

The art of Camel Carving in Cholistan, Punjab Pakistan

Mohammad Shafeeq

Graphic Designer & Photographer Bahawalpur, Punjab Pakistan

Abstract- The previous princely state of Bahawalpur deiceit south of the Punjab in Pakistan.Now the governmental division of Bahawalpur,it encompasses the districts of Bahawalpur and neighbouring Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan,maintaining accurately the equal boundaries as it did before the partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947.Established in AD 1727,Bahawalpur emerged as one of the most notable Muslim States of British India.Located in southern Punjab,it funtioned as a princely state for about 229 years before finally ceding to Pakistan in 1956.Now,i come to the point the word "camel" is derived via Latin and Greek (*camelus* and *kamēlos* respectively) from [Hebrew](#) or [Phoenician](#) *gāmāl*. The [Hebrew](#) meaning of the word *gāmāl* is derived from the verb root g.m.l, meaning stopping, weaning, going without or repaying in kind. This refers to its ability to go without food or water, as well as the increased ability of service the animal provides when being properly cared for. [Camel milk](#) is a [staple food](#) of desert traveler tribes and is sometimes considered a food in and of itself; a nomad can live on only camel milk for almost a month. Camel milk is rich in vitamins, minerals, proteins, and immunoglobulins; compared to cow's milk, it is lower in fat and lactose and higher in potassium, iron, and vitamin C. Bedouins believe the curative powers of camel milk are enhanced if the camel's diet consists of certain desert plants. Camel milk can readily be made into a drinkable [yogurt](#), as well as butter or cheese, though the yields for cheese tend to be low. Camel meat is [halal](#) for [Muslims](#). However, according to some [Islamic schools of thought](#), a state of impurity is brought on by the utilization of it. Consequently, these schools hold that Muslims must perform [wudhu](#) (ablution) before the next time they [pray](#) after eating camel meat. I am a Cholistani. The beautiful Desert of Cholistan is my Identification I belong here.The word Cholistan is derived from 'Cholna' which means moving and the word Cholistan is derived from the [Turkic](#) word *chol*, which means "desert". Cholistan thus means Land of the Desert. The people of Cholistan lead a semi-nomadic life, moving from one place to another in search of water and fodder for their animals. The dry bed of the [Hakra River](#) runs through the area, along which many settlements of the [Indus Valley Civilization](#) have been found.The local people are known as"Riasti"immigrants from other parts of the Punjab and India are known as abadkar and mohajir.Most local people speak Seraiki, but Punjabi and Urdu are also widely spoken. One of the first civilizations in the world developed in the valley of the Indus River in Asia. It engaged both sides of what is now the border between Pakistan and India. The Indus Valley civilization lasted from about 2500 BC to about 1700 BC.The Indus valley people were well versed in the art of carving. More than 2,000 seals have been discovered from the various sites in the Indus valley. The engravings of the various animals on the seals like those of the humped bull, the buffalo, the bison, the deer, the tiger, the rhinoceros, the

elephant, etc. reveal the artistic ability and technical skill of the engraver of the Indus valley. The figures on lather, metal, wood, ivory and soapstone are also vary remarkable and realistic.Four Civilizations were here such as **Arayan,Bhudhaist,Hinduism and Indus Civilizations** but these three civilization (Arayan,Bhudhaist,Hinduism) now,mixed or marged in Indus Civilization.Now,the Art of Camel Carving is a excellent art expert in the Cholistan desert, Punjab Pakistan. It only belongs to the experts of Cholistan who cut and shave completely developed hair of the camel with different seizers into the forms of simple lines and geometrical designs. There is no reproduction paint used but rather a natural colour of hair dye (mehndi) is mixed with water and applied to the negative area of the designs to make them look dark and prominent. The carved camels are designed for the yearly festival Of Channan Pir (start in Feb), planned between the Derawar and Mujh Gargh forts. They bring their carved camels on Channan Peer Urs and there they do camel show like as camels dance,the agony (camels fighting),the journey (camels race) and camels magic. The basic and extrinsic methods will be applied for the formal and contextual investigation of the camel carving motifs. The flowing lines of hair cutting represent the sun,moon,stars,vegetables shape,Cholistani Herbs,leaflike,animals,birds and humen figure like a micro-universe designed on the body of the camel. Nobody knows exact time frame that when was start this art and from where.

