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**PHATA LAND USE PLAN**

By

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### **Development Planning**

The Punjab Housing and Town Planning Agency (PHATA) working paper states that: "The approach adopted in the Five Year Development Plans appears to be traditional and incremental rather than innovative and futuristic. The pitfall of incremental approach is that it leads to the projection of the past rather than the creation of a normative future. It is imperative that the Five Year Development plans being implementation oriented are prepared within the framework of long-range Perspective Plans with a vision of 20 - 25 years"

We agree that development plans should be based on a "normative" paradigm, and should be prepared within the framework of a long-range "vision". It is after all such paradigms and visions that define the goals and objectives for which we prepare our plans and strategies, and against which we measure our progress and "development". Clearly our first task must therefore be to define our "normative" paradigm.

"The approach adopted in the Five Year Plans" has been anything but "traditional". Incremental, yes, but based on the normative paradigm of "modernism" which came to be accepted as the conventional framework for development planning for most of the last century.

Our insistence on being "innovative and futuristic", on "the creation of a normative future", and our fascination for "rapid development pace and fast technological changes", betrays the enduring legacy of the modernist paradigm. This is the paradigm in which the "normative future" is the "material paradise". In which progress and development are measured in terms of quantity - the acquisition of material wealth, power, domination and control over nature and one's fellow humans. It is this paradigm that has led to rapid industrialization, urbanization, and massive demographic changes that have been the core issues of development planning for most of the past century. And it is the pursuit of the material<sup>^</sup> paradise that has led to the indiscriminate exploitation of the earth's natural resources, degradation of the environment, pollution of its air and water, global warming, massive extinction of its plant and animal life forms, the development of weapons of mass destruction, and unprecedented social upheavals.

Clearly, the modernist "norm" of infinite "progress" and "development" measured in terms of material acquisitions, technological prowess and the domination, control and manipulation of nature, is by definition unattainable and inherently flawed. Globally and nationally, our physical, economic and social sector plans, can no longer be based on unending urbanization, industrialization and population growth. Even within the modernist framework these factors are likely to change and be transformed by changes now taking place in information and communications technologies, high tech production, new energy sources and cultural factors such as literacy, health, income, values, mores and lifestyles.

The road to the modernist Utopia has brought the world, our humanity and all life on this planet, to the brink of destruction. The problem is not with this or that technology, strategy, plan or design. These are merely tools. The problem lies in the "ends", the purposes, the goals and objectives we seek - the "norms" embedded in the modernist paradigm itself. The need of the hour is an alternative paradigm, a paradigm shift.

\*Architect

The following is a paraphrase of a seminar paper<sup>1</sup> which dealt with issues of a development paradigm for the new millennium.

### **Alternate Paradigms**

The initiative of The Punjab Housing and Town Planning Agency (PHATA) to discuss Physical planning and policy issues "within the framework of long-range Perspective Plans with a vision of 20 - 25 years", is imaginative, brave and timely. Imaginative, because it opens up a vista which calls not only for a radical shift in focus, but a new set of lenses and filters as well. Brave, because such a review challenges us to shake off the cobwebs of myopic dreams. And timely, because, if ever there was a moment in history when humankind stood at the edge of a precipice, it surely is now. This initiative is expected to help the Sub-Group on Physical Planning & Housing re-examine its planning process in the light of rapidly changing conditions, and provide the guidelines for a meaningful plan of action.

Development plans are fairly routinely reviewed, discussed, and redesigned. But this is usually done under some pressure and within much shorter time frames. Usually it is next year's budget, or a policy review against a five year horizon. But a "long-range Perspective Plan" context surely implies more than a short-term action plan or even a long-term policy formulation. It should provide an opportunity for taking a fresh fix on our bearings and orientation in relation to cardinal directions and ultimate destinations. Now tradition and modernity represent two distinct perspectives. The former, by definition, relates to a longer-term perspective and to universal, eternal principles, while the latter, equally by definition, is concerned with the here and now, the immediate, and of the moment. Any action plan or program is designed to meet larger strategic aims and objectives. Every strategy is in turn determined by still larger goals and principles as defined by a specific world-view.

