

Aesthetics in Transformation: Diffusion of Selected Truck Art Features to the Household Objects



**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of
the degree of**

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In
Asian Studies**

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2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my individual research and that it has not been submitted concurrently to any other university for any other degree.

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SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL

I hereby recommend that the dissertation under my supervision by **Syeda Sana Munir Kazmi** titled '**Aesthetics in Transformation: Diffusion of Selected Truck Art Features to the Household Objects**' is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) in Asian Studies.

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Dedicated to

My loving parents, you are my life's soul. In your shadow, I have thrived to this day. You picked me up in my shattered times and presented me to the world as a collage of love. I give credence to your cosmic support. In short, you are the noble beings who shaped me pretty versatile.

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Abstract

In this study different concepts are incorporated to explore how truck art, an indigenous art form made its way to popular culture in the form of decorative motifs and items being used in household decorations, fashion and clothes, and other décor items. The diffusion of truck art into day to day objects can be seen as a cultural shift where one form of art gains popularity by masses to be incorporated in other objects to be enjoyed by masses. This research deals with aesthetic representation of objects decorated with truck art styles by focusing on how such styles and articulation of cultural objects add to the aesthetic appeal of everyday objects. Using a purposive sampling technique, this research gathered data from truck artists and karigars, as well as retailers and restaurant owners to explore the motivation and reasons of truck art diffusion. The findings of the study reveal that as an indigenous art form, truck art is a very good depiction of Pakistani culture, which is why it is not only popular amongst the truck drivers, but also common people. Thus, this art form flourished and gained popularity amongst masses through its portrayals in different fashion and other consumer items. The study implies that art can be used as a strong medium to bring a change in the society because of its strong influence, and at the same time can be used to promote cultural industries of Pakistan at global level.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction and Methodology	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background and Rationale of the Study	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem	3
1.4 Objectives	4
1.5 Hypotheses.....	4
1.6 Research Methodology	5
1.7 Ethical Considerations	10
1.8 Organization of the Thesis:.....	10
Chapter 2- Literature Review.....	12
2.1 Art and Aesthetics	12
2.2 Art and Society	17
2.3 Consumption and Commercialization of Art:	20
2.4 Folk to Popular: Transition of Art	22
2.5 Diffusion of Art into Everyday Life	23
2.6 Moving Art	24
2.7 Conclusion	25
Chapter 3- Understanding Pakistani Truck Art.....	26
3.1 Origin, History, and Evolution of Pakistani Truck Art	27
3.2 Motivation behind Truck Art.....	28
3.3 Religious and Cultural Influences on Truck Art	29
3.4 Truck Art Styles, Types, and Design.....	30
3.5 Motifs and their Meanings.....	34
3.6 Art Decoration on the Back of the Truck	36
3.7 Regional Styles of Truck Painting:.....	36
3.8 Cost and Maintenance of Truck Art	38
3.9 Increasing Popularity of Truck Art.....	38
Chapter 4 -Truck Art Diffusion	40
4.1 Ideas behind the Art.....	40
4.2 Expansion of Ideas.....	46
Chapter 5- Analysis and Conclusion.....	76
5.1 Analysis of Findings	76

5.2	Conclusion and Implications	79
	Bibliography.....	82
	Appendices:	87
	Interviewees:	87

List of Figures

Figure 1. Naan-Sense Entrance.....	43
Figure 2. Naan-Sense Cafe Peshawar (Interior)	44
Figure 3. Naan-Sense Interior.....	44
Figure 4. Khayber-Dodai (Open Air)	45
Figure 5. Khayber Dodai (Interior).....	45
Figure 6. Interior of Restaurant	46
Figure 7. Digital Truck Art Design	47
Figure 8. Truck Art Inspired Notebook Cover	48
Figure 9. Interior of Restaurant	48
Figure 10. Paints and Brushes of Painters	50
Figure 11. Household items.....	52
Figure 12. Household Items (Kitchen Items)	54
Figure 13. Dry Food Plates.....	55
Figure 14. Household Items available at <i>Hajji Sb's</i> workshop.....	55
Figure 15. Decoration Items for Household	57
Figure 16. Coffee-Table and Guitar decorated by truck art.....	57
Figure 17. Toy Truck for Children and Tissue Box	57
Figure 18. A Lamp Decorated by <i>Chamak-pati</i>	58
Figure 19 Dry Food Plates.....	58
Figure 20. Fashion and Clothing	59
Figure 21. Brands which are prominent for Truck Art Inspired Themes	60
Figure 22. Female Bags (Clutches, Wallets, and Hand Bags) Decorated by Art Work....	62
Figure 23. Ear-tops, Rings, Bangles decorated by Truck Art Work.....	64
Figure 24. Available Shoes for Male and Females (online and available at different stores).....	66
Figure 26. Interior of Deas Perdas Restaurant.....	68
Figure 26. Entrance of a Restaurant	69
Figure 27. Round Decorative Emblems	69
Figure 28. Mobile Phone Covers	70
Figure 29. Nail Paintings	70
Figure 30. Mehndi Themes.....	71
Figure 31. Gifts and Favor Boxes for Weddings.....	72

Figure 32. Painted Vespa's	73
Figure 33. Vehicles Adorned with Truck Art.....	73
Figure 34. Painters at Work.....	75

Chapter 1

Introduction and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

Arts and aesthetics historically have very important significance in human lives. Humans have relied on art to express their ideas, emotions, and feelings for centuries. It is through this expression that man has found a way to adorn his life by reflecting his ideas on different media. For instance, the primitive carvings and paintings found in caves depicting earlier civilizations, performance of ritual and religious duties, and worship of ceremonial deities indicate that man has always wanted to preserve ideas and culture through various means. Similarly, excavated coins and utensils from archeological sites all over the world represent the aesthetics of earlier humans while giving us some insight into their lifestyles (Kiefer, n.d.). Similarly, Balter (2009) points out that art is as old as humans themselves, and therefore, chasing the origin of art is a meaningless effort. However, understanding the roots of the symbolism is more appropriate as art is basically the cognitive ability to communicate meaning and convey emotions. As the humans progressed, their expression of art started becoming a focus of philosophical and aesthetic research.

While both art and aesthetic are universal cultural concepts that have existed for ages, they did not get their due share of attention beyond the realism of philosophy. It is, therefore, become interesting to see the concept through hybrid lenses. In the field of arts, hybrid conceptualization of objects means that two meanings can be derived from an object- the communicational as well as aesthetical (Davies, 2006). The communicational aspect of the concept pertains to conveying the feelings and emotions through the use of art. On the other hand, the aesthetical aspect of this concept is related to seeking enjoyment, recreation, and entertainment through indulgence in arts. This hedonistic aspect implies that man uses art as a tool of self-satisfaction to derive pleasure. This is why numerous artisans have used different media to achieve their dual purpose of self-expression and self-satisfaction.

Based on this hybrid conceptualization, this study aims to look at the indigenous Truck Art of Pakistan from an anthropological and cultural lens. This study is inspired by the

rapidly gaining popularity of the truck art themes in everyday life objects of Pakistani citizens. Thus, this study explores the inspiration of decorating sitting-rooms, interior of restaurants and small cafés, clothes and jewelry items, and other day to day consumption items through some specific objects which represent meaning of beauty in explicit and implicit meanings. Additionally, this research incorporates both anthropological and cultural approaches to find out historical and cultural representation of decorative motifs inspired by the famous Pakistani Truck Art in Pakistani households. To do so, this study aims to explore and understand the motivation and inspiration that lies behind the rainbow of colors and variety of paintings found on Pakistani trucks and vehicles, its link with the popular culture of Pakistan, and its diffusion into day to day objects of consumption.

1.2 Background and Rationale of the Study

Art is a universal concept and a significant part of every culture. It provides a unique perspective, a fresh view towards life and society which is not apparent otherwise. It brightens the life by touching upon emotions and feelings in a surprising and subtle manner. This is why, fostering creativity and art is a part of all societies across the globe. In the West, the emergence of creative industries aimed at fostering the art and culture through various art festivals has been popular for the past few decades (Lizardo and Skiles, 2008). In developing countries like Pakistan, however, preservation and proliferation of art has been done, not through organized effort, but through fragmented factions of the society in order to commoditize the art. Because of the rich and colorful cultural heritage, the focus on interior and exterior decoration through cultural emblems is very popular in Pakistan. Not only within the households, but also in leisure areas like restaurants and cafés, the trend to adopt a unique cultural ambiance is on the rise. Pakistani Truck Art, which is gaining global popularity for its unique, bold, colorful, and cultural portrayal of the Pakistani art, is one such trend which is no more restricted to trucks and lorries alone, but is making its way to the households through various different decoration products designed using the same truck art format (Khan, 2011). While adorning and decorating trucks is a practice which is carried out in many other countries including India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Japan, and Turkey etc., the uniqueness of Pakistani truck art is characterized by its vibrant colors, humorous one liners, romantic portrayal of the folk culture, and an exquisite amalgamation of politics, religion, and culture through colors (Paracha, 2016).

Adopting the themes of truck inspired art across different cultural and day to day objects is a topic that presents a scope of investigation. While a lot has been written on the Pakistani Truck Art after it made waves across the globe through fashion catwalks in Europe and Truck Art inspired trams in Australia (Khan, 2011), an anthropological and cultural investigation into the topic is missing. Truck Art presents a soft, vibrant, and amicable cultural image of Pakistan across the globe in the midst of the political chaos and war against terrorism. At the same time, the fact that it has been endorsed by luxury fashion designers and brands like Amir Adnan, Khaadi, and Maheen Kardar, implies that this form of art has spread its wings and bloomed from a traditional folk art into a popular art form. This proliferation, acceptance, and widespread popularity of truck art makes it a very interesting and research worthy topic. Thus, in this study, not only a detailed analysis on history, evolution, and styles of truck art are discussed, but primary emphasis is given to understand the motivation behind decorating the vehicles by truck painters and artists, as well as the motivation by common man to consume truck art inspired items and goods.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

For the present research, different concepts are incorporated to explore how truck art, an indigenous art form made its way to popular culture in the form of decorative motifs and items being used in household decorations, fashion and clothes, and other décor items. The diffusion of truck art into day to day objects can be seen as a cultural shift where one form of art gains popularity by masses to be incorporated in other objects to be enjoyed by masses. This research deals with aesthetic representation of objects decorated with truck art styles by exploring and analyzing how portrayal of this cultural folk art changes the utility and meaning of different household objects. At the same time, this study focuses on how does a form of art which remained vastly popular among transporters to decorate their vehicles became the part of popular culture that common people want to enjoy and express. This is an interesting anthropological question that will be the focus of research.

This study also aims to explore what motivates people in any society to consume objects that represent and reflect their cultural traditions and affiliations. Furthermore, how do these objects add value to the aesthetic aspect of the daily lives of people, present an

interesting topic of study. Thus, the core statement of the problem for this study can be expressed as:

Pakistani Truck Art has penetrated to the households in the form of decorative items, designs of clothes, fashion accessories, and utensils. The popularity of this unique art format presents intriguing research opportunities for anthropological investigation to uncover the reasons, motivation, and effects of diffusion of art into popular culture.

1.4 Objectives

Based on the problem statement, the objectives of this study can be written down as:

- to explore causes of Truck Art diffusion
- to find out people's perception about painted clothes, utensils, and other consumable items
- to find out the motivation behind indulging in cultural heritage in today's modern era
- to explore the reasons behind adoption of Truck Art as a decorative style

1.5 Hypotheses

Although this study is qualitative in nature, following hypotheses have been developed to address research objectives:

- People buy and consume clothes from boutiques according to their own aesthetic choice related to their culture, religion, and other aspects of life
- People get influenced by others to consume objects representing arts and aesthetics
- The diffusion of art is motivated or triggered by the economic benefit that can be drawn from its commodification
- Adoption of truck art into various consumable items represent collective identity and affiliation with cultural artefacts

These are some hypotheses and assumptions that are kept in mind while collecting primary data to explore the rapid and huge popularity and dissemination of truck art into various other consumable items.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the systematic techniques that are used to collect relevant data to answer the research questions. It may include selection of observational techniques, collecting data, and choosing the methods of analyzing the data to find meaning. According to Bernard (2006), a method can be defined in various ways. At the most generalized level, a method can mean the study of how we know things. Another meaning of method can involve choosing the way of knowing things like field work or experiment or observations. Thus, research methodology involves general and specific details of all those activities needed to identify the need for data to data collection and ultimately the data analysis to find solution to the research problem (Bernard, 2006).

The quality of a research is very much dependent on the quality of the research methods employed. Therefore, it is critical on the part of the researcher to opt for the most suitable techniques and utilize all necessary resources to come up with reliable and objective findings. This research, like many anthropological researches, is qualitative in nature. The rationale for such a research design is that qualitative design allows for answering questions about lifestyles, perceptions, and motivations in a better way than does the quantitative design.

In the following pages, a brief overview of the methods is given, while identifying the ethical considerations at the end of the chapter:

1.6.1 Participant Observation

It is one of the methods of field work to collect data that involves participation of the researcher in the culture being research, rather than merely observing it. The idea behind participant observation is to record and reflect upon the observations and insights gathered during the technique. Marshall and Rossman (1989) define participant observation as a “*systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study*”.

During participant observation, the researcher can delve deeper into the culture to find out the answers to research questions. Bernard (2006) points out that by immersing into the culture, the researcher becomes better equipped to ask the right questions, and gives

intuitive understanding to make meanings out of the data and information collected. It also helps in developing a rapport with the people to make them more comfortable and, hence, more open to share information with the researcher. Thus, this methods helps in collecting deeper understanding which is otherwise hard to gather by simply observing the culture as an outsider. Participant observation, however, requires careful approach, because it may influence the behavior of people being studied once they know that they are being observed for a research.

For this research, participation observation has included observing the consumers coming to buy merchandise with truck art themes, owners of such shops and franchises, as well as dealers and middle man in the supply chain of truck art products.

1.6.2 Key Informants

In most cultural anthropological researches, convenience sampling is used to gather field and primary data. Key informants play an integral role in data collection by acting as the first point of contact between the researcher and the field itself. Bernard (2006) explains that a key informant is an individual who knows a lot about the field to be studied, and is willing to share their information with the researcher.

Important characteristics of a good key informants include being observant, articulate, and reflective of their own culture and surroundings (Bernard, 2006). These characteristics help them facilitate the research by guiding the events in which some distinctive sets of actors have been involved in some defined situation at some particular point of time.” (Ellen, 1984; p. 237)

For this research, case study method is also used to acquire in-depth information about the research questions involving diffusion of truck art, the inclination and motivation of people to consume such objects, and the motivation of artists and art sellers in producing such objects. 10 case studies covering various aspects of the topic are covered in this research. The cases also include demographic information like educational and social background to understand the linkages between art consumption and production and socio-cultural factors.