I. INTRODUCTION

Now let's review the art of Camel Carving in Cholistan. There are three types of camels in Cholistan such as
[1] **Marychi (black camel) generation**

[2] **Desi also Wattai (white camel) generation**

[3] **Malguda-Rujhani generation**

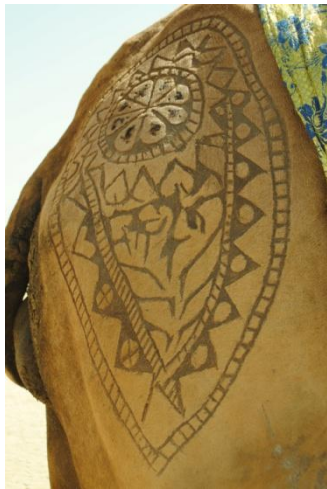
[4] **Benroti generation**

The people in Cholistan who recognize his camel just from one glance at the foot print of that camel from the heard of hundreds of camels. They and other experts says that Marychi generation is pure Cholistani camels but Marychi generation meet resemblance to Eygpt generation and India Rajistani generation.Desi or Wattai camels is also Cholistani generation but some camels experts says that it was come from Dubai and mostly used here for magic,race and dance.Malguda-Rujhani is a Pakistani generation (nasal) who came from Tehsil Rujhan Dist Rajanpur,Punjab Pakistan.Malguda Rujhani camels mostly used for the agony (for fighting).

The art of Camel Carving in Cholistan is a old technique or art on camels of Cholistan. It is an interesting and attractive art of Cholistan Bahawalpur. Cholistani experts have made a design on a camel about 8 eight to 15 fifteen days. They have created design in lines, geometrical forms with his skilled and imagination. Cholistani people says that carving pattern represent life in Cholistan desert.

Cholistani camel carving expert have taken inspiration from the following such as:
Sun, Moon, Stars, Cholistani Herbs, leaflike, Animals, Birds, Humen figure, Butterfly Weed, Leafs of Dish Cloth Gourd, Onewayri (local name) a Cholistani Herb, Luseen (local name) and Korwal daa peeta (local name), a Cholistani Herb, Kadu Di wal etc. They live in Cholistani desrt. Cattle grazing Shephards with their heard move along from one place to another with green grazing land and do observe deep desert land of Cholistan from all over

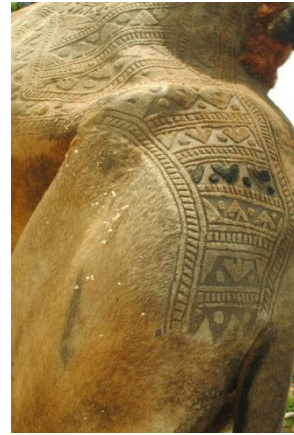
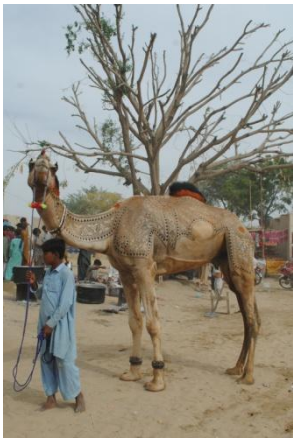
the place. **The art of camel carving in Cholistan are being the following areas of Bahawalpur region:**
Chak 11 BC near Bahawalpur Airpor , Chak 13 BC near Bahawalpur city, Channan Peer, Chak 111DNB Headrajkhan, Shahiwala, Chak 88DB Yazman, Teilwala Bangla, Mithra, Khutri Bangla, Qazi Wali hatiyan, Chak 92 DB, Chak 116DNB Headrajkhan, Chak 127DNB, Meerania, Azeem wala Toba, Kandha Fareed Feroza, Chak 75East Rahim Yar Khan, near Islam Ghar Fort Rahim Yar Khan, Derawar Fort, Angtraa Toba, Deen Ghar Fort, Kaaly Paar, Muj Ghar Fort, Kheer Sar, Thandi Khui, near Marot Fort, Chak 319 HR Marot, Chak 326HR Marot, Chak 340HR Marot, Chak 282HR Marot, Chak 333HR Marot, Kora Khu near Ahmadpur East, Hatayji near Mubarakpur, Basti Wani near Uch Sharif, Chak no 1/P near Khanpur, and Basti Darkhan near Liaquatpur, Latan Sighar near Yazman mandi etc. These are photographs of camel carved:



(fig 1-2-3-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 4-5-6-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 7-8-9-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