Ideally, tradition should provide the larger, guiding framework of principles within which we devise strategies to deal with the contingencies of the present. We will therefore review the traditional world-view and the role of development planning within this perspective. We will then review the contemporary realities in the global, regional and national context, and show that the contemporary development paradigms are not only unsustainable but are opposed to the perennial wisdom that has sustained our planet, and humankind, over all the past millennia. Finally, we will suggest an alternative development paradigm and a sustainable and meaningful national strategy for development in Pakistan.

### **Traditional World View ...**

What is real? What is man essentially? What does it mean to be human? What is the relationship of Man to the Real? What is Man's function in this universe? The answers to these questions in all traditional cultures have been essentially the same. That is, that phenomenal existence is transitional and relative; that the Absolute is a higher metaphysical reality; that Man is both phenomenal body with animal desires, and spirit endowed with an intellect capable of contemplating higher realities; that his unique function is to reflect the Truth, and that to do this he must overcome his animal self, and realize his highest potential, to become one with his true, spiritual Self.

<sup>1</sup> Kamil Khan Mumtaz, "Tradition and Modernity", presented at NCA/Seminar 2000 - Art, Architecture and Design Education in the New Millennium.

On the other hand, *"The modernity project has been part and parcel of modern European history [and Euro-centric cultures/ The history of its political economy, its science and technology, and particularly its philosophy. From Descartes through Kant and Hegel to Marx, Heidegger, Husserl and Derida, European philosophy has moved from speculations on the nature of God to rational analysis of the nature of Man. From intuitive and inspirational experience of the abstract to phenomenal experience of the concrete. From idealism to dialectical and historical materialism. From faith and vision of a heavenly kingdom to altruist ideologies of a Utopian fraternity of Man, to phenomenism, existentialism and pluralism. In this process, European Philosophy has reduced the Truth, from the Absolute, self evident Cause, to a logical postulate, then from a mental construct to a relative personal truth, and finally to a meaningless game of semantics.*

*At the same time modern science began by reducing Man, made in the image of God, to man the thinking animal, then proceeded to de-sanctify his myths and archetypes to the level of the collective sub-conscious, bringing his loftiest emotions and profoundest thoughts down to the level of animal sensuality and sexuality. It then proceeded to assign even these animal reflexes and responses to the machinations of molecular chemistry and genetic codes.*

*With each stage in this downward spiral, European man's penetration into the depths of the material, physical, phenomenal world has been reflected in his art and architecture: from the inspired cathedrals and icons of the Middle Ages, to the Humanist harmonies and proportions of the Renaissance; from the calculus and perspective of the Baroque; to the analytical and scientific theories and machine aesthetics of the Modern Movement; and from the iconoclastic puns and sensual delights of the post-Modernists to the nihilist anarchy of the de-constructivists.*

*Of course there have been other developments as well: secularism; the nation state; democracy; the new social contract. The spirit of inquiry, the scientific, empirical method, the rapid development of the means of production, and the means of communications, not to mention the means of destruction coercion, exploitation and domination, which have enabled man [some men] not only to 'conquer' nature but other men as well, and [in the process] to acquire much material wealth. Indeed, these are the achievements which have been held up as proofs of the efficacy of modernity, spurring man on to ever greater 'conquests' and acquisitions.<sup>2</sup>*

*....At the beginning of the century, the modern movement, with its heroic manifestos, had set out to transform the world. Architects, the champions of industry and the new mass production technologies were going to bring prosperity, happiness and joy to all mankind. With mechanised production of buildings and new modes of transportation we were going to build clean, healthy, well designed, comfortable and aesthetically satisfying new cities.... Yet today, at the close of the century, after some remarkable "progress" and "development", and despite a profusion of ingenious buildings by a galaxy of brilliant architects, the world, the*

<sup>2</sup> Kamil Mumtaz, "Modernity and Tradition", OUP, Karachi, 1998

*real world inhabited by a very large section of humanity, has been transformed not into the promised paradise but into a living hell<sup>3</sup>*

