence and perfection. It is a historically proven fact that the Greeks are considered to be one of the most aesthetically superior races and Alexander's reigns had opened new avenues in all forms of arts, crafts and architecture (Kleiner, et al, 2001). The special style of combining shafts and columns serves as the space for identifying Greek influence in the same manner as Islamic art, calligraphy and architecture which immediately reflects the presence of Muslim influence.



Photograph 1 - The Greek Museum Brun Village Bumburet, Kalash

In contrast the people of Kalash possess no taste for plastic and visual art and crafts. Even their architecture is very simple and monotonous. They neither have any art critics nor any desire to develop this faculty at the individual level. They just limit themselves to pottery, crafts and oral literature. They limit the oral literature only to recitation which leads to very minimal accounts based on recollections of elders. In contemporary times the youth is striving hard to recollect evidences and stories to document and preserve their heritage. They are trying hard to convince their elders that their Holy Book “Kalasha Dustur” will receive the same respect and honor as the Bible and Geeta.

The people of Kalash do not create patterns by taking inspirations from the beautiful natural scenery around them for aspiring sensory perception and by the natural beauty. They only imitate what their elders have done centuries ago. Due to modernization the present picture is quite different to what they had experienced in the past. Though Greek missionaries have actively taken part and supported them in preserving the Kalash heritage, reviving the masterpieces of their elders lost in the midst of times. The basic objective here is to evaluate the symbolic meanings attached to the art and crafts as basis to discover the origin and establishing cultural identity on the basis of factual reality. The work of architecture is very simplistic in nature and is very much closer to their natural environment. It is done in a very raw manner, the finesse, mastery and perfection are lacking. The school and the museum exclusively designed by the Greek architects are far superior. The local claims that they have done the carpentry and carvings. The excellence in work signifies the inner talent and ability of the people. The proper professional training and supervision will enhance the taste and aesthetics. The informer expressed beauty having two segments, natural and

cultural beauty. For them their cultural patterns and traditions successfully fulfills the definition of cultural beauty.



Photograph 2 - The Sanctuary of Sajigor

The youth of Kalash is inspired to draw goat, trees, flowers and pots. They do opt for carvings as effigies for their ancestors or hero, but the figure drawing is absent in their culture. They do not carve or decorate the coffins of their dead. They just use the finest of wood like walnut, sheesham, and teak wood; in accordance with the symbolic and economic status of the individual in the community. The tool and equipment used for painting and drawing in the past were preferably walnut hair. But in contemporary period they have the luxury of using charcoal pencils, synthetic paints. Natural dyes are preferred for decorating holy places like. Art as a medium gives a certain idea about the intelligence, imagination; horizon, innovation and creativity of the individual reside in any community. The artistic creativity generates various symbols, images, and shapes through which they master the environment with shapes and structures rendered the continuous process of life in discreet and unmoving shapes that can lead to any meaningful identity which is based on their faculty of imagination.

Symbolism and Goat Art

The people of Kalash regard goat as an integral unit of their religious beliefs. Representation of goat art is dominantly present in every feature of their religious and cultural lives. According to Peter Parkes:

“The goats are regarded as the foremost cultural feature of the Kalasha society. The ritual premises are founded upon the welfare of the sacred herds, transmitted from the gods to the early ancestors, and hence upon the notion of reproducing a

competent, able and ritually pure male community of herdsman. The goats are seen as pure and sacred animals, which are destined to be sacrificed by their respective owners, and the supernatural mountain spirits. The goats are regarded as the mediators between man and the hidden world of supernatural powers that surround him. The scarified blood of the goats, provide means of protection against the forces of decay, pollution and disintegration, the domestic influences thought to inhibit the domestic life of the villages.” (Parkes 1987:645)

The drawings of goats are carved on their temples, homes, and especially on their notebooks. The people romanticized the concept of goat due to the ritual and religious significance of the goat as an animal. When the researcher showed a beautiful driftwood to the young boys and asked them *sia kia.....?* What do you think this can be? A young boy hardly 17th year old instantaneous responded that “Bakri Ghaas kha rahee hai” (The goat is eating grass). There is a strong emotional attachment which exists between the youth and goats in Kalash culture may be due to the time a boy spends with the goat herd in summer pastures away from his family, village in the company of the few elder male relative (ibid). The goat becomes the playmates of the child and he even marks a favorite goat. In case of senior members, they use to compose songs for the chosen one they prefer the goat with prominent horns (Aas, 2008).