1.6.3 Daily Diary and Field Notes

Anthropological research involves collection of various types of data: from audiotapes to photographs and transcriptions to participant observation. It is therefore, important to take

notes and maintain a daily diary to keep track of all the data gathered in a systematic manner.

For this research, field notes are taken using the jotting technique where small details and observations were jotted down while observing events and participants, or talking to them, so that those details could be used later on when analyzing the data. This jotting technique helps in providing the trigger that helps in recalling the larger details. Additionally, a personal diary is also used in this study where observations, views, and extra information were recorded during the field work. Notes were taken in English, Urdu, or Punjabi, which was later transcribed and translated for formal use.

1.6.4 Translation and Transcription

This part of the data collection involved writing down the collected data by the researcher for analytical purposes. The researcher translated the data from Urdu and Punjabi to English for the purpose of uniformity. During the translation phase, the motive was to translate the gist of the interviews without affecting or altering any meaning of the content. However, verbatim translation was not carried out because of the hefty amount of work and effort it required, which was not necessary for this study.

After data collection the next step was to analysis of field data. For this purpose different themes were taken out from the data along with their related explanations. The objectives of the study were kept in mind to extract related themes from collected information. For the sake of validity and authenticity, some of the quotes have been added verbatim in the later chapters.

1.6.5 Interview Guide

Interview guide is a set of instruction that delineate the questions and topics that need to be covered during the interview in a particular order (Bernard, 2006). Interview guide is used as a tool when using semi-structured in-depth interviews, because it allows the researcher to remain in control of the important topics needed to be discussed, while leaving the room for both the researcher and the respondents to take upon new leads for discussion.

For this study, interview guide is made based on the research objectives and the problem of statement identified in the beginning of the study. Main topics covered in interview

guide pertain to truck art as a part of Pakistani culture, and then its diffusion in other spheres of lives in recent times.

1.6.6 In-depth Interviews

Research in social science and more specifically anthropology relies heavily on in-depth interviews as they allow retrieving important information and gaining detailed insights into the research topic. In-depth interviews generally include a semi-structured format, which allows the researcher to follow a general script to cover all important areas, while leaving the discussion open ended at the same time.

For present research, twenty five in-depth interviews were conducted. The unit of data collection for the interviews involved respondents who belonged to the field truck art directly or indirectly. Ten of those interviews were conducted from truck painters that included hand painters, karigars, machine painters, workshop owners, and wood workers.

Of the remaining in-depth interviews, 4 interviews were conducted from owners of clothing franchises; 2 were conducted from restaurant owners where interior of the restaurant was inspired by the truck art themes; 4 interviews were conducted from shop managers whose merchandise include truck art inspired household items; and 5 were conducted from end consumers who buy merchandise with truck art theme.

The major themes that these interviews touched upon include the affiliation with the profession of shop owners and managers, their personal interests and likes/dislikes about the art, their motivation towards keeping the products with new art designs and trends, as well as their perception and expectations about the future trends.

1.6.7 Sampling- Purposive Sampling

Sampling refers to selection of a subset of respondents from within a population in order to study and estimate the characteristics of the whole population. Sampling, therefore, allows generalizing the findings over the larger population by studying a small group of respondents (Bernard, 2006). For this research, non-probability sampling technique is chosen to select the respondents. Bernard (2006) claims that this technique is helpful under circumstances where research involves extensive and labor intensive study of a few cases. Thus, choosing cases on purpose rather than randomly fares better. Similarly, this sampling is also appropriate when collecting cultural data, that requires gathering information from expert informants, rather than any randomly chosen respondent.

Purposive of judgmental sampling is used in this study to select the respondents. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to decide upon the purpose for the informants to serve (Bernard, 2006). As this research can be brought under the umbrella of Truck Art consumption as a mass cultural product by being depicted in fashion, household objects, and decoration ideas, the respondents were chosen based on their relevance to the truck art consumption and production.

1.6.8 Case Study

Anthropological research deals with cases in a different manner than how legal scholars do it. The case study in anthropological research is generally based on inductive reasoning, that is, it involves describing the case first, and then extracting generalizations out of it. Thus, these cases are used to analyse how different perspectives, regardless of being conflictive, interplay to form a social system. According to Ellen (1984), case study is defined as:

“The detailed presentation of ethnographic data relating to some sequence of events from which the analyst seeks to make some theoretical inference. The events themselves may relate to any level of social organization; a whole society, some section of a community, a family or an individual.”

1.6.9 Audio Recording

As mentioned earlier, a number of data collection and recording methods are used by researchers in anthropology. Audio and video recording provide quick, easy, and reliable way to record participant observations, interviews, or other details for later transcription and analysis. Also, it helps in capturing the tone and expressions of respondents that can otherwise go unnoticed by the researcher due to one reason or the other (Heath, 2011). Yet another advantage is that one can review the data again and again to make the most out of it (Knoblauch et al., 2006).

Because of the multitude of features offered by smart phones, and their ease of use, the researcher used iPhone 6 to record audio after getting the consent of the participants. Thankfully, the respondents cooperated and allowed the audio recordings after getting to know the purpose of the research, and thus facilitated the data collection by the researcher.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

Any form of research necessitates compliance with some ethical and moral guidelines to ensure objectivity and validity. For qualitative researches, which involve in-depth collection of data from respondents, researcher has to establish a relationship with the respondents to collect quality data. It is, therefore, even more important to keep the ethical considerations in mind before embarking on the data collection endeavor.

Since the present study is about the perception and aesthetic representation through clothing, utensils, and other objects rather than the vehicles, considerable care was taken to ensure the research complied with the ethical responsibilities and safeguard the rights of respondents. Before taking interviews, the respondents were informed about the nature and the topic of research. No individual was coerced to take part in the research, and every participant was given the right to leave the research at any point in time, if they wish. In line with the ethical principles of research, respondents were assured that the data will only be used for this particular research, and will not be handed over to unauthorized persons. The confidentiality of the data was also ensured and taken care of.

As a part of the ethical research process, all the respondents were informed about the use of collected data and ensured that for the sake of this research their responses would be transcribed to look for recurrent themes and only minimal disclosure of personal accounts will be done, if needed. It was also ensured that respondents were taken into full confidence regarding revealing their personal information, by building rapport and trust with them.

It was also ensured that personal biases and opinions of the researcher were kept at bay while choosing the respondents, making notes and observations, and analyzing the data, to ensure objectivity. The data collected in the field was properly handled and transcribed, so as to make sure to not change the meaning of the data. Special care was taken regarding the fact that respondents feel secure and confident to share their information without any doubts and concerns.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis:

The thesis is organized and divided into 5 chapters, each discussing an important part of the study. A brief overview of the following chapters is given below for easy perusal and review:

Chapter 2- Literature Review: This chapter forms the basis of the research by developing the theoretical foundations. Deriving from the important theories, the chapter aims to form a structure on which the analyses of primary research of this study are based. Ranging from the literature from theories on arts and aesthetics, to finding out how art and its forms become a part of cultural identity, and exploring the commercialization and commoditization of art, this chapter reviews the relevant literature.

Chapter 3- Understanding Pakistani Truck Art: Based on secondary data, this chapter discusses and presents a detailed account of Pakistani Truck Art beginning from its history to evolution, types, motifs used, and influences behind the colors and motifs. The purpose of this chapter is to present a well rounded view on the truck art based on desktop research.

Chapter 4- Truck Art Diffusion: After secondary data being discussed in earlier chapter, this chapter presents findings from the primary research and interviews to address the research objectives set in the first chapter. The chapter also presents visuals and pictures of truck art inspired items found during the research.

Chapter 5- Analysis and Conclusion: This chapter winds up the present study by presenting an analysis of the findings. Using the literature and primary research findings, this last chapter analyzes the diffusion of truck art as a popular cultural phenomenon in the country. Moreover, the chapter presents conclusion and implications for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

One of the primary purposes of art is to reflect ourselves in the form of the things we make. Humans have evolved culturally, socially, technologically, morally, and economically over the centuries, and thus art plays an important role in expressing the current context of human society and culture. From the earliest paintings in the caves depicting hunters and beasts, to traditional religious paintings aimed at evoking certain behavior among the masses, to architectural edifices showcasing the grandeur of emperors, to the modern day art embracing the free will of humans, art has played a pivotal role not only in reflecting the society, but also in directing the society into new ways of thinking (Foster, 1989).

The intricacies that art exhibits by influencing various facets of human lives, and being influenced by various factors of the environment have been a focus of research for experts belonging to different disciplines. In this chapter, the primary motivation is to touch upon and discuss different theoretical approaches that could help explain the interplay between art, culture, and society. Doing so will help understand and analyze the diffusion of art in any society, and more importantly in comprehending the diffusion of truck art into popular culture in Pakistan. However, most of the literature available is done by the Western philosophers, anthropologists, and sociologists who, for the very obvious reasons, focus primarily on the arts and culture of the Western world.

The idea of this literature review is, therefore, to borrow from their ideas the understanding of how art and culture interact in human life and thus extracting the meaning to apply on understanding the commercialization of truck art in Pakistan.

2.1 Art and Aesthetics

The word “art” is basically derived from the Latin word ‘*Ars*’ meaning methods and techniques. The word art is used to express ones feelings and perceptions which is why every language and culture has its own characteristics of art. Aesthetics, on the other hand, is a philosophical discipline that deals with the nature and experience of art

(McGregor, 1974). Art can be expressed in a number of ways and through a variety of medium. Painting, drawing, music, dance, acting, sculpting, sketching, poetry, and carving all represent different forms of art that an artist uses to express his feelings, emotions, perceptions, and observations. Art, in fact, enriches human life at many different levels. It is a universal concept that connects ideas to human feelings and emotions. According to Andel (2015), art brings order to the chaos; brings new meanings and creates new perspectives; challenges conformity and statics by allowing for diversity of views; engages minds and senses and shapes the identity of people and places. Advocating the concept of universality and significance of art in human life, Firth (1951) suggests:

‘It is commonly held that economic activity is a necessity but that art is a luxury, yet we can empirically assert the universality of art in man’s social history, there are universal standards of aesthetic quality just as there are universal standards of technical efficiency’ (p. 155-62).

Thus, art is one of the defining characteristics of cultural identity of people and society. It is reflected in numerous forms through culture, religion, and language. It extends beyond the realms of morality and reality, and reaches for the infinite through imagination and expression.

2.1.1 Free and Functional Beauty of Artefacts

Kant (1790) famously distinguishes between the two types of beauty namely free and dependent, in his work the Critique of Judgment. Based on his interpretation of beauty, dependent beauty is derived from the functionality of the thing. Thus, functional beauty is attributed to the extent of which a function of the thing is achieved. A chair is beautiful if it offers comfort to the user. On the other hand, free beauty is independent of any such restrictions, and can be perceived without any classification or function. It, therefore, relies on conceptual and cognitive categorization as well as imagination (Davies, 2006).

The disinterested perception of free beauty is cognitively based, even while it does not involve conceptual categorization, because it rests on the free play of the imagination and the understanding (Davies, 2006). The primary function of artworks is not to be anticipated for the sake of beauty and their aesthetic properties alone. Aesthetic theories of the early twentieth century led philosophers of art to accept that as well as aesthetic properties or artwork, artworks also possess artistic properties that are to be appreciated

and enjoyed. The connections that can obtain between these two kinds of property, the idea that aesthetic judgments should be restricted only to the realm of aesthetic properties is problematic (Davies, 2006). Though it applies to the case just described, the story about dependent beauty fails to deal adequately with aesthetic characters that contribute to their non-aesthetic primary functions. Moreover, the class of such items is a crucial one, because it includes artworks and the kinds of craftworks that have the strongest claim to the status of art (Davies, 2006).

The aesthetic judgment of an artwork's dependent beauty considers it from the point of view not of its primary artistic function, but in terms of a subsidiary aesthetic one. Doing so disregards many of the ways in which the work's aesthetic features contribute to the artistic effects it achieves and to the aesthetic character implicated in meta-level relations between artistic properties. In consequence, the model of judgments of dependent beauty does not deliver what we might expect from an adequate account of the role of aesthetic judgments in the appreciation of art (Davies, 2006). For example the initial judgment that the vessel's aesthetic qualities contribute to its functioning well as a utensil turns out to be wrong. When we use it, we find when put the vessel on fire the painting damaged and all aesthetic face unstable. We then should revise the judgment that the pot is beautiful as a pot. Either we now see the judgment as evaluating a purely aesthetic function that is independent of and secondary to the vessel's being a vessel, which, as such, has the primary function of help in cooking. Or we decide that it is appropriate to revise the verdict of the item's primary function, and hence of its nature. For example, we might come to see that it should be conceptualized as a painted vessel, not a pot. As such, it is not for cooking purpose. A functionally beautiful valuable property must enhance its primary function, even though it may not be a good in virtue of other practical failings. A painted chair (painted chairs are also available at *Lok Virsa* for decorative purposes) might be functionally beautiful because of the way its elegance suits it for its primary purpose.

A question may occur how the items' aesthetic features and its primary purpose (utility) specifically related and why they are necessary to evaluate the aesthetic and utility representation of any item. There could be one possibility, that the aesthetic and the practical use are different aspects of the same material. This certainly establishes the intimacy of the connection, but it does not allow evaluator to distinguish clearly enough

between something's being elegantly practical, and its being both elegant and practical at same time.

It might be due to the fact that the aesthetics of the item constrain the way through which primary function is pursued, when the primary function is important in determining the aesthetics of the item. In other words, in such a case, the relationship between function and aesthetics is of mutual influence or symbiotic in nature.

The kind of beauty that arises from this mutual interaction between the items' aesthetic features and its primary function is distinct from beauties that attend the item in an incidental or secondary way. The color of the knife's handle might be aesthetically pleasing. In that case the color adds aesthetic value to the specific items, but not to it as their function, since many other kinds of items would have their aesthetic value supplemented to the same degree if they were similarly colored. The said objects are not more beautiful unless there is some relevant connection between the attractiveness of their color and their practical functionality.

Functional beauty is not always equivalent to formal beauty. The judgment is positive if the successful realization of the item's aesthetic properties contributes positively to performing its primary function, and the successful realization of formal beauty will not always do the same. Because the evaluation of the contribution made by aesthetic properties to its primary function focuses on the object as object, and not on aesthetic features that are only incidental or secondary to its being the object it is and having the functional value that it has, these judgments capture something often claimed as central to aesthetic judgments, mainly they are concerned with the object for its own sake. This aesthetic evaluation takes account of the non-aesthetic primary function that is crucial to its subject's identity (Davies, 2006).