*"If the future city is simply an extrapolation of current trends, then for much of the world's urban population, their habitat of tomorrow will secure for them nothing more than a shelter within an illegal settlement and an insecure job that provides an inadequate income. These shelters will be made of temporary materials, with whole households cramped into a single small room, often on land sites subject to flooding, with little or no provision of water, sanitation, drainage, garbage removal and health care. This is the reality for some 600 million urban dwellers around the world."\**

*This phenomenon has emerged as the dominant reality in much of the Third World in the twentieth century, and in most cases has become progressively more acute during the last fifty years.... But the collateral damage of "development" has not been limited to the Third World. The impact of "science run wild" is now being felt even in the most technologically advanced societies.*

*....Technology has indeed increased production of commodities and material wealth. It has also provided more and more efficient means for the transfer of this wealth over greater and greater distances. As distances between the consumer and the producer have increased so also have the number of middlemen between them who have expropriated increasingly greater shares of the wealth produced. Thus technological development has also resulted in an increase in the rate of exploitation.*

*Development in communications and military technologies have enhanced man's ability to dominate his fellow man, to manipulate and control larger and larger numbers of people over greater and greater distances and territory. Thus as power structures have expanded in size and complexity, the local ruling elite have realigned their allegiances with increasingly larger, more powerful and distant overlords. In the process traditional social hierarchies based on personal relationships of family, kinship, clan and community, have been replaced by monstrous state bureaucracies and relations of money.*

### **Contemporary critiques of Modernism;**

In the wake of the havoc wreaked upon individuals, communities, and the very biosphere of our planet Earth, have emerged a number of critiques of modernism. Social science's critique has been concerned with the issues of justice, economic disparities, exploitation; moral degradation; gender inequalities; the "green" critique has focused on environmental degradation; depletion of natural resources; bio-diversity; conservation. The thrust of these critiques has been to save the structure of modernism from self-destructing, by papering over the cracks, by replacing a few defective components, by redecorating some rooms and spaces. But the defects in the superstructure are inherent in the very foundations, in the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the modernity edifice, in its answers to the big questions (What is real? What is man essentially? What does it mean to be human? What is the relationship of Man to the Real? What is Man's function in this universe?), in short in its "development" paradigm.

Now even this, the modernist "ideology" has been trashed by the Post-Modern critique of modernism. What was left of its philosophic structure, its reductionist logic, its discursive reasoning and its rationalism, has been taken apart, stretched to its absurd limits; making a

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, p...

*1010, p...*

<sup>4</sup> David Satterthwaite, "City Scan" in **Down to Earth**, February 29, 1996

mockery of man's very quest for eternal truths, so that today it is no longer fashionable to talk about principles, ideals, objectives, or higher purposes to existence.

Now as the world is looking for ways to mitigate the effects of modernization, it is turning to alternative medicine, to homeopathy, acupuncture, herbal and other "natural" cures; to organic agriculture, natural fertilizers and natural pest control; to renewable energy sources: sun, wind, tidal flows; even to "natural" cosmetics, essential oils, aroma therapy; natural fibers; vegetable dyes. The list is growing every day. But all these are efforts to save ourselves, our species and our environment, from the *effects* of modernization and "development". What we really need, more urgently than at any time before, is to address the causes. The cause, as we have argued on so many other occasions, lies in the set of criteria, the value systems, the ideological and philosophical basis, the world-view, the basic perspective of "modernism". The value system that measures development and progress in quantity rather than quality; that measures the worth of a man by what he *has* rather than what he *is*; that seeks knowledge in order to gain power and dominance rather than to enlighten and to serve; that encourages us to satiate every desire rather than to overcome animal appetites and rise above egotistical cravings. It is this paradigm of "development" which has brought mankind, and the entire planet, to the very brink of destruction. Indeed we may already have crossed the threshold, as a collectivity we may already be over the edge of the precipice, and in a state of free fall. Even so, if we are at all seriously concerned about the present state of affairs, we will have to go beyond tinkering with the effects, beyond papering over the cracks. We will have to raise some very basic, very fundamental and very un-fashionable questions. This is as opportune moment in time as any to take a fresh fix on our bearings and orientation in relation to cardinal directions and ultimate destinations, to re-state some guiding principles, to re-define, if necessary, our world view, even to start again with the big questions.