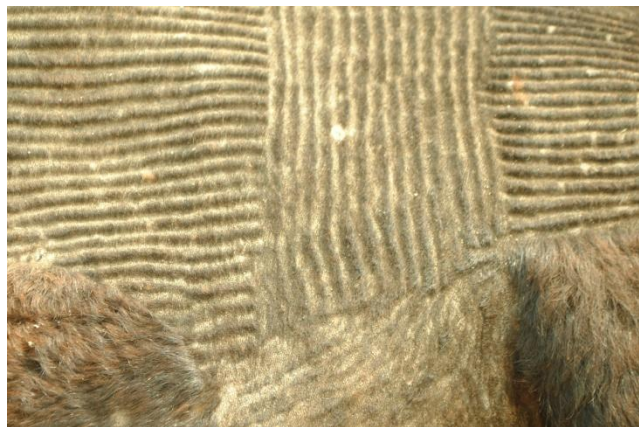
(fig 10-11-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 12-13-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 12-13-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



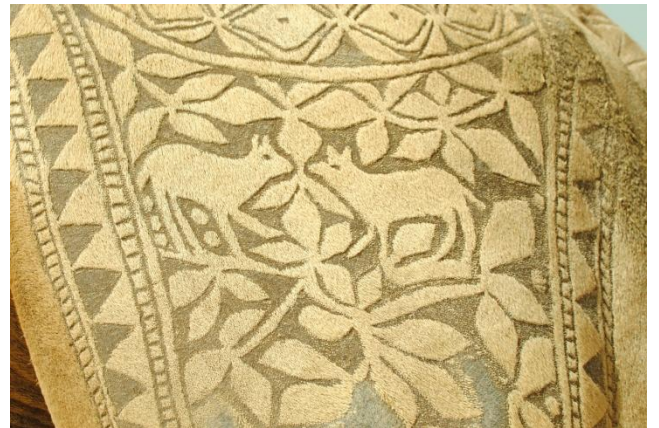
(fig 12-13-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 14-15-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 16-17-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 18-19-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 20-21-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 22-23-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)

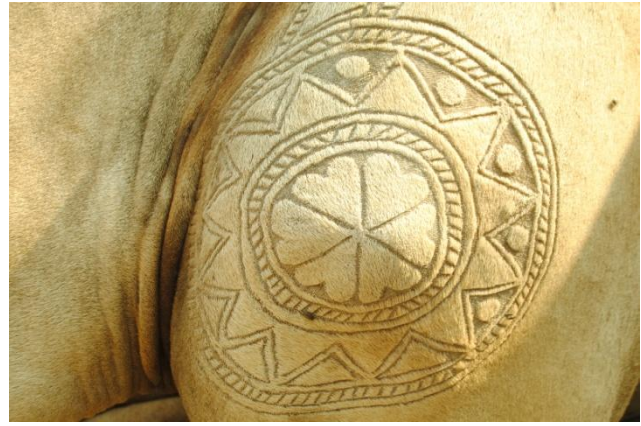


(fig 24-25-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)

It is also important that Cholistani primary source of water is rainfall which is utilized through natural depressions or man-made ponds called “Tobas” and “Dahars.” The secondary source is underground water which is brackish and salty and not fit for human/animal consumption. Two livestock production systems prevail under pastoralism in Cholistan viz. transhumance and nomadic.



(fig 26-27-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)



(fig 28-29-camel carving pattern of Cholistan)

REFERENCES

- [1] The Islamic University of Bahawalpur Shoba Saraiki ,Cholistan k Qabail or Janwaron k Tottam, research project, Eshtaraq Lok Virsa Islamabad (book style,unpublished)
- [2] Sight in the Sands of Cholistan Bahawalpur's History and Architecture Edited by Major- General Shujaat Zamir Dar(book published by OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS)
- [3] Akbar G, TN Khan and M Arshad, 1996. Cholistan desert, Pakistan. Rangelands, 18(4): 124-128.

- [4] Ali I, M Shafiq and U Farooq, 2009. Camel rearing in Cholistan desert of Pakistan. Pak Vet J, 29(2): 85-92
- [5] Khan BB, M Younas, M Riaz and M Yaqoob, 2005, Breeds of livestock in Pakistan. Pak TM Printers, Faisalabad, Pakistan

AUTHORS

First Author – Mohammad Shafeeq, Graphic Designer & Photographer from Bahawalpur, Punjab Pakistan,
mail:shafiqgway2012@gmail.com , Contact no: 0092
03017769792