2.1.2 Aesthetic Judgment of Artwork

Dickie (1983) explains that one universal feature of art is it being an artifact- that is, a creation of man. Another defining characteristic of art is that is used as an expression of emotions. However, both these properties can be linked to non-art objects too. For instance, a painting and a hammer both are artifacts and both can be used to express some kind of emotions. The presence of aesthetic appeal turns an object into a piece of art.

When looking at the creations of art, defining beauty, however, becomes a more complex concept. The comprehensive judgment of an artwork's success takes in more than consideration of its functional beauty. While evaluating the work of art, aesthetics not only include the degree or amount of pleasure provided by the contemplation of that particular art, but also by the role played by the aesthetic properties of the work to secure such response.

The judgment does not split the external effect from consideration of the internal means. Moreover, the judgment applies to the work identified as the artwork it is (Davies, 2006). Artworks cannot be considered as atomic singularities. Judgments of the artwork's aesthetic value, to be of its aesthetic value as the artwork it is, must contextualize it in the appropriate way. This view of aesthetic judgment applies in the same way not only to items with non-aesthetic practical functions, but also to artworks that are for contemplation (Dickie, 1983). For that reason, it gives us a way to understand how some kinds of art can serve non-aesthetic primary functions.

Art and aesthetics go hand in hand to deliver the meaning and beauty of an object. However, the value of art is not measured by the value of its aesthetics alone. While aesthetics reflect one aspect of art, in essence, art is a tool for seeing our reflection and thus understanding who we are. Philosophers of art in the early twentieth century accepted the fact that any piece of art has both, aesthetic properties as well as artistic properties that must be enjoyed and appreciated. Another concept that is worth mentioning in relation to art and aesthetics is the theory of aesthetic perception. According to this theory, anything can be perceived aesthetically, regardless if it is a piece of art or not. Based on this definition, anything can be viewed aesthetically, be it natural scenery, or a fruit or vegetable, or a painting by Picasso. However, important properties of art include an aesthetic appeal, an expression of emotions, and artifactuality. Dickie (1983) asserts that perception of art is an activity that undertakes various complex cognitive processes.

Davies (2006) argues that the concept of free and dependent beauty undermines the logic of aesthetic judgments, and thus aesthetics can be defined in the form of functional beauty. Thus, functional beauty combines the aesthetic qualities of a thing with its functional quality, thus a chair that looks pleasing to the eyes can only be considered truly beautiful if it is also comfortable to sit on, and thus fulfilling its function as a chair too.

This mutual interaction of the aesthetic features and the functional features of an item make it beautiful. If, on the other hand, the chair is unstable or cripples the user's back, the judgment of chair's beauty should be redefined. It should either be seen as a chair-sculpture (a chair not supposed to be used for seating), in order to fit the definition of functional beauty. Thus, in this case, an item's aesthetic features and its functionality should be related in order to make it functionally beautiful.

These concepts when applied to the work of art can have important implications. Artwork in itself is supposed to be aesthetically pleasing. In this sense, the art work cannot be viewed as atomic singularities (Davies, 2006). In fact, art has been used for centuries to serve a deeper purpose, than merely as a tool for human pleasure. Many authors have explained art as more than a tool and as an abstract force or idea (Foster, 1989). In this sense, the art moves up in the ladder from biological forces at the bottom, to aesthetic, moral, intellectual, and spiritual forces at the higher ends of the ladder (Ward, 1896).

Art has been, therefore, used for various instrumental purposes meeting the various needs. For instance, religious art is used to convey holy messages of divinity; didactic art tries to invoke sense of morality; popular art is used for the purpose of undemanding entertainment; folk and cultural art is used to personalize and decorate one's possessions and lessening of the burdens of life. Truck Art, in essence, uses all these conceptualizations as a part of its functionality. The artists use drawings and paintings on trucks to deliver religious connotations and to ward off evil, convey messages on morality, provide witty entertainment, and depict the cultural affiliations of the truck driver.

2.2 Art and Society

The relationship between art and society is as old as the human society itself. Art has been a part of human society since the stone-age, in one form or the other. Much of the art from earlier human civilizations was aimed at delivering different functions, for instance to ensure fertility or success on the hunt (Foster, 1989). The earliest found cave paintings with their intricate details, the astonishing precision and grace found in various architectural structures including the Stonehenge and Pyramids of Giza attest to the aesthetic sense of the early human civilizations. Anthropologists and sociologists alike have written extensively on the relationship between art and the society.

For instance, Marx (1963) considers art as a social product by suggesting that the senses of a social man are different than from a non-social man because human sensibilities are created and cultivated through social history and interactions. Daley and Ward (1907) explain art as a socializing agency while Ross (1897) considered art a major form of social control. Cooley (1966) believes that art has a moral function by saying that art omits the irrelevant details of reality and gives colors and life to the significant details to portray real as the ideal.

Art is, therefore, seen as a key social institution by the sociologists. At the same time, in recent years, art is defined more broadly, which has lent it to the growing recognition in its involvement in influencing the society by not just highlighting and solving social problems, but also improving the quality of life by enriching human life (Foster, 1989).

Various theories defining the relationship between arts and society have been put forward over the years by experts. In the nineteenth century, the relationship between the two was seen from a biological perspective. Herbert Spencer (1900) defined it as an ‘evolutionary force’ whereas Hirn (1900) saw it as an impulse or need. Yet another approach used to determine the relationship between arts and society is the psychological one.

Freud (1943) explains it as ‘fantasy providing catharsis’; art and music therapists consider it an efficient approach to treat mental illnesses; and more recent work explains it as a form of play. The common theme of both, the biological and psychological approaches is that both imply that art is driven by internal motivation (Foster, 1989). Child and Siroto (1965) in their cross cultural research reveal that the quality of work of artists and craftsmen converge across different cultures, and hence supporting the universality of art.

Marxists use the social structural approach in defining the relationship. Based on this approach, the type of art produced is determined by the class of the artist and the consumers who demand it. It is based on this approach that fine arts is considered for the upper social classes, while the popular and folk arts is for the masses (Foster, 1989).

Truck Art can be explained as the folk and popular art that is produced by the artists belonging to lower social classes, producing the work of art for truck drivers who also belong to a similar social class. Lastly, pluralistic approaches to arts and society see the relationship emerging from interplay of various factors to serve different purposes. LeRoi

Jones (1968), for example, asserts that art is a medium used to support political orientation, cultural uniqueness, or national identity.

Sorokin (1937) explains the different cultural orientations that influence the style of art. Ranging from the *ideational* tendencies that rely purely on ideas and imaginations, to *sensate* tendencies focusing more on values of flesh and realism, to an intermediate *idealistic* tendency that satisfies the physical and spiritual values alike, the art is used to express dominant values in the society.

The role of art in a society is manifold. Its instrumental uses have been many, from being used as a tool for propaganda to a tool for social control. It is used by various facets of the society from political, religious, educational, military, and economic institutions to gain support from the public for their special purposes (Foster, 1989). At the same time, it is also seen as an agent of social change and sometimes as a measure of social change. Sorokin (1962) asserts that each type of art is reflective of a specific culture and type of personality.

Yet another way of looking at the relationship between art and society is to understand the influence of society on art. The society influences arts in a number of ways including religion, community, and economy. Demographics also play a meaningful role in shaping a society's preference of arts. For example, a society with ageing population might prefer traditional art, while one with younger population will support popular art forms (Foster, 1989). Art and artistic styles vary with the changes in society and culture. Wood (1993) notes that the differences in artistic styles are more prominent when looking through cultural conditions particular to that time. Foster (1989) notes that art has played a very important role over the last few decades in promoting and highlighting different social issues and problems. In the Western world, for instance, art was extensively used in the form of paintings, literature, music, and folk art to support equal rights for Blacks (Foster, 1989). This brought the popular or pop art into the limelight whereby academics and theorists starting seeing pop art as equally important as the fine arts because of its influence on the society. A popular art, which is the art of the working class, has enabled the blurring of the line between fine arts and folk arts.

2.3 Consumption and Commercialization of Art

Up until early 1960s, the explanations for consumption of fine art and popular art were considered very straightforward. In the pre-industrialized era, fine arts were consumed by the elites because they had the capacity to consume and appreciate it. For the masses though, commercialized popular art met the needs. In this respect, the cultural consumption of art was seen as an activity that was affordable for the elite, and was made affordable to the status seeking masses through commercialization of mass produced art (Lizardo and Skiles, 2008). According to this view, the demand for arts from upper social class as well as masses were met is cultural industry experts who could manipulate the customer preferences.

Consumer studies on culture consumption reveal that there is neither an incoherent nor a strict division between the fine and popular culture items (Lizardo and Skiles, 2008). This means that there is no strict segmentation based on social class differences on the consumption patterns. However, Bordieu (1984) asserts that educational differences do play a role in engagement and indulgence into cultural styles.

Other recent studies have emphasized the significance of social factors in driving the demand for arts. These factors include institutional domains mainly family, work groups, and educational system that forms and influences the cultural consumption patterns (Bourdieu, 1984). Based on this new research, the entities responsible for production and distribution of culture and cultural products are not closed systems, but are open and complex in nature (Hirsch, 1972).

Thus, culture industry relies on satisficing rather than rational maximization to produce culture. Similarly, on the demand side, consumption of arts and culture is not a simple determinant of social class divisions, but various factors like education and institutions. Arnold (1883) points out that culture can be used to not only explain how the whole society works through religion, economics, and politics, but also to explain the aesthetic elements of the society through art, music, literature, and drama, etc.

With the turn of the 20th century, the rise in industrialization and globalization resulted in emergence of mass cultures and pop cultures. In the Western world, this industrialization of culture led to an elitist anxiety regarding fine arts consumption (Lizardo and Skiles, 2008). According to some philosophers, this led to a rise of culture industry characterized

by a one-dimensional society dominated by the likes of Hollywood movies and television that could be used as a political and economic weapon by the elites (Joas, 1992).

It is very important to mention the work of Bourdieu (1973) who sought to explain the relationship between culture and social class. The focal point of his theory is that there is a fine distinction between the high culture (the culture of elites) and the popular culture (the culture of common man). He further states that the dominant or elite class has the power and resources to influence and legitimize certain cultural practices and behaviors which distinguish them from the culture of the masses.

Hence, one must possess cultural capital which refers to the 'shared high status cultural signals' including attitudes, formal knowledge, and credentials to assess the value of a cultural good (Lamont and Lareau, 1988). Based on this theory, Bourdieu (1984) argues that "a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded" (p. 2). However, with the rise of globalization and widespread popularity of mass culture, the distinction between high and popular culture is diminishing in the sense that popular culture is becoming more omnivorous across all social classes.

The proponents of 'mass society' theory also assert that the industrialization of culture meant amalgamation of lifestyles across different social classes, thus threatening the elitist nature of arts in the society. Such a society, according to DiMaggio (1987), is constituted by individuals forming a homogenous mass of status seeking people from middle class who could be easily influenced and manipulated by the affluent society.

At the same time, mass culture theory also means social threat to the elite class because of democratization of culture. What this implies is that with advancements in mass communication and industrialization, the culture of the society evolved into a form of mass culture, which has deep rooted implications on the consumption behavior, also with regards to arts. Lizardo and Skiles (2008) note that one of the key features of industrialized societies is the organized and formal production of cultural goods and products that existed as a part of folk or community goods. Thus, technological advancements and marketing evolution is also a driver of media cultures, which has had an impact on commodification of the art in recent era.

Explaining the proliferation of mass culture in the Western world, MacDonald (1957) asserts that with the advancement in technology, the barriers and monopoly of culture once held by upper classes shattered which allowed for cheaper production of different cultural products including art, literature, furniture, movies, and television etc. This mass culture flourished in the hands of businesses who aimed at exploiting the needs of masses to earn profits by commercializing the culture which was once restricted within the silos of elite in the case of fine arts, or within the confines of common people in the case of folk art (MacDonald, 1957). The mass culture, therefore, diminished the discrimination of class or social status through its democratic nature.

The notion of mass culture when applied to the commercialization of truck art explains one of the reasons why the truck art penetrated and expanded its wings to appear in other areas of Pakistani culture either through fashion, household items, interior decoration, and utensils etc. It is this amalgamation of folk culture into the mass culture to commercialize this art for business purposes, while meeting the needs of masses.

2.4 Folk to Popular: Transition of Art

From the Western perspective, the art can be classified into three major categories namely fine art, folk art, and popular art. Fine art, as discussed earlier as well, is the art of the elite class which is produced and enjoyed by the people belonging to a particular social status. At the other end of the spectrum lies the folk art, which is basically communal art produced by people belonging to small social communities living in closely knitted system.

This art is more personal; based on the everyday experiences of the people of the social group; and governed by the local traditions (Bell, 1989). The audiences of folk art, like that of fine arts, are limited, small, and niche. This is because of the localized nature of the content either in the form of paintings, folk ballads, folklores, folk dance, or folk music. In the middle of the continuum lies the popular art, which caters to the needs of the masses that are present somewhere between the elite class and the class belonging to small communities. It is impersonal in nature in the sense that it does not reflect the everyday experiences of the audience like in folk culture, and is not highly difficult or abstract like that of fine art.

While a universal and clear cut definition of popular culture and popular arts is not available, some of the salient characteristics are that it is popular amongst the masses; can be commercialized for financial success; is created by the people; and presents hegemony between different social classes (Haskell, n.d.).

Truck art can be classified as a folk art in its true essence because of the fact that it originated amongst a small societal group to represent the traditions, emotions, and beliefs of truck drivers who belong to small rural communities and low income class. However, with the passage of time it started overlapping with the popular culture and popular art to combine the characteristics of both, folk and popular themes.

The artists producing truck art borrow the cultural themes from folk culture (in the form of religious beliefs, floral patterns, fantasy, and folk lore) as well as from popular culture (in the form of depiction of celebrities, modern technology through planes, and innovative material) to cater to the taste of not only the owner of the truck, but also to entertain the masses. Moreover, with the proliferation of truck art themes into other spheres of life, truck art has evolved into a form of popular art/culture of Pakistan.

2.5 Diffusion of Art into Everyday Life

Recent literature in the field of consumer behavior reveals that with increasing commercial influence on the popular culture, arts and aesthetics are making their way into everyday lives (Brown and Patterson, 2000; Schroeder, 2005). Studies on various consumer related areas including fashion, visual images, and personal care have begun to find out and explain the aesthetic discourse of everyday life. To reiterate, aesthetics offer a wide range of meanings ranging from sensory experiences relating to arts, crafts, performing arts, or other visual forms (Schroeder and Borgensen, 2002) to sensory experiences relating to day to day objects. Carroll (2001) asserts that it involves a wide array of conceptual categories from art to expression, symbolism, harmony, imagery, beauty, and feelings.