To comprehend the impact of art on cultural identity we must analyze the naturalistic art which includes the pictures of plants and animal accompanied by geometric designs which are either still life or are intellectually created. The cave art as a work of prehistoric man, a pothole to his lifestyle, the degree of accuracy, and perfection in artistry is absent. The impressions of palms and fingers were very dominant, which lead us to believe that man of that time was poorly equipped with certain skills. The artistic approach in these figures and drawings is naturalistic. He attempts to represent convincingly the perception he had about the nature. This can reflect to his observation and extraordinary memory. When applying modern interpretation of this cave art on the design and artistry of Kalash it shows that the aim of the artist is to be realistic and convincing. There are no palms and finger impressions on the walls of *jestik'han* but the exact precision and aesthetic is lacking in their work of art.

Sculptures and Effigies in Kalash

Muslims of the region are not very keen on visual arts. They do not take interest and create any sculptures. Their main interest is in the traditional Islamic calligraphy. The Kalash believe that there are certain gods and goddesses who facilitate the supreme god *deza* as invisible creatures, but don't delegate any specific shapes and structure to them. This very ideology helps them to be distinguished from Hinduism. As the history entails that they have been severely treated and persecuted by the Hindu Rajas and Mahrattas. The people are fond of making wooden effigies, as an image of their ancestors, at Gandao to honor the memory of his father "dada". This is done in November on *sariak* festival. In year 2008 this festival was celebrated at the mega level as a revival of long forgotten tradition. The woodcutter and the carpenter go to the woods and find a suitable tree with fine nodes is called upon by the deceased name. They chop down to carve the face and cut the trunk, according to the man's size they further carry it to the cemetery. The carpenter, by employing his artistic capabilities shapes the forehead, nose, and lips of the dead man. For making the eyes, they fill the hollow spaces with pebbles or cowries.



Photograph 3 - The Statue Carved for the Dead Ancestor at Gandao

They eventually decorate this out of proportion sculpture with ornaments like a necklace and the head is covered with red turban as a symbol of bravery. The vegetable colours are used to dye the statues. They are also decorated with weapons which signify the circumstantial event of death. In the environment they exist, it is humanly impossible to preserve the material cultural heritage due to harsh climatic conditions and the constant interference of Muslims. They started building caves for their dead, but later gave up the effort and started burying their dead. Generally, their statues have no feet just the legs, hands dropped to the both

sides. The size of this standing statue is 160 cm to 180 cm high. One is still present in the village Grum in the Rambur valley. According to the people of Kalash the fabulous statues of the horseman are now disappeared and destroyed (Loude et al, 1988). These were the images of their general warriors, their fighting chiefs which remind them of their great past and glory. Horse symbolizes the voyage of souls, horse symbolizes divinity, but due to the scarcity of resources they are unable to keep horses in the valley of Kalash. Though the horses are found in abundance in Chitral and reared with great fondness by the elite of the society.



Photograph 4 - The Temple of Mahan`deo, Rambur Valley, Kalash

The image of the carved horse head is seen on the sanctuary of Sajigor, Mahan`deo and jestik`han. The horse also represents military power and royalty (ibid) and the rank achieved by the dead. This rank cannot be complied by any living man. The image of the sun and the horse together, symbolizes social position of the economic status of any man and are connected with funeral symbolism. In Vedic believes the sun is perceived to be the stallion that transports the soul from the living land of the dead. The same fundamental believe is practiced in Kalash where they carve a solar wheel on an open coffin and place the body in it and leave it in the daily axis of the sun i.e. the east. Traditionally it is accepted as true that the horse carried the soul to the other world. Greeks are often known to carve the statues for the martyrs only to recognize the sacrifice they made to protect the national identity (Kleiner, et al, 2001).

On the contrary the Kalash effigies for the dead are poorly made without following any proportions. All Greek stone sculptures were painted whereas the Kalash never tried to make or utilized the beautiful colored texture rocks and stones available to them, which might have sustained the extreme climate to some extent but they

preferably utilize wood to make statues. People used to visit and mourn at the tomb. Apparently, the significance and essence are similar but the level of originality and elegance can never be compared. The Greeks are known to make effigies of their god and goddesses in the temples. Statuettes of prestigious personalities with emblematic position in the society were specially constructed to acknowledge their nobility.

