

CULTURAL LINKAGES BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF SINDH AND JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

Japan and the land of present Pakistan had cultural linkages since ages. Sindh has remained important part of this land. The Indus civilization had trade links with other countries including Sumerian and Babylonian civilizations. This trend continued afterwards, and trade relations were established between people of Sindh and Japan in the nineteenth century. This interaction led both the countries to have cultural linkages. Presently many Sindhis are residing in Japan who have adopted Japanese culture besides maintaining their own cultural traditions and customs. Sindhi poetry adopted Japanese Haiku and 'Safarnamas' were written in Sindhi language grasping the living and traditions, etc. of Japan. This research paper also discusses that both countries' people have similar style of sitting together and exchange of opinions and happenings of the day which is traditionally called 'Katchehry' in Sindh.

Keywords: Trade, Sindhwork, Japanese, Sindhis, Tero, Hyderabadids, Shikarpuris, Katchehry, Haiku and Safarnamas

INTRODUCTION

Japan is the land of rich culture. Its relation with Indo-Pak subcontinent was established particularly when Buddhism reached there. It was transported from the sub-continent, some say from China, to Japan in 6th century B.C. (www.japan.guide.com/ebe2025.html).

The word Bhuddism is derived from an appellation of its founder 'Budhha' or the 'Enlightened' who is otherwise known as Gotama, his family name (Seligman Edwin, R.A., 1950:32). In Japan 75% of the population follows Buddhism (Ibid).

Probably it formed first link between Sindh and Japan which brought people of two lands nearer to each other. It paved the way for developing other links including culture. Sindh being a culturally rich part of the subcontinent also developed relations with the people of Japan.

This study suggests that trade was main vehicle of establishing linkages between the people of Sindh and Japan. Shikarpuris and Hyderabadids played important role in strengthening trade between Sindh and Japan. Many Sindhis are settled in Japan. They continued with their own customs and traditions and also adopted Japanese dress. Japanese type of

poetry called *Haiku* was introduced in Sindhi language which gained popularity with the passage of time. It is known as *Tero* in Sindhi language.

Sindhi language is being taught in Japan. Department of Sindhi language has been established in Osaka University, the sixth oldest university of Japan.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rober A. Huttenback in his book *British Relations with Sindh: 1799-1843* (1962) writes about trade links between Hyderabad and Bombay.

Claude Markovits in his work *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947* Traders of Sindh from Bukhara to Panama (2000) has given an account of reaching Sindhwork to different parts of the world.

Anthony Falzon Mark has written in *Cosmopolitan Connections: The Sindhi Diaspora: 1860-2000* (2004), about Sindhi merchants who settled in Malta and had trade relations with Japan and China.

Altaf Shaikh has given an account of similarity in *Katchehry* between Sindh and Japan in his book *Geeshaon Key Des Mein*. He has quoted Japanese women who returned from Pakistan and seen happening of *Katchehry* (ڪچھري).

Mamta Sachan Kumar in his work *Trade of the Time Reconceiving 'Diaspora' with the Sindhi Merchants in Japan* (2010) tells that a word Sindhwork optimizes Sindh merchantry in its most elevated form.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For writing article secondary source has been availed by the author. Books written by foreign and local writers have been referred. Moreover, material available on internet has also been used in this regard.

HYPOTHESES

1. Trade Relations developed cultural linkages between the people of Sindh and Japan.
2. Cultural interaction with Japan influenced the Sindhi literature.

FINDINGS

The history of Sindh dates back to early age of mankind. The mountains of Rohri and caves manifest that human beings used these houses of stone as their abode. The ruin of Moen-jo-Daro is five thousand years old. According to some accounts if excavation of entire area around the ruins takes place then the ruins may be more than 10,000 years old.

The excavation of Moen-jo-Daro has unearthed Stupa constructed on raised platform. According to board planted near the ruins by Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Department Stupa was constructed in 200 B.C.

In pre-Islamic period Sindh was the home of Bhuddist religion. Stupas and monasteries of Bhuddism dominated the landscape of Sindh before the Arab conquest of Sindh (www.questia.com/library/journal/aP3-).

The population of Sindh adopted Bhuddism as a religion during the period of Kushan rulers in the first century CE ([www.britannica.com/place-Sindh-province-Pakistan](http://www.britannica.com/place/Sindh-province-Pakistan)). The region, where the rock art was found in pre-Islamic era in Sindh, was known as *Buddhiya, the land of Buddhists*. The valley of Khairthar range possesses the remains of many stupas and petroglyphs (Zulfiqar Ali Kalhor, 2013, 'Buddhist Traditions in Rock Art of Sindh, Pakistan', *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, July https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-31741_00901/buddhist-traditions-in-the-rock-art-of-Sindh-Pakistan).