The rationale of discussing the consumer side of the theory here is to explore the motivation of consuming cultural and artistic products by people. Heilbrun (2002) argues that everyday objects have the potential to fulfil aesthetic needs of consumers by providing sensory experiences in one form or the other. For instance, consumers engage in experiential type products to derive pleasure (for example going to an amusement park,

or a resort, or a movie). Similarly, hedonic experience is one whereby consumers derive enjoyment or pleasure through multisensory aspects of the product or experience (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Art consumption can be explained using these experiential and hedonic theories. Individuals exhibit certain consumption behaviors by collecting the past meanings, negotiating future meanings, and assembling the present meanings of various cultural and religious constructs (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008).

Thus, research on consumer behavior has shown that consumers look for hedonistic experiences by consuming a product, which can explain why art and popular culture makes its way into everyday life of individuals. Rantala and Lehtonen (2001) point out that aesthetics is reflected in the shopping experiences of people as people want to buy things that offer style. Thus, consumption of every objects like clothing or home decoration have an aesthetic aspect to it.

2.6 Moving Art

Art, as discussed above, can be in a variety of different forms. One increasing popular form of art is seen on vehicles and is generally regarded as ‘moving art’ (Truck Art, 2013). Menez (1988) describes it as one of the vital forms of “contemporary urban folklore” because of the use of a combination of folk and urban traditions to present art on the vehicles. It is an indigenous art form that is prevalent in many countries including India, Thailand, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Philippines, and Panama (Szok, 2008). However, every country depicts a different culture and heritage through their moving art which makes it unique to the respective culture.

Despite the fact that vehicles are adorned in various countries, this type of art did not gain much scholarly attention from art historians, anthropologists, or sociologists because they regarded it as unsophisticated form of art. Lately, however, some studies have been conducted to understand this type of indigenous art and the underlying meaning it conveys.

Pinney (2004) is of the opinion that visual culture can be considered as important as writings and thus, visual history can provide important insights into the political, religious, and cultural intersections. More importantly, while textual writings can be a source of reflection for elites and educated class, the visual culture can be an integral

source of expression for lower income classes, especially in countries where illiteracy is high and common.

In this context, the truck art can be considered a product of a community culture that practices and values the importance of visuals, images, and paintings to present and communicate a public face of the society (Schulze, 2012). Elias (2011) claims that on surface, the truck art of Pakistan may seem like a rainbow of colors, motifs, and figurines, but in essence, it functions as a symbol system with uses a syntax and strict set of decorative rules to deliver and communicate different meanings. Lefebvre (1989) also asserts that the designs and colors are not chosen arbitrarily, but careful consideration is given using visible and invisible signs as a sign of communication.

Pakistani highways offer a free and open gallery to the massively decorated and colorfully painted trucks which have gained widespread popularity as an indigenous form of art through its iconic visual expression and symbolism. This form of moving art can be seen as a form of visual language, a form of expressive communication, and reflects various religious, mythical, cultural, social, political, and folk themes. Its diffusion into other spheres of lives in the form of decorative items, event and home décor themes, fashion and clothing items, and decorative utensils represent a cross between mass and folk culture, which highlights the importance of art and its effect on cultural evolution and lifestyles of common man.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed and highlighted different theoretical perspectives which can be used to view truck art. The aesthetics of the paintings drawn on these trucks, combined with the amalgamation of different class cultures provide interesting domain of study to anthropologists, art historians, and sociologists. While the theories discussed in this chapter are taken from the Western context and culture, and cannot be generalized as it is to the Pakistani context, they offer useful explanations of the proliferation of this indigenous type of art into different spheres of life. The emergence of popular culture, massive commercialization, and cultural integration has been at the forefront of today's life styles of masses. These theories, therefore, can help in analyzing how truck art made its way into other popular areas of consumption. Next chapter focuses on comprehensive discussion on the truck art from its origin and history, to types and styles, implied and explicit meanings of the truck art paintings, and their sources of influence.

Chapter 3

Understanding Pakistani Truck Art

Pakistan has a very rich cultural history which dates back to more than 5000 years with successive settlements of different civilizations across the Indus Delta over the centuries. From the distinctive architecture and crafts of people of Mohin-Jo-Daro, to calligraphic excellence of artists in Mughal era, the country has developed a very colorful culture (Rich and Khan, 1980). The traditional culture of Pakistan is a beautiful amalgamation of distinct cultures of Persians, Greeks, Arabs, and even British. Handicraft and creative industries provide employment to roughly 15% of the workforce of the country, according to the study by Kevin et al. (2014). Nevertheless, most of this sector is informal and undocumented which makes it difficult to comprehend the true scale and impact of the sector on the economy. One of the popular cultural and folks industries of Pakistan is that of painting trucks and vehicles, commonly known as truck art.

Painted and adorned trucks are a common sight on the roads and highways of Pakistan. The art has gained so much popularity that a whole book has been written on it by Jamal J. Elias (2005) by the name of *On Wings of Diesel*. In this 288 page book, the Elias delves deep into this traditional art of Pakistan and extensively discusses the different art styles and details of decoration through his research. Vehicle art is not a specialty of trucks alone, but can be seen on different public transport vehicles like wagons, mini buses, and auto rickshaws. According to Elias (2005), truck decoration can be divided into three parts according to the part of the vehicle's body. These decorations are done on the front, the back, and on the sides of the truck, with each of these parts showing different designs and art elements. Many individuals are involved in the decoration of a single truck. A variety of figural floral and geometrical designs are made with the different materials at the body of the truck and in the cabin of the driver. For the decoration of each portion there is a specialist who decorates or paints the truck with his specific tools and materials.

The present chapter carries the descriptive information about the designs and styles of artwork and other decorative work made upon the truck, by truck painters and other artisans. In addition, this chapter provides a detailed account and discussion of Pakistani

truck art right from its origin to its current evolution based on secondary sources of data. It is worth mentioning here that the work of Jamal J. Elias on the Pakistani Truck Art is phenomenal and has been used extensively in this research to understand the themes of Pakistani truck art.

The aim of this chapter is to bring together the literature that is already published on truck art to understand various aspects of this indigenous skill and profession. Based on the discussion in this chapter, the interviews and primary research is tailored and structured to address the research objectives.

3.1 Origin, History, and Evolution of Pakistani Truck Art

The painting on trucks has its roots going back to the Mughal emperors who used to get their horse carriages decorated with beautiful floral patterns to show royalty and grace. The artistic designs painted on the carriages were approved and deemed to befit the lavish life style of elites. This explains the love for decoration that seeped into later generations of commoners, albeit a little differently, to adorn the engine powered carriages (Kurt, 2008).

The current form of truck art emerged in the 1940s when Sikh transporters painted their Lorries and vehicles with portraits of their spiritual gurus to safeguard their vehicles from evil eye and mishaps (Paracha, 2016). These paintings were made in the loud and bold colors to catch the eye. Muslim transporters, therefore, started painting figures of Sufi saints as a sign of religious devotion and love. Another account of the history of truck art is that competing transporters would paint their trucks with beautiful patterns and designs to catch the eye of the onlookers and as a branding strategy (Kazi, 1998). Also, since the truck drivers were not literate enough to discern different trucks, these colorful paintings served the purpose of distinguishing different transporters' vehicles. While the art no more serves the same purpose anymore, but it has developed a deeper cultural and traditional significance in Pakistan (Kurt, 2008). With the passage of time, and changing influence of the society and environment, political, social, and popular cultural trends started appearing on the trucks too.

In the 1960s, the human portraits on the trucks began to include political figures (Paracha, 2016). Ayub Khan, the then martial law administrator and president of Pakistan became a very popular figure because of his Pashtun origin, as most of the truck drivers belong to

the north western parts of the country too (Lefebvre, 1989). In later years, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's face also adorned the trucks, as he became one of the most popular leaders in the country after Quaid e Azam (Paracha, 2016).

3.2 Motivation behind Truck Art

According to the analysis by Elias (2003), there is no apparent direct economic benefit of painting and decorating the trucks in current times, yet almost all the trucks seen on the roads of Pakistan are decorated immensely. Majority of the trucks in Pakistan are not owner operated, but belong to large fleets owned by transporters. The fleet owners, nevertheless, allow the truck drivers to take their vehicles to artisans and workshops to get them painted according to their own particular tastes. Thus, when looking at the primary motivation to get the trucks painted, one must look somewhere else than the economic aspect. The motifs and patterns drawn on trucks not only depict aesthetic considerations, but also reveal religious and emotional worldviews of the truck driver and truck painter (Elias, 2003). According to Busch (2013), in many ways, the truck art is a representation of beauty over legality and practicality. What this means is that a lot of decorations on these moving vehicles depict controversial, illegal, or fictitious drawings. Thus, it serves as a source of expression in a country where religious and cultural boundaries are very strict.

Some of the motivational factors and reasons behind truck decorations are discussed below:

3.2.1 Killing Boredom on the Road and Bringing Good Fortune

One reason why the truck art gained popularity amongst the drivers was to make long journey less boring and bearable for the drivers on-board. While the drivers want their vehicle to look the most beautiful of all, they face a certain dilemma too. According to Lefebvre (1989), it is commonly believed that evil spirits and Jinns are attracted to beautiful things, and therefore, in order to ward off evil eye and as a protection against any calamity, the art includes pictures of religious places. Additionally, the drivers also use amulets or hanging a piece of black cloth to camouflage the beauty and avert any misfortunate event.

3.2.2 Representing the Idealism of Artist

Apart from underlining the fact that this is a reflection of a lifestyle not the lifestyle itself, it also indicates the layered complexity of Truck Art. Even in portraiture only the ideal is represented. The degree of realism is merely a reflection of the keenness of artist's memory and observation. The artist makes the forms with which he is familiar and which appeal to his imagination. Realism is not the issue. The idea of the memory picture is not just a matter of lack of opportunity for direct observation but rather related to both Muslim concepts of Fana and Hindu concepts of Maya. The appearance is not the reality. The intention is not merely communicating a physical observation but also evoking and conjuring emotions through sketching the ideal representation of beauty. The varieties of saturated colours are meant to express the intensity of experience and communicate a symbolic meaning derived from religious or literary inspirations. For example, the pictorial representation of Buraq, the flying horse on which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) covered his journey on the night of Miraj, is repeatedly used as a symbol of speed, divinity, and spirituality. The image of the Buraq evolved from the various works of poets including Persian poet Fariduddin Attar and Turkish poet Ghanizade (Elias, 2003).

3.3 Religious and Cultural Influences on Truck Art

Truck art is not merely used to showcase the aesthetic sense of the truck driver, but have other meanings too. For instance, the religious symbols and motifs used on trucks are meant to safeguard the truck from evil eye. In this sense the truck serves as a talisman. If you prod and encourage a truck driver to explain his motivation to spend huge amounts on decorating his truck, when he is not willing to spend even half of that amount to improve his home, he might tell you that if he does not honour the source of his livelihood, there will be no "barkat" in his business. Clues to superstition are all over the decorated truck. The eyes that ward off the evil eye and keep a watchful God awake - a tradition that spreads from Turkey to roadside shrines in India, the Manat cloths or religious pledges that hang from the truck body, the poetry that suggests that the owner owes his prosperity only to God, or that a mother's prayer will open the doors of Heaven, or simply spreads a message of good will to all (Elias, 2003).

Sufism has had very deep influence on truck art and decoration. Every truck route is lined with shrines outside which stand people day and night that collect a token coin or rupee to ensure a safe journey. In fact at one level the act of decorating the truck is perhaps a

parallel to the activity when visiting a shrine of showering scented red rose petals or a cover woven with strung red roses or a gilt cloth on the grave.

The role of the *Sufis* in the development of poetry in Sindhi, Punjabi and Purbhi, is well known (Frembgen, 1998). Equally significant is their role and impact on the local art. The Sufis were often manual workers. The patron saint of craftsmen was often a mystic and after his death, his tomb became a centre for craftsmen especially at the annual *Urs* or gathering of devotees usually accompanied by a fair (Elias, 2011). For example, Bahauddin Naqshband of Bokhara who is the patron saint of weavers. The path to God and Truth in Sufi tradition is only limited by the limits of the imagination. This is expressed in the excessive architecture of Mazars or shrines and the cult of the hyper real that links all expressions of popular culture. The 99 names of God reinforce the idea of multiplicity to express the power of unity.

In Truck art which is ultimately a cultural text, as in Mazar architecture, every conceivable material and form can be used for decorative devices and ornamentation. Truck artists draw their art by crossing the boundaries of reality to express their limits of imagination through art. The association with the shrine has important underlying meanings. It does not simply represent a place, but shows a deep rooted part of the culture. The *Mela* or *Urs* that takes place at shrines welcomes each and every one from the society without discrimination of economic or social status. Whether you are physically disabled, or mentally challenged, victims of social burdens, or burdened by unhappy marriages, the Sufi shrines welcome every one with open arms to fulfil their spiritual needs and listen to their heartfelt desires. The use of Sufi themes on truck art is a symbolic representation to assimilate the spiritual and cultural aspect of the life of a common man of the country.

3.4 Truck Art Styles, Types, and Design

All the trucks in Pakistan are intricately adorned from the exterior of the truck to the interior surfaces including the fuel tank, rear view mirror, and even the bolts on the wheels (Lefebvre, 1989). This amount of detailing that goes into painting a truck is not random choice of the painter, but involves a complex system of system and symbols that makes the vehicle the carrier of specific message. Gonzalez (1982) asserts that folk or traditional artists have a very specific and unique style of work which they choose to express themselves in their personalized way. They do not do so because they don't know

any better, or because they have learnt a specific skill, but because they use art as a form of expression. Therefore, the details and intricacies of designs made by the truck artists and painters cannot be termed as naïve or unsophisticated because of the fact that they appear highly expressive, jubilant, and not very deep. In essence, each motif, pattern, and material used in the decoration of truck has a meaning and aesthetic explanation.

The idea behind decorating the truck sparing not a single inch of space unadorned is twofold- the driver wants to attract people's attention by portraying the personality of the driver through a milieu of colors, motifs, and decorations; and on the other hand he wants to keep his vehicle safe from the evil eye through use of religious and spiritual drawings and decorations on the truck (Elias, 2003).

The art created on trucks is characterized by creative, bold, colorful patterns inspired from nature and its beauty as well as imaginations. From the drawings of mountains, and water falls, to beautiful butterflies, and feminine eyes, artists adorn their trucks to enhance the beauty and aesthetic appeal. Although, at a glimpse they may look very similar, a deeper look reveals the differences between the styles of truck being painted in different provinces (Elias, 2011).

