Tracing The Void

Sonya Schoenberger | Sujjad Ahmed

curated by Hajra Haider

Opening on Wed. Feb 4, 2015, 4.30-8.00 pm till Tues. Feb 10, 2015, 11am–7pm Daily (Sunday Open)

IVS Gallery, Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture
TRACING THE VOID

Sonya Schönberger (Berlin, Germany)
Sajjad Ahmed (Lahore, Pakistan).

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IVS Gallery timings: 11 am- 7 pm daily (Sunday open)

Once occurred, an event is etched in history, leaving fragments behind for the generations to come. The question then is: how does the knowledge of these fragments inform those in the future? Does it teach them to refrain from taking the same route or inevitably leads them to the exact same eventuality with dire consequences, concluding in an even greater catastrophe?

World War I was inclined to be the war to end all wars. Yet it was shortly followed by World War II, the effects of which the world is still reeling with. And even this was not the end of war and conflicts. The year 2014 marks the centenary of World War I. As commemorations take place world over, millions of citizens of this world bear the burden, mostly unseen, of conflicts past and present, of the last 100 years of a constant state of warfare.

Children grow up listening to stories of war heroes, and of the atrocities of war. These memories are nurtured not just through stories but memorabilia scattered in the surroundings. The tales being repeated so often that they form a new reality in the mind of the listeners who feel they have witnessed the events and hence rendering them true. Unfortunately, they not only carry the weight of history but also of the present; experiences and consequences of war lived through, affecting every aspect of life. Resources, human and material, required establish stable systems and harmonious communities are usurped in the accumulation of weapons and fighters, ammunition and maintenance of militaries while education, healthcare, wellbeing of communities and countries are ignored.

Two countries which both started from scratch at the end of World War II; a country that came into existence after the War, suffering through mass migration and the other, rebuilding after complete destruction of war, serve as an example. Their trajectory of 67 years reveals two of the many possibilities resultant of their individual histories and indirect connections.

Sajjad Ahmed from Pakistan and Sonya Schoenberger from Germany have been investigating individual and national identity in the light of the nation’s history in their separate art practices.

Tracing the void brings these two artists together where they recollect memories through objects and stories of people, reflecting on the present state of existence in light of our today and yesterday highlighting certain questions; What baggage were we born with and what have we accumulated along the way, in our lifetimes? How far have we moved on? What have we become? (Hajra Haider)

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