The cultural linkages between the people of Sindh and Japan have been since pre-partition of the sub-continent which took place in 1947 A.D. The merchants from Sindh reached Japan in the nineteenth century and started business there. Probably this was the first main interaction between the people of Sindh and Japan which grew stronger with the passage of time.

It seems that trade of Japan was dominated by Sindhis, Marwadis, and Gujarati Muslim communities in the nineteenth century (Ghosh Amitav, 2016), 'Indian Merchants and Trading Houses in 19th & 20th Century Japan' <http://amitavghosh.com/blog/?p=7354>). They arrived in Japan a few years after the Meiji restoration in 1868 (Dorota P. Praszalowicz, 'Polish Berlin: Differences & Similarities' cited in Lucassen, David Feldman & Jochen Oltmer (eds.), 2006, *Paths of Integration: Migrants in Western Europe (1880-2004)*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam. Hindu Sindhi merchants also played momentous role. This was the period of British suzerainty in major portion of the world. It was said that the sun never sets in British Empire. The empire, by 1922 A.D., ruled over about 458 million people, twenty five percent of the globe and covered territory more than 33,700,000 kilo meters (<https://www.quora.com/When-was-the-peak-of-the-British-Empire-What-was-going-on-then-What-combination-of-events-caused-it-to-start-fading>).

The sub-continent was also part of the British Empire. Britons entered the area under the flag of East India Company. After war of independence in 1857 A.D., the sovereign rule of the King of England was enforced in the sub-continent. Sindh became part of the British Empire in 1843 A.D.

Sindh has experienced waves of migration from and to it. However, the major migration from Sindh took place twice. First was originated with the British annexation of Sindh [with Bombay Presidency]. The group of merchants from small town of Hyderabad (to be distinguished from the city of Hyderabad in central India) came out in search of business opportunities, leaving behind the families, and reached a part of Panama and the Straits

Settlement (Today's Singapore). Second took place after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 A.D. (Dorota, 2006).

The Talpur rulers of Sindh shifted their capital from Khudabad to Hyderabad. In the nineteenth century, Shikarpur and Hyderabad were known for trades abroad.

They carried out their trade through sea to Europe, Africa and different countries of Asia including Japan. They also used land route to reach their various destinations. It was not first time that the Sindhi traders undertook trade abroad.

The various studies conducted on Moen-jo-Daro reveal that its dwellers went to Iraq and other countries for the purpose of trade. They used two types of ships for their external trade. Firstly, they built ships which could sail in the waters of the Indus River from Mone-jo-Daro state. Secondly, they built ships having different designs and capable of sustaining waves of sea to keep journey alive for reaching the destination successfully. Such ships entered the sea through the waters of the Indus River.

Shikarpuri

The trade of Shikarpuri merchants grew so much in the nineteenth century that Alexander Burns wrote: (Madras Courier, 2018), 'The Sindhi Merchants of Gibraltar', <https://madrascourier.com/insight/the-sindhi-merchants-of-gibraltar/>). "It will be only necessary to name the towns at which the Shikarpuri merchants agents to judge of the unlimited influence which they can command".

Many Sindhi merchants, before the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, went to Japan and settled there in Yokohama. The grandfather of Chandru G.Advani left Sindh for Japan in 1910 A.D. He was third member of Advani generation in Yokohama. He said, "My father followed my grandfather to Yokohama in 1917 A.D. He managed a branch of his father's business..... Japan was exporting silk to India, and Indian traders had been active here for many years. My father returned to the family home in Sindh that was then still in India [sub-continent]. After partition, that region became part of Pakistan" (Kenrick Vivinnie, 2007, 'Chandru G.Advani' (<https://www.Japantimes.co.jp/life/2007/03/24/people/chandru-g-advani/#.W6OI8PZuI2w>))

The merchants started with marketing the native crafts of Sindh to an international clientele, but as they progressively enlarged the size of their operations, the small scale of workshops of Sindh became increasingly incapable of supplying the needs of constantly expanding network. Consequently, from the 1870s onwards the Sindhwork merchants started procuring goods from other sources both with India in the Punjab, in

Kashmir, in Benares and outside India mostly in the Far East, in China and Japan (Markovits Claude, 2000:117).