The different variants of Pakistani truck art paintings depend on a number of factors. The designs are inspired by the region to which the truck driver and the artist belong to (Elias, 2003). This is the reason that a wide variety is seen in trucks belonging to different regions of the country. In Punjab, Rawalpindi Designs and Peshawar designs are more popular. However, in southern parts of Punjab, more influence is taken from Balochistan and Quetta, which is evident from the art and colors used.

Also, caste of the driver also has an impact in the sense that if a driver is Pathan then he would like celebrities such as Shahid Khan Afridi, A Q Khan, Ayub Khan or other Pashtun celebrities to be painted on his truck. Trucks Painted in Baluchistan province and the KPK province are decorated with trimmings of wood. On the other hand, those painted in Punjab use plastic work for decoration. On the other hand, the trucks painted in Sindh are renowned for the camel bone work they use to depict over trucks. So there is a whole variety of Pakistani truck art that exists in Pakistan.

Another distinguishing feature of the paintings is the colors and style of painting over the trucks. The kind of paintings themselves is the ones that are local to the region where the

truck was painted. Therefore, on highways in Pakistan, you would be able to see representation of all the provinces as truckers move from one city to another transporting goods to make a living.

3.4.1 Motifs on the Truck Art

In his book, *Wings of Diesel: Trucks, Identity, and Culture of Pakistan*, Elias (2011) asserts that the motifs used on trucks have deep meaning and roots into linguistics. They function as a symbol system and their location on the body of the truck can be used to convey different meanings. All the motifs represent the association of the truck owner or driver with the underlying meanings and therefore, every truck is a representation of the personality of the truck driver and his love for his vehicle. Some of the major motif types and their symbolic meanings are discussed below:

i. Figural

There are three types of figural motifs which include animal, human, and birds. Animals presented as symbols of human qualities and human action is a well-known tradition coming down from Sanskrit stories and folklore. Other well-known stories mentioning animals are *Tota Kahani*, *Alif Laila*, *Bagho Bahar*, *Khwaja Sar Parast* and the works of *Luqman* and *Fariduddin Attar*. Animals that are popular amongst the truck drivers include *Lion* which represents strength, courage, and superiority over others. In Pakistani society, the lion is associated with male virility and power. While the drawings of lion are shown as majestic, the tiger is drawn in an attacking position to represent the element of danger. Mythical animals like unicorns, flying horses, and centaurs are also seen on the trucks. Cattle and sheep are also found on trucks mainly belonging to rural parts of the country.

A variety of birds are also drawn on the bodies of trucks to represent speed and freedom. The peacock is the most popular amongst all, because of the regal beauty it represents along with a rainbow of colours. The parrot is a symbol of humour coupled with intelligence. Similarly, eagle is also very popular as not only does it represent ambition and altitude, but is closely linked to Allama Iqbal's *Shaheen*. Other popular bird figurines that appear on trucks include nightingale, duck, swan, and partridge.

Fish is also used on trucks, but the meaning of fish symbolism is more complex. Although fish represents the association with river, sea, or water, it also has historical

heritage. For example, in Indian astrology, the Ketu fish was seen as a symbol and sign of success in the battlefield, due to which it was later incorporated into the coat of arms. Similarly, in the Hindu mythology, Krishna took the form of Matsya, a fish, to save the sacred Vedas. At the same time, in Rajasthani iconography, one of the several headed gods is seen emerging from a fish's head. A slightly different representation is seen in Pakistani trucks, with flowers emerging from the mouth of the fish. Thus, the use of fish symbolism represents a mix of history, mythology, and culture.

ii. Floral

Flowers are an integral part of Pakistani culture and are used to celebrate happiness, and also mourn death. They also are a symbol of beauty and nature. Floral motifs are very popular amongst truck painters, however, different regions use different types and sizes of floral motifs on truck bodies. As in Khushab Peshawar design of artwork is copied, so the painters here make small to medium sizes of the floral motifs on the sidewalls.

Rose flower is the most popular amongst all as it is a symbol of a variety of emotions. In Pakistani culture, the rose and especially red rose is a symbol of happiness and celebration, as well as has a special sacred meaning to it. It is used on various occasions in day to day life, from birth of a new born, to adorn the brides on wedding night, and from celebrating success in an exam to commemorating the loved ones by spreading rose petals on their graves. According to religious traditions, on the night of Miraj, a drop of sweat from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) fell on the ground, from where erupted a plant of fragrant red roses. Thus, the roses also have a religious and spiritual context. This is why, in truck art, anything which is dear to the truck owner is drawn nestled in a rose. Each truck market has its own style of painting rose flower. It is dependent upon the skill of the truck painter. As the painters have no extra command upon the drawing as compared to other truck markets, so they paint it in very simple manners and sometime add green leaves with other shades.

iii. Geometrical

Geometrical patterns are also common part of truck decorations. Different materials including mirrors, wood, metal, tinsel, and plastic are used to form different shapes and designs. Three dimensional models of birds and animals are also attached to add to the beauty.

iv. Architectural

Representations of famous buildings and monuments like Khyber Pass, Quaid's Mazar, Shah Faisal Mosque, Kaaba, and Masjid e Nabvi are very common architectural paintings on trucks.

3.5 Motifs and their Meanings

Elias (2003) studied the meanings of symbols and syntax used in truck decorations and based on his research, classified them into a number of categories that are discussed below:

3.5.1 Explicit religious symbolism and imagery

As mentioned earlier as well, one of the primary motivations of truck decoration comes from safeguarding the truck from evil eye and adding barkat to the livelihood earned. Belonging to mainly rural areas, the truck painters and drivers alike have strong religious affiliations. Truck art uses explicit religious images and symbolism through calligraphy and paintings of religious places like Kaaba and Masjid e Nabvi, drawings of Buraq, and star and crescent that represent Islam and Pakistan. Kaaba and Prophet's Mosque are highly popular in this regard and are mostly appear on the front of the truck to show respect and divinity, and never on the sides.

3.5.2 Talismanic Objects

These include objects like amulets, animal horns, flags or pieces of cloth taken from sufi shrines, and yak tails which are considered to possess talismanic powers to protect the driver and the truck from any calamity and mishap.

3.5.3 Religiously loaded symbols

Unlike explicit references to the religion through mosques and calligraphy, this category includes implicit references to religion or talisman. For instance, fish is considered a sign of good fortune, an eye represent protection from evil eye, and names of Sufi saints. Eye is drawn to serve different and multiple purposes, and can also be regarded as adding feminine beauty to the truck. Elias (2003) also mentions that in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Chakor (partridge) is kept as a pet because of the belief that if evil eye is cast on a household or person, it is deflected to the chakor and it dies instead. The death serves as a signal and warning to take preventive measures for averting the misfortune that might befall. Thus, painting of chakor on the truck serves as a symbol of prophylactic meaning.

3.5.4 Idealism and Fantasy

Naturalistic paintings depicting rivers, streams, mountains, beautiful women, and pleasing animals fall into this category. These drawings depict the idealism and fantasies that the driver garners in his heart, and can only express through his truck.

3.5.5 Depiction of Modern life

Over the years, the truck art has evolved to include the representation of technology and fast paced lifestyle. Drawings of ships and aircrafts are very common that represent the speed, technology, and modernity. Fighter jets like F-16 are highly popular amongst this category and serve the dual purpose of patriotism and modernity. Celebrities from politics, sports, and entertainment industry are common features too. More recently, Shahid Afridi and General Raheel Sharif are amongst the most popular ones.

3.5.6 Non-religious calligraphic program

One of the most interesting parts of the truck art include witty one liners, poetry, and witty jokes that are written on the trucks to provide a good laugh to onlookers. Romantic and philosophical sayings and poetry are also very popular. Many of the quotes have gained legendary popularity amongst masses. Some of the quotes that are repeatedly seen on truck art are listed below:

- Maan Ki Dua, Jannat Ki Hawaa, Baap Ki Dua, Chal Beta Truck Chala!
- Na Surat Buri Na seerat Buri, Bura Wo Hai Jiski Niyat Buri
- Dekh Magar Pyar Se
- Pappu Yar Tung Na Kar!
- Truck Chala Rha Hu, Goli to Nahi
- Dekhne Mai Dolly, Chalne Mai Goli
- Saajan Koi Koi, Dushman Har Koi
- Faasla Rakhen, Warna Pyar Ho Jaega
- Horn Ahista Bajaen, Qoum So Rahi Hai
- Jhooley Laal!
- Na Cherr Malangaan Nu
- Naseeb Apna Apna

Witty and humorous lines like these leave a smile on everyone who reads them. Not only do they provide instant enjoyment, but also make the onlookers appreciate the creativity and wit of the poet or author of such quotes. The beauty of these quotes lie in the fact that

they are succinct, innovative, and humorous at the same time. This is why, they catch the eye of the riders passing by immediately.

3.6 Art Decoration on the Back of the Truck

As mentioned earlier, different parts of the truck have different types of specific paintings attributed to them. The back of the truck has the catchiest paintings due to the fact that the back of the truck gets the most attention by onlookers when on road. From gigantic portraits of popular celebrities, to funny one liners, the back side presents the greatest variety. It is also the back of the truck that depicts the recent societal trends. The portraits of cricketers, politicians, and celebrities can tell who the popular figures amongst masses are. This also implies that truck drivers keep on updating their art in order to keep pace with the latest society trends.

It is also interesting to note that one of the most striking feature of art on trucks is the rainbow of colors used in the decoration. However, in making the paintings, special attention is given to the color scheme so that it gives a pleasing, rather than a chaotic effect. In addition to the wide range of colors, artists also use reflective mirrors and plastics, and colorful lighting to add to the beauty of the vehicle.

Pakistani truck art has made waves beyond the national boundaries and many foreign countries have imported it in one form or the other to their lands because of the colorful and lively feel it gives to decorative items. An important feature of truck art is the quotes, poetry, and humorous sayings which are sometimes used to entertain the onlookers, while sometimes meant for moral exhortations (Elias, 2005).

3.7 Regional Styles of Truck Painting:

The style of artwork on the side panels is the recognition of some specific market. Each big truck market has its own style of painting a truck.

The famous type of truck decorations are as follows,

3.7.1 Rawalpindi Design of Truck Painting

In Rawalpindi design of truck painting the motifs are made large in size and number nearly covering whole of the truck body. The whole body is filled with floral, figural, and geometrical motifs in Rawalpindi design. Fonts too are kept large and flowers are painted in bulk and big leaving no vacant spots.

3.7.2 Dera Ghazi Khan Design of Truck Painting

This design is in practice on the trucks in the Southern Punjab and Baluchistan. This design is known because the Dera Ghazi Khan city is the main city which is exit and entrance point to Baluchistan province from Punjab. In this design the body is decorated with splendid even the one truck body and with less paintwork.

3.7.3 Kamar Mashani Design of Truck Painting

This design is the combination of Peshawar and Pindi design of truck decoration. Although Kamar Mashani city has no market for truck decoration or truck body making, but the choice of drivers of this city gave this style recognition. In it font is kept very large nearly covering half of the truck body and motifs too are made in the same way on the remaining parts.

3.7.4 Karachi Design of Truck Painting

Karachi design of truck decoration too carries the same motifs of Peshawar and Pindi design. In Karachi some trucks are decorated with patches of mirror. It is called *PICHI KARI* or *SHISHA KARI*, like those in mosques and Shrines. It is in practice in Karachi only.

3.7.5 Peshawar Design of Truck Painting

In Peshawar design the motifs are made from small to medium size on each side of the truck body above lower edge. These motifs are floral and geometrical in design. The upper portion of the truck body is called *Dilla* or region. Different motifs are painted inside these geometrical motifs e.g. flowers, birds, trains, shops, buildings etc. this design is copied in Khushab, which is called Peshawari design of *PHULL PATTI* in local language.

These geometrical motifs are made above the lower edge at the sidewalls of the truck body. Above the motifs, leaving some blank space, the name of the good agency or transporters is written in Urdu or English, sometimes a ribbon is also painted which is called *Mufflar*, by truck drivers and the painters. In Peshawar design of truck decoration each column of the truck body contains a word with dash in the start and end of the word. The border or shade painted with these words is called *Tahreer*, among the truck painters in their own terminology.

3.8 Cost and Maintenance of Truck Art

The intricate details and the level of work on each part of the truck's body is itself an indication that truck art is not cheap. According to Elias (2005), it can cost around PKR 300,000 to 500,000 to get the whole truck painted from inside out. For truck owners and drivers, who live on meager wages, this amount is a humungous expense. However, due to the massive popularity of this art form, truck drivers are willing to bear the cost for the sake of getting their uniquely designed truck.

It is also important to mention that trucks have to be repainted every five years not only to keep pace with the latest trends, but also for maintenance purposes. Hence, truck decoration is not an easy hobby, as the drivers have to continually save a hefty amount for their trucks from their modest incomes. This is why, they are unable to save much for their family and continue to live from hand to mouth. Nevertheless, none of these challenges stop truck drivers from getting their vehicles adorned so that they can make their presence known on the highways of the country.

According to Lefebvre (1989), since truck drivers spend most of their time on highways, away from their roots and their homes, they consider trucks to be their second home, for which they decorate and adorn it to express their emotions, their personality, and to express himself to the people who do not know him as well as his friends and family does. Thus, truck owners spend the money on getting the decorations done, even if they have to take loans or sell their belongings sometimes to cover the costs.

3.9 Increasing Popularity of Truck Art

In a country marred by various political, religious, and sectarian challenges, truck art is something that presents a colorful, loving, lively, and soft image of Pakistan. One of the major reasons behind increasing popularity of this indigenous art is that it represents a beautiful picture of Pakistan across the globe. Thus, it gives a sense of patriotism and a cultural affiliation to the people of Pakistan too. The fact that the truck art from Pakistan has gained international recognition and reputation which increased the interest and motivation to adorn the vehicles. Thus, truck drivers feel encouraged to invest in truck decoration that is popular not only in their native country, but other parts of the world as well.

Kazi (1998) points out that the motive of the drivers is to get their trucks adorned like a bride is adorned on her wedding night- beautiful and eye catching. This is why, trucks are often referred to as moving brides on Pakistani highways.

It is because of this beauty and aesthetic significance of the truck art to the Pakistani culture that truck art is being incorporated in different spheres of life now. From fashion industry to interior decoration, the truck art is making its appearance everywhere. Coupled with this is the fact that Pakistani truck art has gained global popularity and foreigners find this type of art as very attractive, unique, interesting, and representation of true Pakistani culture.