I submit that in trk, traditional responses to these questions we have an alternative development paradigm, an ideological framework, a guide to action, which is as valid and relevant today as it has been for all the past millennia. Moreover, in many of the traditional practices we could also find the bases for a realistic, sustainable national and global strategy for development.

### **A National strategy**

For the last fifty years in Pakistan we have pursued the goals of modernization, that is, economic prosperity through industrialization. The result has been economic and social collapse. Clearly, this state of affairs cannot be sustained any longer. Neither can we ignore the changes taking place in the emerging 'new world order'. In the technologically advanced countries industry has moved on to very high levels of technology. At the same time, the green lobbies in these countries have prevailed upon their governments and industries to clean up their acts. One of the results of these developments has been that these economies are looking for markets /buyers/takers on whom they can dump their obsolete technologies. Another aspect of the "globalization" of capital has been that the rich are becoming richer, raking in super profits, by exploiting the vast pools of cheap labor in the less developed poor economies of the Third World. For countries like Pakistan this is the road to a "cheap and dirty" future.

The modernization of the past fifty years has devastated our social infrastructure to the point that "catching up with the west" on their terms is simply out of the question. We do not have the necessary infrastructure of education, power, communications, efficient state institutions and systems of justice, law enforcement, revenue collection, and governance. Even if we decide seriously today to put things right, it would require three or four generations just to

rehabilitate our health and education sectors. Neither do we have the cash. Continuing to chase after capital from international funding agencies and investors will only drag us further into the debt quagmire.

So do we have any options? Yes. Get real. Look to our real strengths, and the realities of the global marketplace. What has really sustained this country over these past fifty years? It has been our agriculture and small and medium sized enterprises based largely on skilled labor and low-tech processes of manufacture. Our foreign exchange earnings have come mainly from rice, cotton, yarn, gray cloth, carpets, garments, knitwear, leather, sports and surgical goods, and manpower export. Our strength is our land and its people. This is what we have to build on.

It is my contention that as life in the technologically advanced countries becomes more and more industrialized, and mechanized, there is, and will continue to be a growing market niche for hand-crafted products and organic agriculture. This is a niche we are well placed to exploit. We have the basic resources: land, sun, water and the traditional agricultural and craft skills. But ultimately, our greatest asset may be our "under-development". Despite our best efforts we have not been thoroughly "developed" or "modernized". As a result, we have retained vast reservoirs of traditional knowledge, practices and skills. These are the threads that link us with the deep wellsprings of traditional wisdom that have survived, interwoven into the tattered fabric of our "collective sub-conscious", informing every aspect of our cultures, especially the arts - poetry, literature, music, dance, calligraphy, popular graphic arts, popular architecture and the decorative crafts.

Traditional manufacture of consumer products relies on natural, indigenous materials and human resources, and simple technologies that employ animate and other renewable sources of energy. These technologies are therefore environment friendly and low cost (in the less developed economies of the Third World). But to capitalize on these advantages in the global marketplace our agronomists and framers will have to improve quality while re-introducing traditional methods of fertilizers, pest control and seed selection etc. Better animal husbandry, livestock and forestry will also be necessary to improve the quality of raw materials required for manufacturing hand crafted consumer products. Our scientists and materials technologists will need to improve the quality of raw materials such as cotton, wool, and wood, and standards of traditional skills, by tapping the wealth of traditional wisdom and re-introducing traditional materials and techniques. We will also have to develop appropriate design and marketing skills.

The adoption of the strategy outlined above would imply a radical shift in our educational policies. The emphasis of our vocational training programs would have to be on the development of traditional craft skills. Science and technology education would have to lay due emphasis on plant and animal biological sciences particularly agronomy, veterinary science, materials sciences and appropriate technologies. Art, architecture and design professions and education in these fields would have to play a key role in national development, as participants in economic production, construction and cultural revitalization.