Hyderabadi

The merchants of Hyderabad of Sindh, now part of Pakistan, were also famous for their merchandise abroad. They travelled to different parts of the world. The record and literature available on topic suggest that the merchants from Sindh may not have travelled without permission of the concerned authorities. During the period from January 1915 A.D. to January 1916 A.D., District Magistrate of Hyderabad issued 572 certificates of identity to men from Hyderabad district going abroad for the purpose of trade. The following table depicts the figures destination wise (Kenrick Vivinnie, 2007, 'Chandru G.Advani', <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2007/03/24/people/chandru-g-advani/#.W6OI8PZuI2w>):

Destination	Number of Applicants
Mediterranean & Atlantic	222
Naples	7
Egypt	69
Gibraltar	104
Sicily, Catania	3
Tripoli	2
Algeria, Algeris	9
Casablanca	2
Vigo	1
Tunis	2
Ceuta, Mellila, Tetuan	4
Malta	11
Canary Islands	8
Far East	293
Dutch East Indies	108
Philippines	51
Straits Settlements	79
Japan	23
China	18
China and Japan	2
East & South Africa	28
Eritrea	2
Jibuti	1
Mombassa	1
Portuguese East Africa	10
South Africa	10

Salisbury	4
West Africa	10
Sierra Leone	8
Lagos	2
Central & South America	15
Panama	7
Chile	6
Trinidad	3
Persian Gulf	3
Australia	1
Grand Total	572

Source: Claude Markovits (2000:127).

The above table indicates that Sindhi merchants approached Japan through two ways for the purpose of trade. Firstly, they exclusively took journey to Japan and secondly, they visited China and Japan having one travelling certificate.

The Sindhi merchants had close coordination though settled in different countries. While doing business in one country they imported items from other countries and stocked in their shops. In Malta, they stocked their shops with Japanese ceramics and antimony wares, brassware, silk items of clothing such as Kimonos imported mainly from Japan, Silver, filigree, embroideries and curiosities ([http:// languagesindhi.blogspot.com/2013/12/sindhi-language.html](http://languagesindhi.blogspot.com/2013/12/sindhi-language.html)). The merchants settled in Malta had branches/depots in Japan and China (Falzon Mark Anthony, 2004:135). At least four Sindhi firms in Tianjin [China] were engaged in retail sale of silk goods in shops located on Victoria road. Sindhi merchants from Hyderabad owned them under partnership some of whom had been in the city for years. One Sindhi married a Chinese woman. A self-contained community of perhaps twenty persons of these merchants and their employees sold goods purchased in Japan and in Shanghai from other Sindhi firms (Claude Markovits, 2000).

SINDHI FAMILIES

The people of Sindh have been living into joint families since the ages. This spirit is still continued. No doubt changed global social scenario has left imprint on this family institution to some extent, however, still they live together. They revived such spirit even after migration to the different destinations.

Sindhis remained well connected with each other despite living in different countries. Simultaneously they preserved their culture beside the local culture. Dyal N.Harjani portrays this in the following words: “In spite of the Sindhi diaspora and temptations to imbibe some of the local cultures for

better or otherwise, most are financially secure and socially well established in their place of residence. Amazingly, Sindhi appear to be well connected with other Sindhi families residing between a vast demography from one corner of the world in Putna Arenas-Chile to Kobe in Japan” (Daduzen Dayal, N aka Harjani aka, 2018:10).

Japanese Culture & Sindhi Families

Sindhi families now settled in Japan may be divided mainly into two categories. First, Sindhi families which migrated and settled there before the partition of the sub-continent and second, Sindhis who went to Japan from Sindh after the inception of Pakistan in August 1947 were settled. This includes Sindhi women who are married in Japan and now they are settled there.

It is human nature that where he settles, he gets influenced from the customs and traditions of local people. Sindhi people also accepted cultural impact of Japan. They married with Japanese and lived successful life. Moreover, Sindhi women and girls liked traditional dress of Japan, *Kimono*.

Kimono is national dress of Japanese Women. *Yukata* is national dress of Japanese men. Sindhis living in Japan wear these Japanese national dresses happily. Japanese women married to Pakistanis also wear traditional women dress of *Shalwar* and *Cholo* (shirt) which is popular in all parts of Pakistan including Sindh.

Katchehry (ڪچھري)

It is traditional name given to Sindhi style of gathering. Here people gather at one place. Elders share their experiences of life and discuss the social, economic and political issues. Its literary aspect is important. Poets present different forms of poetry and receive applause from the listeners. Everyone feels relaxed and comfortable on being part of such gathering.