One of the retailers by the name of Uth-Oye has been offering unique and amazing fashion products using truck art themes. By incorporating various truck art symbols and motifs, the retail brand is aiming to introduce avant- garde designs to the masses. Another designer by the name of Maheen Khan introduced a brand 'Gulabo' that is focused towards highlighting the street culture of Pakistan from foods to trucks and their art. This has enabled these designers to provide a unique fusion of modern fashion and tradition and thus offering variety and vivacity to the consumers. Many event planners now offer truck based themes for different events like Shadi to depict true Pakistani culture and colors.

Chapter 4

Truck Art Diffusion

The vibrant and lively colors and the exquisite detailing that goes into motifs on trucks represent much more than just the flowers and beauty, but has underlying language of storytelling and symbolism which is an important part of the Pakistani culture. Present chapter deals with the perception and diffusion of truck art in various facets of life in terms of clothing, fashion, jewelry, utensils, interior and exterior décor, and other household items.

When spoken about emergence of truck art in other aspects of social and cultural lives, an interviewee (truck painter) told, *“Even nowadays people are more concerned about their memories of their beloved ones, a friend of mine requested to paint his parent’s grave. Unlike the commoners who painted their graves with one or two conventional colors for instance green and white. He requested to use my skills of art work and make the grave novel”*.

This chapter, thereby, focuses on the primary research conducted to identify the primary motives behind adoption of truck art themes into various consumption items of common man. Using anecdotes collected from during the study, and some unique case studies, this chapter discusses how a cultural reinvention has taken place through amalgamation of modern and traditional art with particular emphasis on traditional art work and symmetry of colors.

4.1 Ideas behind the Art

The concept diffusion of innovations usually refers to the spread of ideas from one society to another or from a focus or institution within a society to other parts of that society. Here in current scenario, the diffusion of truck art in other aspect of lives is discussed.

Truck art is the prominent aspect of Pakistani moving art (Elias, 2011). As stated earlier, initially one of the purposes of painting the truck bodies was to safeguard them from wear and tear that is otherwise inevitable in long journeys. But with the passage of time colors

became rainbow and writings became poetry and calligraphy. Diffusion of truck art took place from its source (truck) to the other aspects of lives from household items to wearing objects among members of society. The phenomenon of diffusion can be understood by the fact that people like to adopt ideas which helps is proliferating a certain art, tradition, or innovation to create new knowledge.

In any form of art, its esthetics is a key element to be considered. For an artist the most important task is to use all the skills and reflect his inner emotions and feelings into a form of art for others to see. To make this communication channel efficient and clear, aesthetics plays a key role. Truck art, like any other artwork is inspired by some thought working behind the scenes. There are several ideas which contribute in shaping the truck art masterpieces.

In the Wings of Diesel, Elias (2011) points out the truck art motifs are inspired by utopian ideas as well as societal trends. From the portrayal of heavenly landscapes and villages to symbols of cultural identity, and symbolic representation of eyes, rose, and fish, every aspect of the truck art is a story in itself.

These ideas can be categorized into:

- Floral Depiction: The art mainly inspired by flowers and the beauty of nature it depicts.
- Living and non-living objects: Mainly depicting human eyes, lips, heart sometime the whole portrait of a person. Also illustrating pictures of planes, ships or similar non-living representations.
- Patterns of colours: This mainly shows various patterns of colour splatter with a blend of dark and light colours in such an arrangement that it catches the viewer attention.

4.1.1 Perception

Perception has a significant role to play in any visual idea. According to Bernstein (2011), perception involves a two-step process whereby sensory input is first processed to extract shapes and recognize objects, and then in the second step makes linkages with the individual's existing knowledge, concepts, and beliefs to form the meaning of an object or idea.

We are living in world full of ideas and objects, a rich culture has groomed us in a way to admire the beauty and further transfer it in our next generation. How people perceive things which are living around them. It is not a common way to think about things, people, and relationship and perceive what they are in their innate beauty.

It was observed that after getting formal education, the approach to see and evaluate things may change to some extent or in other words perspective could be affected by education. People think more critically and measure the beauty of objects on scientific visions e.g. combination of colors, utility and aesthetic sense of objects. Sometimes the perception and the overall persona is entirely independent of formal education, like in this case the Artists of this truck art are mostly illiterate however are at the peak of their artistic abilities capturing their ingenious insight in the form of their art.

Knowing about your own likes and dislikes doesn't a great deal rather know what others will like and admire is within itself an education. This education is what an artist is fully equipped with to present their creativity in the form of their art which is liked and venerated by others too. *Hajji Saab*, is a prime example of such an artist. He showed his artistic skills using household objects and painting them with fascinating colors and patterns in such a way that one can just not stop admiring the creativity.

Old lamps (Kerosene Lamp) is not a commonly used item in cities or even in villages anymore but still some rural areas still use it as the source of light. He painted those lamps with *Phool patti* and some birds, rose and peacock. When asked why most of his art has a rose, he simply said 'The rose symbolizes LOVE and it's known to all regardless of their socio-economic background.

No matter if someone is tied to orthodox or modern cultural values, they will always know that rose is a symbol of love, respect and continuity.' *Hajji saab's* perception of the world is thoroughly different to general people's. He thinks, perceives artistically within the cultural context and try to depict his discernment in his art.

Speaking to owners of local restaurants and cafés about the interior decoration, one of the respondents stated "In this fast paced era people tend to avoid visiting restaurants and just order home delivery, however people who does have interest in culture and history visit the place called Lok Virsa. It is the place filled with cultural artifacts and the people visiting it have inspired me to decorate and fill my café with historical and cultural

artifacts. This will not only inspire and amuse people but also appreciate the beauty of cultural history and restore it for future.”

4.1.2 Inspiration

People can perceive different things looking at an object. The overall decorum of the view point is formed by what the object is trying to deliver to its viewer. The interviews conducted for this study revealed that most of the people who were somehow related to the art of painting did also have a poetic nature. The inner beauty of the soul is revealed in the form of their art, which inspires them to take the best of their thoughts and feeling and lay it out for others to see and feel in the shape of a physical piece of art.

According to Merriam Webster’s dictionary, ‘the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions is inspiration’ (Merriam, 1828).

Whilst talking with individuals about cultural and historical objects, a respondent who is owner of a café named NaanSense in Peshawar, the restaurateur Ms. Laila Habib stated, ‘I love cultural objects not because they remind me of our culture, but they inspired me with their patterns of colors and aesthetic understanding of the artists.’ People are much more interested to share their understanding about world around them with others and most of the time they use objects rather than words to express their feelings about any particular object, scan or function through fiction and painting it on walls.

Figure 1. Naan-Sense Entrance



Figure 2. Naan-Sense Cafe Peshawar (Interior)



Figure 3. Naan-Sense Interior



Green stated that primary source of inspiration is always the ordinary people who have done extraordinary things and achieved daunting tasks. It is these people who influence and inspire others by being different, creative, innovative, or motivational in any sense (Green, 2013).

Similarly, cultural inspirations and affiliations also play an important part in shaping the interests of a person. Manager of Khyber Dodai located in F.6 Markaz Islamabad, when asked about the interior of his restaurant, stated “*I belong to KPK, and my family has been engaged in the business of transportation for years and all my childhood was surrounded by trucks full of artwork on them. When I grew up, I wanted to do something*

other than my family business hence I began to think and finally made-up my mind to start a restaurant. But when it came to decorate the new restaurant, my inner infatuation with trucks and the artwork on them came alive, hence I made the interior decoration of the restaurant with truck from its cabin to its body covered with paintings and other art work.”

Figure 4. Khayber-Dodai (Open Air)



Figure 5. Khayber Dodai (Interior)



Figure 6. Interior of Restaurant



This isn't the story of just this person, in fact there are several others who took an inspiration from old artwork and tried to revive them in this new era via either introducing them in their restaurants, café's or whatever business they are conducting.

4.2 Expansion of Ideas

Idea can be any possibility which provides a way to do something in a unique manner. In this study, the Truck Art is used as an idea, the idea which not only inspires people but also helps to safeguard the metallic body of the truck from rusting. The paintwork on truck inspires people also it is a representation of native culture enabling people on the roads having a glimpse into their culture while travelling on the roads. One of the interviewee whilst explaining his admiration of the truck art also stated that it makes him wonder and appreciate that how the artist skillfully manages to present his art work on the body of truck as it's not as plain as an art paper in fact its combination of rough and rugged surfaces with a lot of bends etc. and to present the art on such a surface with high precision is a skill in itself.

The idea of depicting the culture in the form of artwork isn't only confined to trucks anymore. According to *Hajji saab*, 'in mid of 90s he was painting a truck when a group

of French tourists noticed him and therefore asked him to show his artistic skills by painting their guitars. He painted the guitars for them and they loved the artwork a lot so much so that the word got out and since then many tourists come to *Hajji saab* with similar requests hence he started painting different objects ranging from water jugs, mugs, glass, plates, and other household utensils and put them on a shelf. Tourists are attracted to these items and they appreciate the truck artwork on these objects.

Truck art painting evolved in the community to such an extent that in this modern era of technology, this indigenous art has flourished to keep pace with the technology. One prime example of this is Mr.Faran, a Lahore based entrepreneur who offers truck art painted objects online through e-marketing. The online shop offers coffee mugs, t- shirts, glass, table mats, tea coasters, key rings etc. with designs inspired from the Pakistani truck art. His expertise is mainly graphic designing which he uses to design truck art and then digitally print it on these objects. Thus, digital tools and technology has made it easier for this art to spread and expand. The art which have passed down from truck painters to their students after years of practice and learning, can now be replicated through digital tools and software.

Figure 7. Digital Truck Art Design





Figure 8. Truck Art Inspired Notebook Cover



Figure 9. Interior of Restaurant



To explain a deep meaningful thought in a sentence is difficult but you will see that the truck art also contains such phrases to explain their thoughts in Urdu such as (کر بھلا ، بو) (جیسے کو تیسرا) بھلا ؛. Drivers uses their own interpretation for representing their thoughts

e.g. (مان کی د عا جا بیٹا ٹرک چلا ، تو لنگ جا سا ڈی خیر اے) are some phrases which is commonly used in truck art and therefore also represented on objects painted with truck art. The café named Khoka Khola located in Beverley Centre, Blue Area Islamabad, uses such phrases painted in truck art theme on various decoration objects ranging from table mats to mugs.

4.2.1 Use of Colors

As mentioned previously, one of the most striking features of Pakistani Truck Art is the use of a wide range of colors which also reflect the diversity of people in our country. However, the underlying philosophies and aesthetic meaning of colors are not academically learned by the truck artists. Rather, it is their own innate articulation that they express through colors on the body of the truck. Hajji Sb, pointed out that we prefer to use soothing, rather than shocking colors, so that people who view it can experience a cooling effect.

Color has all the attention in any object. Which pattern of colors suits on which object, is the skill of the artisan that is not the field of any other who may think he/she is good in making colorful objects. In making truck more colorful every major truck workshop has their unique color combination.

Anyone can see the colors combination in restaurants like in Khyber Dodai, the interior looks like Peshawari style because the colors e.g. yellow and other dark colors present there. Literary people or those who loved cultural objects and have knowledge about them can easily identify the patterns which are hidden for general masses.

Figure 10. Paints and Brushes of Painters



There are two ways how artists use colors in their objects one is base colour which provide a base for the second color that made the sight more delightful. Both colors work and their type are described in detail.

i. Base Colors

White is widely used base color for any artwork involving paint. Even in the paintings and drawings found in Lascaux Cave in France dating back to more than 17,000 years ago also used white color either as background, or sometimes to highlight their vivid drawings (Michael, 2010).

Every object does own special characteristics such as when painting a peacock, the colors are more vibrant and artists make it more prominent by using dark blue and tree green colors with white base as it provides a background for the art to be more visible and clear.

Speaking to one of the coffee mug printer of truck art, it was revealed that even they tend to use white coloured mug so that the art is more vibrant on the white background and looks more eye catching.

A truck artist upon questioning stated that they use two colors for making the base of any picture mainly white first and second is the color of the truck's body e.g. if painting a floral diagram it needs more than one base color one for the overall picture, second for its division into two parts, upper area belongs to sky and lower to land, so the sky needs to be blue and animals lie at land.

“There is no hard and fast rule for base colors but we commonly use white because it is natural color which cannot absorb any color and provide the opportunity to other colors to show their brightness. Apart from white color as base there five more colors used in any kind of painting, Blue, Red, Green, Black and Yellow. Using various combinations of 1ten colors 101 different colors can be formed, this is a very skillful ability of an artist”, stated by *Hajji saab*.

Observing restaurants with truck art painted revealed combination of dark and light colors, open or the central areas painted in light colors with lots of images and sitting cabins with dark colors that made a clear difference among the decoration of the inner side of the restaurants.

ii. Rainbow Colors

Due to the light nature rainbow colors are not commonly used in truck paintings rather dark colors are used to depict the artistic skills in the form of truck art on trucks. However, in restaurants and inner view of café can easily provide a view of hybrid colors combination in a patterned way. It was evident that colors made the scene more delightful. It is the selection of colors which made the scene more prominent amongst the whole picture. *Hajji saab* also stated that color selection for painting a specific scene is a great skill of an artist and is a complete thoughtful process in its self as the artist tries to express his feelings

In coffee mugs you can see the combination of colors which made the picture more visible and vibrant like the design of traditional *Chunri, Ajrak* etc.