Buildings and Architecture

Early buildings in Kalash have unfortunately been destroyed in the mist of time. The factors are numerous, involving the environmental conditions, natural catastrophes and above all the brutality of tyrants. There are no significant spiritual archives presents in the temples. The historical accounts contributed by few famous and committed anthropologists' claims that these temples were present (Castenfeldt, 1996) but are lost to the natural catastrophes. Relying on the literature available, there is a detailed description of the temple which belongs to the goddess Imra. My purpose for using this information is to draw any similarity in which the art and craft of Greeks, Aryans and Assyrians. The Kalash community is mystified and haunted by the speculative presumption concerning their mysterious past. According to Svend Castenfeldt Temple of "Imra" a Pre-Muslim temple is located in the village Kishteki, in the middle of Prun valley, a U- shaped valley high up in the Nuristan Mountains (ibid). Castenfeldt is mainly relying on the accounts of Sir George Robertson, when he visited the Prun valley and saw the great temple in 1981. The width of the temple is 50 to 60 feet Square and 20 feet high. The temple is supported with the help of carved pillars.

The reconstructed is displayed as a model 1:45 at the museum of prehistory at Moesgard in Denmark, together with the reconstruction drawings and photos from the Parun valley. Originally this work was initiated by Schafer, Lentz and Edelberg but was never completed due to the Unfortunate death of Schafer in 1968, Edelberg died in 1981 and his book on Nuristani buildings was published posthumously. Lentz died 1986, and the publication of the whole reconstruction together with the related material on myth, hymns, and calendar was carried out by Castenfeldt and his team. According to him;

"The research archives of both Lentz and Edelberg came to a Danish university, where in 1984 I found the temple material. A working group was organized to

evaluate the material, which looked promising. We visited Professor Lentz in Germany and agreed with him how the temple reconstruction could be carried on and published. In one of Schafer's last notes, which I found when we added his later paper to the archives, he recommended the use of computers, and so we did. The working group consulted the school of architecture of Aarhus and a couple of building engineers. The result is as follows. The temple was stable because of four rounded corners. Pillars close to the walls might have supported the roof along with the four pillars around the fire place. In fact, the main hall can be regarded as a combination of quadratic squares and circles, two of the main symbolic figures in the pre-Islamic culture" (ibid: 114).

The temple belonged to the kafirs of the region. According to Jettmer the Paruni people were the religious specialists of Nuristan, who understood best about religion. So, this temple was the main temple for the whole of Nuristan. Now the Nuristani people are the staunch believer of Islam, so it is very difficult to get fresh information in that area. There are no new informants, but the temple must have been of central importance for all other parts of Nuristan. The art and architecture of Kalash bore absolutely no resemblance with the artistic perfection of the civilizations like Greek, Mesopotamia, Persia, Semites and Assyrians; all these civilizations were very magnificent and have left their mark as a precious heritage.



Photograph 5 - The Traditional Kalash dur House.

The Kalash have their own traditional method and units of measuring grains, land, clothes, and buildings. There are modern equipment and tools available to them, but for the sake of purity and contentment they rely on their conventional ways. They do not follow their religion and traditional patterns due to any obligation or fear. In fact, they practice it as a space for personal satisfaction and happiness.

Religion has contributed love to the development of the arts and architecture (Durant, 1995) which begins with the tombs of the dead, to the worship places like mosques, churches and temples.

The Dwelling “dur”

The basic floor plans of the houses are mostly rectangular and are situated at the top of the mountains or pastures mainly because of the purpose of defense and to foresee the danger. These houses are massed together in the villages so that there is hardly any surface left that is not built apart from the narrow streets. Some houses do have a forecourt. The description of interior is similar with a few exceptions based on the religious affiliations and family requirements. This significant difference in architecture serves as a space to signify their traditional cultural identity.