Women have their own style of Katchehry. Women of a village or Muhalla gather at one place and make chit chat with each other. It is some sort of socialization among the women which breeds love and happiness among them.

Both styles of *Katchehry* are in existence in Japan at different times. A Japanese woman, who visited Pakistan, returned to her country. She told that women in villages of Sindh gathered at one place and share happenings of the whole day. Men gathered at *Autaq* (Gathering/sitting Place owned by Wadera) of *Wadera* (Landlord of the area) of village or college mates sat in a hotel for chit chat at the cup of tea. Likewise, in Japan Public Baths are used for taking bath and as a meeting place. Here men and women meet with each other and share activities took place whole the day (Altaf Shaikh, n.d.).

Poetry

The history of *Haiku*, a form of Japanese poetry, dates back to the seventeenth century. It is the most precise, compact and condensed poetry originating in Japan having subjects of predominantly nature and life. Three most popular among the *Haiku* masters are Yosa Buson (1716-1783), Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) and Kobayashi Issa collectively known as the Three Pillars of Haiku. They lived during Japan's Edo-period (1600-1868). *Haiku*, one of the most important forms of traditional Japanese poetry, still remains popular in modern Japan, and in recent years its popularity has also spread to many countries including Pakistan (https://www.pk.emb-japan.go.jp/Culture/CulEvents/Events2016_17/Haiku/HaikuPAL.html)

It is a combination of two words 'haikai' and 'hokku'. Former is linked verse Japanese poem in renga poetry style and latter is the name of the first stanza of renga poetry. *Haikai*, a type of renga poetry, consists of at least 100 verses in 5-7-5-7-7 pattern. *Haiku* poetry form developed from *hokku* of *haikai* and became an independent poetry form in the 17th century; however, the word *haiku* was not used until 19th century. Masaoka Shik named this form of poetry *Haiku* (Ghimire Vinaya, 2018, Japanese Poetry Forms: 'Haiku, senryu, Haiga and Tanaka' <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Japanese-Poetry-Forms-Haiku-Senryu-Haiga-and-Tanka>) Having perception of mind of a poet and conveying inspiring moment of realization *Haiku* leaves reader to picture the details and draw the conclusion is considered as a good *Haiku* (<http://sinarium.com/haiku/>).

Haiku is written in different languages of Pakistan including Urdu and Punjabi. *Haiku* is so popular in the country that Pakistan Haiku Society has been established. The poets of Sindhi language have written poetry in this form of Japanese poetry.

There are various forms of poetry which have been brought from other languages to Sindhi language. These include *sonnet*, *Blank Verse*, *Tarail* and *Haiku* etc. These all came to Sindhi language through English language [Imdad Hussaini, interviewed 20.09.2018].

Haiku poem contains three lines. Like in Japanese poetry, *Haiku* (هائڪو) in Sindhi poetry also contains moments of sudden inspiration and realization or create scene. It also depicts the sentiments of happiness, love and sorrow. Narain Sheyam was first Sindhi poet who used this form of poetry in Sindhi language. He used eleven-thirteen-eleven morae in his *Haiku*. He said following *Haiku* under the title of *Tasveeroon* (pictures) [Imdad Hussaini, interviewed 20.09.2018]:

ساز رکيل پٽ ساڻ،	Saz (musical instruments) laid against the wall,
بند اکيون، چپ ڳائڻيون	Eyes closed, singers silent,
راڳن ساڻ رهاڻ!	With evoking melodies,

Ordinarily in Sindhi language, *Haiku* is not written on *Radeef* (ردیف) but on *Kafyo* (کافیو). These are rhyme patterns of words which are part of *Ilm-e-Arooz* or Prosody (علم عروض). However, the great poet of Sindhi language, Shaikh Ayaz has written *Haiku* on *Radeef* also [Imada Hussaini, personal communication]. He has written book entitled *Pan Chan Pujanan* (پن چن پچان) which contains poetry of *Haiku* in Sindhi language. One is reproduced here (Ayaz Shaikh, 1985:8):

میان! مان چائن. Mister! I know,
تیندو وچاگل مہرسان What glamor turns into,
پن چن پچان. After its leaves are scattered.