4.2.2 Household Items

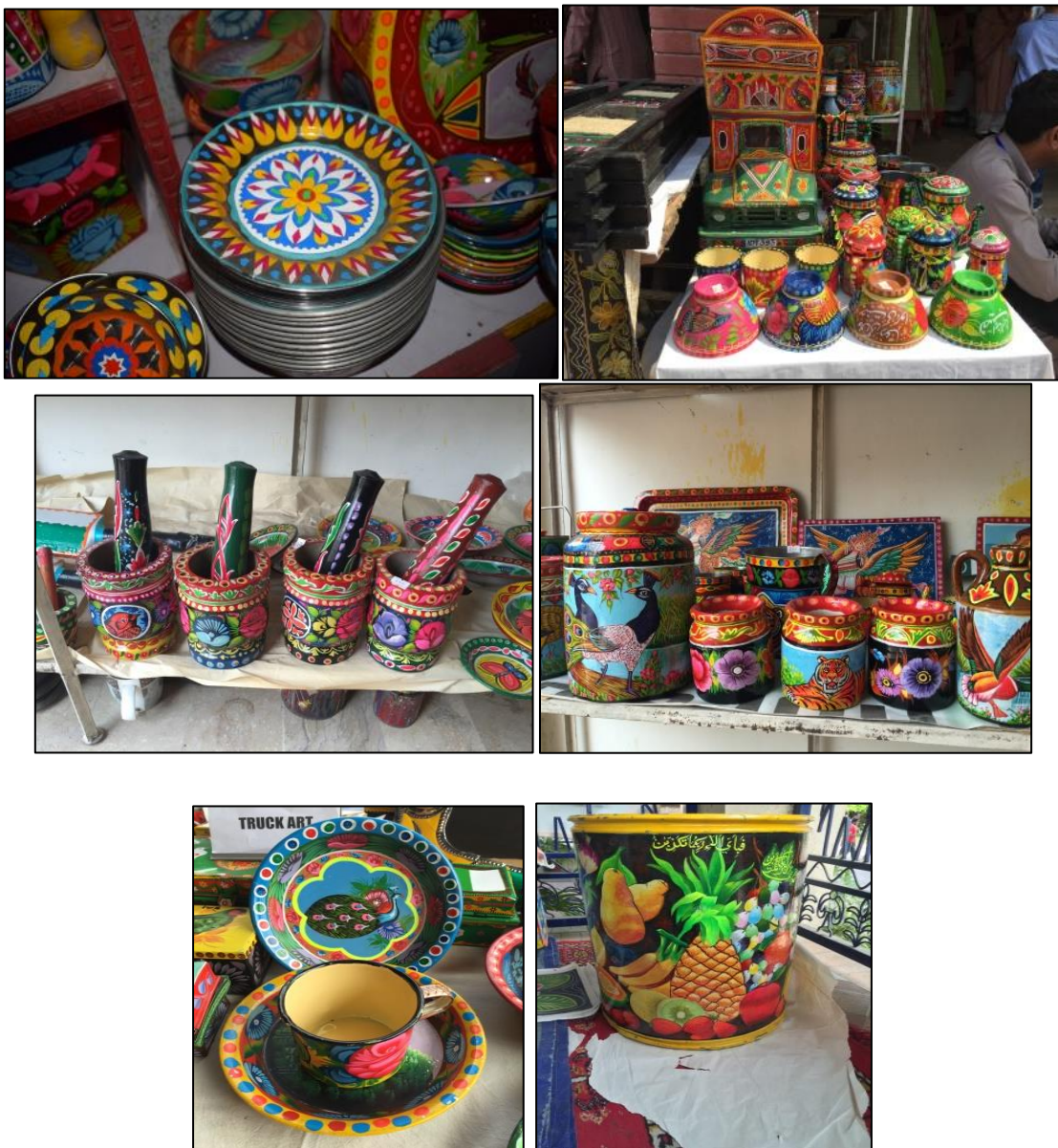
Truck art painted household utensils has a diverse range from kitchen items such as plates, pots, mugs etc. to lamps, lanterns and stitching machines. When asked about the vision of painting the truck art onto these utensils, an interviewee responded that anyone can buy the unpainted household utensils from anywhere but at Lok Virsa it is a unique art, painting these utensils with truck art is what makes them unique and is the reason why people would specially come here to buy them.

After the painting of art on them, maybe the item is no longer able to serve its purpose e.g. plates for eating food in, as the colors of the paint might fade. However, a cautious

warning is given to the customer about this fading of the paint and mostly they tend to use the item as an object of decoration rather than using it as household utensils.

Hajji saab, shared, “Kitchen utensils are a necessary part of a house and if they are painted with various forms of truck art, it makes them unique and distinctive. I, in my spare time used to paint my tools kit, water glass and almost anything which I use. It is part of the nature of an artist that he tends to express his feelings and interests in the form of art on almost anything and everything.

Figure 11. Household items



My colleagues would also bring their glass to me for painting or else threaten me to take mine (smiling). The painted glass always felt pleasing to my eyes and after my retirement

from truck art business my friends did suggest me to try painting on household utensils just as I did on my own glass. So I decided and came here to Lok Virsa and started this shop, painting different objects and household utensils, people not only admire my work but also buy a lot of my master pieces which makes me very happy and proud of my skills.”

There are three types of crafting on utensils, painting through brush and paint, painting through *Chamakpati* and the third one less known is by carving on plates and water glasses.

Clay tea pots (پیلی) and cups are mostly painted using a brush and paint whilst artwork on utensils made of steel is mostly done by *Chamakpati* as it is a light reflector art on paper / plastic and is glued on the metallic surface of the object.

i. Utensils

Utensils are a major and essential part of any household’s daily affairs. Their utility is derived from being used to serve the food. However, when an artist chooses to decorate utensils using his art, the nature of utility changes from a mere utensil to something than can be used for decorative purposes.

Painting common daily life utensils is very usual concept in even major cities of Pakistan. Metropolitan cities like Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad, consists of a number of shops/businesses which use painted utensils for their promotion. It is regarded as one the best marketing strategies to have utensils painted with various artwork in order to attract customers.

Pakistan is land of ideas. It is a community that is constantly imagined and these shifts of imaginings are represented in the structure and decoration of houses. According to the objectification of houses, work of truck is being used for aesthetic representation of the members. It is now common phenomenon that cultural objects are more attractive in this global world people is more concerned about their cultural symbol through different objects.

Household utensils which only used for decoration like plates, cups, dishes and other usual items painted by artisans which made them a master piece and their utility shifts from serving to aesthetic representation of family members.

On average above three shops are seen in Lok Virsa, having various utensils painted with artwork. It may very well be the case that the object no longer is used to serve its purpose e.g. coffee mug for drinking coffee rather it is used as a decoration if it is painted with artwork. For a price of little value to the buyer but a great token of appreciation to the artist one can buy various such utensils from the shops in Lok Virsa and also from the outlet of *Hajji saab's* work. The utensils are divided into two different categories for further understanding, discussed later.

Figure 12. Household Items (Kitchen Items)



Figure 13. Dry Food Plates



Figure 14. Household Items available at *Haji Sb's* workshop



ii. Decoration Items

As stated earlier, household utensils become objects of decoration after painted with truck art as it adds a great value to them and people tend to use it as gifts and souvenirs. The worth of painted utensils increases as they become unique and representative of culture in the form of art. Amongst various such utensils there were some extraordinary pieces of truck artwork such as a dining table and chairs all painted with truck art.

Such masterpieces of artwork can be used as decoration of house / restaurants / café and also can serve their daily life purpose to. Amongst several artists who try to express their affection towards truck art by painting various things in that theme there shines a brilliant artist Haider Ali, he is a laudable Karachi based truck artist who tries to explore his love for the art in various techniques. He is widely known by his business named '*Phool Patti*'.

He started painting with different colors at the age of 7 and till this date it's been 30 years that he has been engaged in his work with all his passion and motivation. His dedication to his work has earned him a well-deserved reputation not only in the locale but also worldwide. He did a promotional truck art theme based fashion design show in 1993 in Pakistan. He has remained engaged at national and international level presenting and promoting his work. His national contributions comprise of 'Karsaz Bridge (Karachi), 'Chamak patti', and Highway Cuisine (Karachi).

Figure 15. Decoration Items for Household



Figure 16. Coffee-Table and Guitar decorated by truck art



Figure 17. Toy Truck for Children and Tissue Box



Figure 18. A Lamp Decorated by *Chamak-pati*



Figure 19 Dry Food Plates



The meeting with of Swiss Council General Mr. Emil Wyiss was a milestone in Mr Haider's life, where he gifted him the trolley bags painted with truck art theme. This got viral on national and international level including social media earning acknowledgment from a Canadian senate member as well.

4.2.3 Working Tools

Labor class forms a major part of the total population of Pakistan and no matter what kind of labor you are; you will definitely use and require some tools. Hence, a large collection of tools painted on truck art theme can be found in Lok Virsa. This not only is a unique form of art but also is appealing to the labor / worker class.

4.2.4 Clothing and Fashion

In the field of clothes and fashion, truck art is still reviving and thriving. Printed Shirts and jackets depicting truck art are available in the market and are also used as gifts amongst the young and rigorous population of the country. Many prominent brands of clothing such as Rangja, Gulabo, Rizwan Baig, GulAhmed, Kyseria, Junaid Jamshed (J.), Kapray are now trending to induce truck art into the design of their clothing line-up. At Lok Virsa, some shops including one own by *Hajji saab* also have some artwork presented on small pieces of cloth for decoration purposes.

Figure 20. Fashion and Clothing





Figure 21. Brands which are prominent for Truck Art Inspired Themes



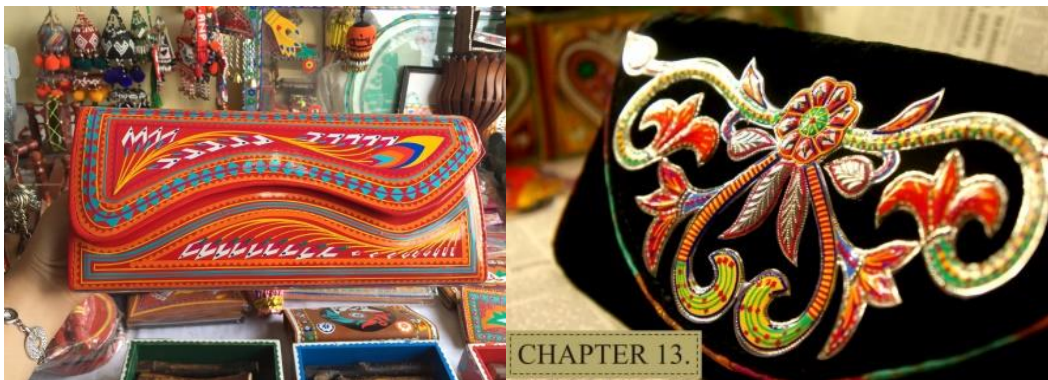


4.2.5 Hand Bags, Clutches & Wallets

Truck art can also be seen in the field of handbags and wallets etc. A lot of renowned brand shops of these handbags and wallets including Chapter13, Chinyre by Bareezé, Rangja, Rizwan Baig, Dolce Gabbana, Gulabo, Maheen Hussain and many other famous designers are seen increasing their product style range by adding this unique truck artwork lady's handbags, clutches and men's wallet (customized). The work of *Chamakpati* is more prominent among artisans for hand bags wallets etc. they use paper *Chamakpati* and decorate their clutches (wallet).

Figure 22. Female Bags (Clutches, Wallets, and Hand Bags) Decorated by Art Work





4.2.6 Jewelry Items

Jewelry has been an essential part of a women's life since centuries, they tend to wear it almost all the time. It ranges from necklace to bangles, earrings to rings. Truck art has its roots well established in this walk of life too. Truck art painted bangles, earrings, rings in a variety of exuberant colors and a range of shape and style are available in the market. Ecommerce or local shops both sectors do accommodate variety of jewellery painted on truck art theme.

Figure 23. Ear-tops, Rings, Bangles decorated by Truck Art Work



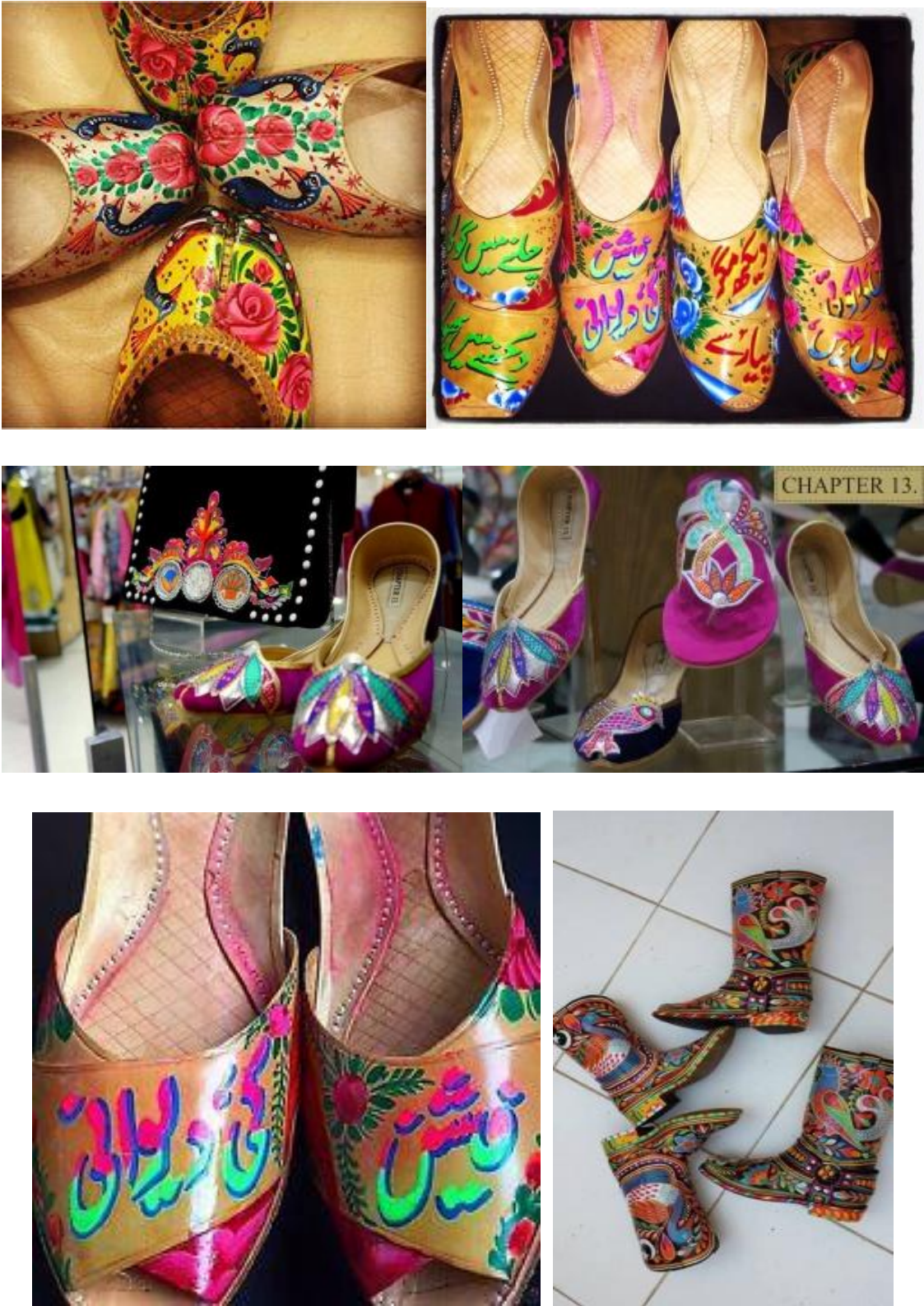


4.2.7 Shoes

Shoes form an integral part of the overall persona of an individual and even this has also shown some interest in artwork. Shoes with truck art printed are mainly sold over the internet, however, there are a few branded shops as well as one small local shop in Moti Bazaar, Rawalpindi does sell these unique style of shoes.