Floor Plan of Bumburet Valley Kalash

The houses face towards the west and consist of a number of enclosed rooms with roof and open courtyard areas. The open courtyard can be anywhere between the walls separating it from the street and enclosed rooms. This is then followed by an attached or adjacent hall connecting the entrance gateway. Only one room is spared, which is always used as guestroom and which is attached to the entrance gate. The whole of this ensemble of enclosed rooms with roof top forms a unit or a house called “Dur or Kor”. A dur may have a length and width of more than 9 -12 meters. Its area can vary in square meters from each other houses. All the buildings have flat roof. Mostly there are single storey houses with a separate kitchen and a separate bathroom. The traditional houses are built on a smaller scale: four central columns and diamond shaped corbelled roof light, with two main roof beams running from beside the entrance door to the ritually pure area in the innermost part of the house. The door opens from the entrance gallery or veranda.

The building material used is determined by the geography of the area. Usually flat and smooth stones from the river beds are combined with the rough stones mixed with the mud and straws as mortar for flooring and roofing. The layers of stone are about nine inches and are sandwiched between the layers of massive wooden beams. Inner walls are plastered with mud. A few houses are covered with plain

wooden sheets for the purpose of insulation. To support the roof and erected walls in place, wooden shafts of horizontal half timbering of cedar wood are used. Brushwood plastered with mud is also used for no load bearing walls or the roof. Roof designs and material are of light weight because the region is prone to earthquake and natural catastrophes. The roof mainly covers the whole area of the house excluding the open courtyard without any change in the level of the roof. The ceiling is supported on long beams, and sets on the walls about two meters apart. The social status is depicted through the carvings and artistic work. Houses owned by the Muslims are bright, airy and spacious. These houses do not have any rear windows they have windows at the sides and the front of the rooms are present.

The houses belonged to Kalash are based on the same principle of construction and material as houses of the other societies with the only difference that they are limited to one window at the front of their roofed terrace. They have very dark houses having a hearth in the middle of the room. Kitchens are situated at the left corner of the roofed entrance with no doors. The empty space after the kitchen area is regarded as “onjesta” and females are not allowed to roam there (see appendix). The spatial arrangement is very congested and only sufficient for three persons. There is no latrine system present in these houses, for which they utilize bushes or corn fields. The Kalash settlements are created in the form of terraced fashion. Most of the Kalash have their houses designed in this manner with few exceptions. The roof top of one house serves as the terrace for the other. The only disadvantage is the lack of privacy and one can easily glance at various houses by standing at the top.

Their agricultural land is away from their dwellings, and they have to cross the unmeasured distance for that purpose. These people have a very sealed interior, which for the Muslims serves as the requirement for Purdah. This is equally useful for the Kalash as a defense from the invader. The walls and exterior in combination with its neighboring building with narrow entrances and strong windowless walls provides the strength to its wide-open complexes of flat roof. These houses resemble a fortress due to which the people had a strategic advantage on the oppressor.

Interior Decoration

These people, though residing in the place filled with scenic beauty, but unfortunately are not conscious of their hygiene. Poverty may be one of the reasons. They have very simple interiors and are unaware of the concept of interior decoration. They believe in simplicity and harmony. Their society is an example of an egalitarian society as predicted by the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). The furniture used by these people is set of bed (sens), rugs, durries, chairs and low height stools. The stools and chairs are portable with no fixed setting arrangements. They arrange the stools and chairs in the verandah. In some homes Takhat posh is also present. The numbers of beds are dependent on the size of the family. The large family often utilizes the combination of floral arrangement and “sens” at one corner. There are no cupboards, but instead they rely on shelves at approximately 6 feet height. This is used to keep things related to daily use and adornment. Now days a looking mirror is an essential item in every household, which was forbidden for the past generations. The kitchens are of U shaped with the stove in the center, sink and shelves at the two sides with no windows at all. Utensils and other related items are kept in the kitchens. The food is taken in the kitchen area. Most of the houses do not have the direct water pipeline, so they have to go to the stream to wash their utensils and clothes.

On the entrance of Kalash houses the weaving loom is a compulsory item placed in the open courtyard. Even now “onja” they can purchase materials from the market, but they are trying hard to prevail and preserve this traditional art. The pati and other crafts weaved by them, are not of very superior in quality, but symbolizes their prestige and cultural heritage.