Imdad Hussaini is one of the great poets of the Sindhi language. He changed the name of *Haiku* in Sindhi language and now it is called *Tero* (تیرو) which also consists of three lines. He has written a book titled *Imdad Aah Rol* (امداد آہ رول) which was published in 1976. Format of *Tero* of Imdad is different from that of Narain Shayyam. He used ten morae in first line, twelve in second and ten in third line [Imdad Hussaini, personal communication]. A *Tero* written by Imdad Hussaini is given below:

اڱڻ اداس، اڪيلونيم. Veranda (courtyard) is gloomy as lonely Neem trees,
اڪين ڀرلهي آئي. In my eyes tricked
اٿيڙو جي ٽمر. Twinkling of Tero

Another form of Japanese poetry having three lines is *Scenryo* (سينريو). Sindhi poets also write in this form of poetry [Imdad Hussaini, personal communication].

Sindhi poetesses have also written *Tero* with enthusiasm. These include Sehr Imdad and others.

Sehr Imdad said *Tero* first time in 1976 when she joined University of Sindh. Her poems were published in *Mehran* a Sindhi magazine. One of her *Tero* is (Sehr Imdad, personal communication):

راند ڪريندو ڪير؟ Who will play game?
سنڌيا “جوڏوڙندي” Sindhia’s while running
! ڦٽجي پيو آ پير Foot got injured!

Travelogue on Japan

Altaf Shaikh, known for his *Safarnamah* in Sindhi and Urdu languages, started his career as a submarine engineer in 1968. He travelled to different countries of Africa, Europe, Far East Asia and South East and other parts of Asia etc. He also went to Japan several times. He met Sindhis settled there and has written several *Safarnamah* (Travelogues) in Sindhi and Urdu languages. A few books written by Altaf Shaikh on Japan are given below:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|----------|
| i) | Japan Key Din | (Urdu) |
| ii) | Geeshaon Key Des Mein | (Urdu) |
| iii) | Japan Jen Jey Jea Saan | (Sindhi) |
| iv) | Jal Paree Jee Agkathey | (Sindhi) |
| v) | Tokyo Jee Geesha Gir | (Sindhi) |
| vi) | Japan Res | (Sindhi) |

In book entitled *Jal Paree Jee Agkathey*, the author has mentioned idioms of Japanese language and Japanese short stories. The book also contains pictorial depiction of Japanese idioms.

DEPARTMENT OF SINDHI LANGUAGE

The University of Osaka is the sixth oldest university of Japan established in 1931. The motto of University is “Live Locally, Grow Globally”. The University has established Department of Sindhi Language.

Altaf Shaikh visited this University when Mamiya was Head of Department of Sindhi Language. Mamiya got master’s degree in Sindhi Language from University of Sindh, Jamshoro in 1990. Altaf Shaikh used to deliver lectures there on *Safarnamah*.

INDUS CULTURE AND JAPANESE EXPERTS

Japanese scholars have keen interest in culture and civilization of the Indus valley. Japanese people visit Buddhist and historical sites in Pakistan including Sindh. Astushi Noguchi researcher at Archaeological Investigation Unit of Meiji University, Tokyo, while talking at international seminar ‘Sindh through Centuries’ organized by Sindh Maddressat-ul-Islam University, Karachi from 24-26 March, 2014 said, “Sindh keeps its unique position through more than 1.5 million years of incredible human history. Hand axes and cleavers the oldest form of the stone tools, found in Rohri Hills could be clues of Afro-Asian connection 1.5 million years ago. This shows us the route of the earliest migration of hominids out of Africa and Eurasia” (<https://merisindh.wordpress.com/2014/05/26/sindh-through-the-centuries-seminar-march-2014/>). Toshi Osada, Professor Emeritus of Research Institute of Humanity and Nature Kyoto Japan and Head of team for researchers said on the occasion, “Many characteristics of this ancient civilization can be seen today in societies of Southern Asia. The team

conducted research under the title 'Indus Project'. The team concluded; different regional communities created a loose network through trade".

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Cultural relations must further be strengthened between Pakistan and Japan for making diplomatic relations stronger.
- Cultural closeness between Sindh and other parts of Pakistan and Japan may bring people of both lands closer to each other.
- Cultural exchanges between federating units of Pakistan and Japan may further be promoted and strengthened.
- Best practices having similarity of both cultures may be introduced in each land for creating understanding and harmony between Pakistan and Japan.

CONCLUSION

Cultural linkages between Japan and federating units of Pakistan are important for bilateral relations of both the countries. The cultural relations keep people close to each other and develop understanding and public opinion on matters of mutual interests. Consequently, diplomatic relations get strengthened.

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