According to an emerging talent , a textile designer Ayeza Hussain who owns an online platform called Basanti for selling her leather products, “I own an online shop of shoes portraying truck art, the prices of these distinctive shoes vary from as low as Rs.1800/- to as high as Rs.2600/- depending upon the amount and quality or the artwork. I have my own template designs of the artwork but if someone does wish to have their own design and colour combination, I try to accommodate their wish.”

Figure 24. Available Shoes for Male and Females (online and available at different stores)





Interviewing owner and the salesperson of the shop at Moti Bazar, who sell shoes with truck art painted/printed revealed that shop is famous in nearby areas because they only deal in *Khusas*. They have two designs ‘peacock and a truck on show (front of the *Khusa* a place is available over fingers for objectification) of the shoe. People do admire the extraordinary work of the artisan on the shoes but still the sales figures of such shoes are low.

4.2.8 Interior & Exterior Décor (Café & Restaurants)

As established earlier throughout the course of this research, the owners of various café and restaurants are also inspired by the cultural objects and the harmony of colors which represent the spirit of life in the form of truck art as stated by *Hajji saab*. Several cafés along with being fully decorated with truck art have some *Chamakpati* work being done on tables, lamps, shades and roof lights e.g. Desi Khana.

‘Des Perdes’ is another café properly decorated with truck art, its exterior and interior and even sitting arrangements are portraying truck art at its peak. Owner of the café shared, “We are offering full meals in our café, and pride ourselves to be the ambassador of truck art and hallmark in promoting this culture. Truck art has always inspired me for life and when I started this business I wanted to promote this artistic culture hence decoration of the café was entirely based on truck art. People who visit my café not only are inspired by this decorum but also admire and appreciate it.”

Figure 25. Interior of Deas Perdas Restaurant



Figure 26. Entrance of a Restaurant



Khyber Dodai (Islamabad), Naan Sense (Peshawar), Naan Stop (Islamabad), Naan Zila (Gujranwala), Khoka Khola (Islamabad) are also examples of restaurants which alongside providing food to the people also prides themselves in promoting the truck art culture by having their decoration done on truck art theme.

4.2.9 Other Items

General use objects such as key rings, table mats, floor mats, mobile phone/gadgets covers and tea coasters, etc. are also not left behind by this artwork. Truck artwork on these objects is also commonly and readily available in these artistic shops such as Khaadi and also various e-commerce shops. A customer shares his views, “When I saw key-chain covered in truck art, it appealed my eyes and reminded me of my childhood where I was trying to do similar sort of art in my lecture. A glimpse into my past and also the beauty of the art made me buy the keyring. The truck art on an actual truck is also fascinating and eye catching especially when you are on road travelling somewhere.”

Figure 27. Round Decorative Emblems



Figure 28. Mobile Phone Covers



Ashfaq Hussain, a truck artist from Carriage Factory, Rawalpindi mentioned that around 5 years ago he painted the graves of parents of his friend on truck art theme. The graves are located nearby 36 Number Graveyard of Peer Wadai area of Rawalpindi.

Truck art theme has also inspired and finds its way into the field of beauty and makeup. Nail painting and Henna are also done in truck art theme in various parts of the country. Henna patterns based on truck art theme with peacock or glitter patterns are widely popular amongst the young generation. Interviewing some owners of beauty salons also revealed that the brides are also inspired by truck art theme and get their nails painted encompassing it using a blend of various colors and patterns. The ladies sometimes also write phrases from trucks onto their painted (truck art theme) nails, this not only enhances their beauty but also makes it unique in nature.

Figure 29. Nail Paintings



4.2.10 Truck Art Mehndi Theme Weddings

Wedding events such as Mehndi are also mostly based on truck art theme. The stage, hallway, seating area and food corner of the event is all based on truck art theme. Cake , cupcakes ,cookies, frame , photo booth, wedding cards, dance floor , lights, disco lights, balloons, main entrance , *methai*, *tail mehndi thal's* and pan area everything depicts truck art theme, even brides wear dress based on truck art theme with different colors and patterns.

Figure 30. Mehndi Themes





Figure 31. Gifts and Favor Boxes for Weddings



Tulip Events and The Innovative Factory are 2 main leading event organizer companies in Lahore who tend to promote truck art themes in their events.

4.2.11 Art on the Go

Automobiles encompassing truck art theme also range from Trucks (the origin of this art) to cars, motorbikes and bicycles. People inspired from this art paint their cars and bicycles on this theme.

Figure 32. Painted Wespa's



Figure 33. Vehicles Adorned with Truck Art





Figure 34. Painters at Work



Haji Saab and *Haider Ali* are prominent names of artists who have painted this art on cars, bikes and bicycles not only in the country but also globally ranging from France, Germany to the United States of America. In proceedings of the interview, both of them conveyed the pride they own in representing their country and culture all across the globe.

Chapter 5

Analysis and Conclusion

5.1 Analysis of Findings

The previous chapters present a detailed account from secondary as well as primary research on different cultural aspects of the truck art. While it has been argued by the philosophers and anthropologists that art gives a medium of expression to emotions and feelings, which is why humans have used it since the beginning of times. At the same time, consumer theories of the recent times support the idea that individuals consume art in different forms for hedonistic consumption, to experience novelty and creativity, to seek therapeutic value from it, and to immerse themselves in a unique experience (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008). Both these point of views explain the indulgence of people in cultural heritage and objects related to art. Consumption of art acts as a bridge between individual and cultural identity (Schroeder, 2002).

When applying the philosophical and consumer behavior theories on the gaining popularity of truck art, it can be understood that from its vibrant colors, humorous and witty quips and poetry, detailed decorations, and creative depiction of local political, religious, and popular trends, truck art provides pleasure to the onlookers, and everyone on the highways of Pakistan. Paintings on trucks often challenges the conformity by portraying controversial themes and gives pleasure to those who can't find it in themselves to rebel against the system, but can at least enjoy the diversity of ideas being portrayed on the trucks. This, according to Andel (2015) is an important component of art, that it can evoke feelings by engaging minds and souls through diversity and new perspectives.

The findings of this study reveal the motivations and causes of rapidly expanding cultural influence of truck art on the lives of common people of Pakistan. Even in this modern era of technology, culturally enriched truck art has its roots grown deep in the society, let it be the art itself or theme of it induced into any shape or event from dresses to interior/exterior decoration, from key-rings to bikes, from happiness to sorrows in the form of grave painting. This art has carried the folk culture of Pakistan for decades and is

continuing serving the nation by not only preserving the history and culture but also promoting it by inducing into various forms of daily life.

As the literature on art reveals that people tend to consume arts to seek pleasure and as a form of expression. This hedonistic consumption is a major reason behind the popularity of various forms of arts and expression. The study showed us that truck art initially started on trucks by artists who had insight of culture and were inspired and determine to keep it alive. The artists were motivated and inspired by their culture and to show their affection towards it they painted trucks on cultural themes. This phenomenon gradually grew into a category of art itself which not only became the mode of preserving the culture but also appreciation for the artist. The artists interviewed for this research revealed the process of diffusion of this art into various forms.

An interesting finding of this study has been the fact that truck art themes have been popular amongst not only the middle class population, but also amongst the elites. With major luxury clothing designers adopting the truck art inspired designs, it shows how this art has captivated the attention of the higher socio economic classes. This popularity amongst elites, according to Lizardo and Skiles (2008) can be attributed to the fact that consumption of art does not involve strict segmentation of social class differences. In fact, in an era of technology and mass communication, it is inevitable that art can seep into different social classes relatively easily. This is one of the very important accelerator of diffusion of truck art into various segments of the Pakistani society. Unlike the 18th and 19th century relationship between culture and social classes, where royalties and elites had different cultural consumption patterns than the common man, the rise of the mass culture brings social classes closer, if not economically, then at least through cultural heritage.

Various interviews and field observations revealed that people consume items inspired by truck art themes not only for the sake of consuming a unique and artful object, but also to express and show their belongingness and affiliation with Pakistani culture. In the Pakistani society, which has been under massive influence of Western trends, be it fashion or food, the love for local art presents very interesting insights. First, as mentioned in one of the previous chapters, the truck art presents a softer image of Pakistan across the globe and has highlighted Pakistan in a positive light in various western countries in the recent years. This makes the truck art close to people's hearts and

they want to adopt it to decorate and adorn their daily lives, and use it as a means of showing their patriotism. At the same time, it offers novelty and creativity to the people who want to consume cultural objects, while at the same time love uniqueness.

The interview findings also show that artists inspired by this art want to not only preserve but also promote it, so they initiated the process of diffusing this art into various forms such as objects, clothing etc. The motive behind this has also been an economic one, and to earn more money through transferring this art into other objects that people other than truck drivers can consume too. This diffusion was deemed necessary to promote this art however some of the diffusion was done unintentionally by the artists just because the art inspired them to a level where they wanted to induce this art in all of their work and in all walks of life even in the modern era daily life.

The idea of decorating household items with truck inspired themes can be explained using Kant's concept of beauty. Decorating these items adds aesthetic value to everyday items, and it might affect the functionality of these items because a painted plate cannot be washed without risking the fading of colors, but can offer aesthetic appeal to the people who can use it as a decorative item. On the other hand, some items' functionality is not effected by the portrayal of truck art on them, like clothing and fashion accessories. Here, free and functional beauty both exist, as Davies (2006) argues, that free and functional beauty should coexist to make an object aesthetically appealing. In this sense, the evolution and diffusion of truck art into various consumable objects does not affect their functionality, but in fact provide an additional aesthetic appeal by adding to the visual beauty.

The study also showed us that people in general also had contributed a lot in diffusion and profusion of truck art. Regardless of the technological advancements in this modern world, people still are profoundly attached to their culture and are very sensitive in preserving and promoting it. The affection of people to truck art shows their social and moral approach towards their culture. Truck art is considered as the cultural flag carrier amongst general public hence they tend to induce it into their daily life in various forms such as a mobile phone cover painted/designed on truck art theme or in events such as weddings where the whole theme depicts truck art or a café/restaurant decorated on truck art theme.

The study showed us the origin of truck art, its cultural and social significance, its diffusion into numerous forms, the key players in this process of diffusion and the reasons for it. This study also highlights cause and effect of truck art diffusion into daily life and explains the phenomenon through which this art has grown its strong roots into the society. Truck art is not only an art for the country but a part of cultural heritage being revived and diffused into this modern period.

The study also illuminates the fact that this art has also begun to be induced by commercial factors. The people have started exploiting the commercial aspect of the art and making it finance based commodity, where the elite class of the society encourages the growth of this art by paying tribute to it in the form of wealth. The less wealthy people of the society might not be able to appreciate the art with money rather using it as a daily use household item such as table cloth or a coffee mug. The artists and painters encouraged the promotion of this art to gain economic benefits.

Thus, this research provides great insight into the motivation behind the diffusion of truck art into different spheres of cultural lives of Pakistani people. This art form has expanded from a folk or cultural art, into a mainstream and popular cultural art. The art that has been loved by all, but consumed only by the truck owners, can now be enjoyed and consumed by common individuals belonging to different social classes and background, all due to its adoption by fashion designers, café and restaurant owners, and retailers.

5.2 Conclusion and Implications

Pakistani Truck art is renowned all over the globe for its use of vibrant colors and imagery that depicts unique artistic taste of the owner. At the same time, it adds a local touch to the vehicle which is manufactured abroad. This art has become the country's cultural identity by showcasing the country as people of creative tastes. Through paintings on the trucks, not only do the truck owners show affiliation with local culture, but also with history, traditions, storytelling, passion, love, religion, politics, poetry, and much more. In the words of Elias (2005), Pakistani trucks act as an adornment of the roads by transforming the landscape into “a checkerboard of moving religious and cultural tableaux” (p. 124). Every little adornment on the truck has special significance and meaning for the truck driver and owner.

The present study finds that truck art is no more a folk art restricted to the trucks only, but because of its cultural and pervasive nature, it has penetrated into other parts of life through making its place in fashion industry as well as in items of home decoration, interior décor, utensils, and others. At one end, it is driven by the fact that truck art has become a type of popular cultural art for Pakistan. The worldwide popularity of truck art has been at the root cause of the cross between folk and popular culture. Unlike fine art and elite culture that is followed by the high social class and is adopted by the lower social classes as followers, the truck painting and art has followed an opposite approach. A bottom up approach of cultural diffusion is seen in this case where fashion designers are now getting inspiration from motifs and symbols used in truck decorations to design fashion items.

The primary research from different stakeholders of the truck art industry reveals that this art is passed on from one artist to another without any formal training and education. In spite of all this, the art is not dying like many other indigenous arts of the region, which looks promising for the future. This has important implications for Pakistan in terms of creating new economic opportunities through prospering the cultural and creative industry of the country. A study by British Council conducted in 2014 reveals that creative and cultural industries contribute around £71 billion annually to the UK economy while adding 1.7 million jobs (Kevin et al., 2014). This important sector can help an economy flourish and grow by offering employability to many; adding value through producing culturally rich and traditional goods; and providing skill and human capital development opportunities in general. Pakistan can benefit by allowing and facilitating the cultural industries, including the truck art industry, to explore new avenues through entrepreneurial ventures and promote a positive and colorful side of the Pakistani culture.

Another implication of this study is that in a country where political chaos, sectarian violence, and religious tensions have been a cause of divide for decades, art in all its various forms, is playing its role to bridge the gaps and bringing unity in the form of promoting cultural heritage. Elites and middle class people, all are equally enjoying from the proliferation of the truck art and important lessons can be learned from this. Art does play an important role in the society by giving voice to common people, forming their perceptions, and influencing their thoughts. Thus, using truck art, and other art forms, our society can bring each other closer on a common ground.

From the perspective of future research, anthropological investigation into other forms of indigenous art should be the focus of future studies. This study offers a basis to study other art forms and their impact on our society.

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Appendices:

Interviewees:

Kapray: Mr. Saqib (Customer Care Manager, Islamabad Branch), Centaurus Islamabad.

Kyseria: Mr. Farooq (Centaurus Branch, Manager)

Muggay: Mr. Faran (Lahore)

Basanti: Ms. Ayeza Hussain (Islamabad)

Des Perdes, F.10 Markaz Branch, Islamabad: Mr. Dilawar (Manager), Mr. & Mrs. Tahir (Designers)

Naan Sense, Peshawar: Ms. Laila Habib (Café Owner)

Allah rung laway: Mr. Hajji Habib-ur-Rehamn, Ganj-mandi, Rawalpindi

Truck Artist: Mr. Ashfaq Hussain, Carraige factory, Rawalpindi

Phool Patti: Mr. Haider Ali, Karachi

RungArt: Ms. Dur-e-Sameen, Lahore