Hotels and Commercial Areas

There is a link road from one village to another just outside the main street. This link road is actually a narrow passage between the water creeks which is flattened with the help of large flat stone layered parallel to each other. Footpaths are available leading towards the villages located in the high pastures. The condition of this link road is very poor because of land sliding and the snow falling. Along this road are located Greek museum, few schools and various shops for grocery, milk, Nan bai bread maker, PCO, handicrafts, pharmacy, hotels, and restaurants. The shops are constructed on a rectangular wooden plank with a flat roof and wooden

shutter. The shops are at a height so ladders are constructed to give an access to these shops.

The main delight for the tourists in the area is the most aesthetically designed PTDC hotel (Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation). This hotel is made of concrete rock stones combined with wooden structure. Inner side is duly plastered and painted. The restaurant is made on the latest standards of architecture and its construction is very superior to the rest of the buildings in the valley. The restaurant has a main hall and a very spacious dining area. The building comprises of two independent structures. The reception and dining area are in the center with two entrances on each side. The main entrance is on the right side. The residential quarters are in the semicircular form arranged around the center with beautiful gardens at the sides. The two unit's rooms have an independent balcony and an attached bath. The restaurant is enclosed with a separate boundary wall. This building style is quite different from the traditional pattern of people residing in the area. This represents economic disparity and deprivation in the people of the area. The other hotels are mainly owned by the local public mainly Chitrali's and are constructed by following the local method of house construction. They do not have any facility of attached bath, but a separate unit is situated at a distant place away from the kitchen area. The kitchen is well equipped having a sink, stove, work counter, a small table and tandoor. These open-air restaurants are exotically placed around the banks of the river. Local restaurant provides a sitting area outside from where scenic beauty of the surroundings can be visualized.



Photograph 6 - Restaurant Situated on the Bank of the River

Art and architecture are two of the very essentials which throw some light on the evolution of culture which are subsequently helpful in establishing the social and

cultural identity. Art may be visual and optic in collaboration contribute to formulating cultural identity. So far there have no archeological finds of any significance reported which can throw any light on the origin of the Kalash Community, ancient art and architecture, lifestyles, their culture or their ancient religion. The closeness of their language may be a pointer to their origin. The artifacts are simplistic in nature. The drawings never go beyond the basic line sketches drawn with the help of coal and charcoal. The sculptures are also limited to wood and are restricted to very basic imagery like a horse head. Their musical instruments have not developed beyond drum and duff. They have not developed any string instruments like Rubab. The language of music is totally alien to them. There is no record of any improvements in the fine art field for the last hundred years. They don't attach any sanctity to cow therefore their origin from Aryans (who left behind when Aryans invaded India) is not without doubt.

Conclusion

For millennia ago Kalash people settled in this region of Hindukush, their progress and cultural evolution seems to have frozen in time. This is very strange because people who once possessed fine mental and physical faculties could not progress at all during present era. It is only when they came under the Pakistan rule that a process of modernization through education has started showing results. It is widely claimed that Kalash are remnants of Greek soldiers who were left behind in India when Alexander the Great went back. However, there is no archeological evidence which can support the speculative theories. There are no relics which could show that Greek soldiers were ever there. No weapons like swords, shields, lances and archery equipment belonging to that era has ever been discovered or preserved in the museums. The items exhibited are very superficial in construction and quality. Similarly, the origin from Syria or Tsyam is also not proven. Their religion provides them with ample opportunities like decorating the walls of on a yearly basis at chawmos winter solstice by the young girls and boys. It is their way of acknowledging the supreme god for all the favors bestowed on them. It is quite remarkable that the people with the finest resources and leisure time are not utilizing their aesthetics and creativity to engender extraordinary artistry.

The Greek soldiers were very fine horseman. The rearing of horse "has "and the sports of the horse riding is not evident in their current culture. The Muslims of

Chitral exhibit great natural talent in horse riding, in fact polo is their favorite sport and the annual polo tournament takes place regularly on the highest polo ground of the world in Shandoor valley. People travel from all over the world to come to see this tournament and it is also televised on national television. The Greeks were highly advanced in art and architecture, but again, there is no evidence of that in ancient and current Kalash society. The entire distinct culture of Kalash people is different from any other in this region and the way it remains intact is quite enigmatic. Perhaps the only reason they have remained at peace with the surroundings is that they have isolated themselves from the masses.

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