

**“UNVEILING THE REALM OF MYTHICAL CREATURES:  
Exploring the enchanted world of mythical creatures through  
digital illustration and miniature painting”**



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**(2024)**

UNVEILING THE REALM OF MYTHICAL CREATURES 2 “UNVEILING THE  
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**(2024)**

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UNVEILING THE REALM OF MYTHICAL CREATURES 5 **Certificate**

It is certified that a research project titled **“UNVEILING THE REALM OF MYTHICAL CREATURES :Exploring the enchanted world of mythical**

**creatures through digital illustration and miniature painting”** submitted by **Alishba Gul**, roll no. **2020-BFA(FA)-002**, under the supervision of **Mr. Mohammed Saleh**, has been approved for submission in its present form, as to satisfy the partial fulfillment for the degree of Bachelor in Fine Arts.

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**Mr. Mohammed Saleh**  
**Supervisor**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to:

My parents for their infinite support, affection, admiration, and eternal faith in me.  
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My research is based on the myths on the existence of supernatural creatures. My primary focus is my own hometown and myths believed by locals. Tales that have the existence of mythological creatures are a vital part of storytelling techniques and are passed down every generation. They have become a great part of culture and society. Some convey horror, suspense, stories of faith, fantasy while some convey moral lessons and messages of courage and bravery. Mythical creatures are believed to exist in every society embedded into their own traditions and culture.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

My Research is based on the myths and beliefs on supernatural beings in my local area District Chakwal. The origins of such beliefs are cultural, religious beliefs and folklores from different regions and traditions. These beliefs and stories have always been shaping the perceptions in our society; therefore, it is important to dive into deeper knowledge about them. Furthermore, we explore the connection of such tales about different beliefs and entities between our culture, traditions and societies. Most of such tales are derived from different mythological beliefs from past generations. Another reason to explore such topic is to preserve the cultural heritage and folklore for the future generations. Such topics can expand our perceptions and



imaginations regarding the people of the historic era and their cultural as well as religious beliefs. People from different areas and regions of Pakistan have their own folklores related to many tourist attractions as well. Moreover, they also have different mythological beliefs regarding some specific events happening in daily life. Such beliefs still have an influence on our society. People still have a strong belief on such myths being real. Growing up in a Pakistani household hailing from a small village I have been always fascinated by such mythical stories. Mythological creatures and folklores are a major part of Pakistani culture and heritage. Therefore, they hold a great significance and are important to be studied deeply. Most of the folklores are connected to the tourist places and residents of those areas still believe them to be true. As Pakistani's majority of us have an obsession with the stories of the existence of supernatural beings. However, the need

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for seeking diverse knowledge about the myths about the existence of supernatural beings cannot be overlooked.

### **1.1 Significance:**

I want to study the connection between the reality and all the myths and beliefs on supernatural beings in my local area from throughout the history. I will use mix media for my illustrations of characters using both traditional miniature painting and digital miniature painting methods.

### **1.2 Objectives:**

The goal of this study is to observe and analyze the existence and impacts of the beliefs in

the reality of mythological creatures in my local area and their importance in history. Through this I will create illustrations using such characters to engage with the audience.

### **1.3 Research question:**

Do supernatural creatures exist in real lives or are they just myths?

### **1.4 Artist statement:**

In my miniature paintings I have created the illustrations of the mythical creatures based on the stories and descriptions I heard from locals of my area through the lens of my own imagination and perspective.

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## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Mythology:**

Mythology refers to the compilation of stories and myths on specific beliefs in a culture, society or a civilization. They also consist of epic tales about the good and evil, wisdom, bravery, victory and betrayal. It further includes classic folklore and existence of fascinating supernatural creatures. In addition to that it also consists of religious beliefs about the God and Goddesses in different regions. Such tales are passed down from generation to generation shaping the narratives of the society and culture. Some regions are famous for their captivating mythologies such as

Greek mythology, Egyptian mythology, Hindu mythology, Japanese mythology, Chinese mythology and Roman mythology.

## **2.2 Pakistani mythology:**

Diving into the rich Pakistani mythology we discover the folklores and local legends of Pakistani history. They have always been a significant part of the Pakistani cultural heritage. There's also a major impact of Hindu culture on Pakistani mythology and folklores. We still see the traces of Hindu influence on everyday life, cultural norms and traditions in Pakistan. Superstitious beliefs are common examples. Folk wisdom and captivating stories are embedded into the storytelling techniques since centuries. Mysteries, horror thrillers and suspense, stories of profound love, heroes embarking on journey, existence of fascinating and some violent mythological creatures such as Fairies, Djinns, Deo and Churail are rooted into the storytelling

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ideas. Such stories often convey the messages of bravery, faith and moral lessons of everyday life. These mythologies seamlessly blend into the cultural heritage creating an intricate pattern of boundless and whimsical imaginations in human minds. Pakistani folk history is rich with legendary folklores such as Saif-ul-Malook, Anarkali, Heer Ranjha, Sassi punnun, Dastaan-e Ameer Hamza, Maula Jatt, stories from the Katas Raj temples and Ansoo lake from the northern areas of Pakistan. Therefore, superstitious beliefs mythological creatures and folklores are an interconnected web of rich and fascinating tapestry of Pakistani cultural heritage. They are also an essential part of the art and creative expression of every region.

## **2.3 Mythological creatures of Pakistan:**

Unveiling the epic tales of existence of mystical creatures in Pakistan is considerably fundamental. Every Pakistani region has its own unique and diverse folklores unmasking the

diversity of vibrancy and distinctiveness of human minds and remarkable imaginations. Northern areas of Pakistan such as Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, Chitral, and other regions of Pakistan such as Punjab, Baluchistan, hence almost all the regions have their own known mythological creatures embedded into their folktales that are passed down to every generation resulting in the preservation of cultural essence of their history

In an article by Nida zehra is Give horror story a chance, she states how horror stories and mythological tales are a part of Pakistani culture. Moreover, we have also experienced this as children, our grandparents and family members telling us stories about such incident including jinn stories and beliefs on such beings. This has been a common tradition to share such stories before bedtime to children. However, we still have such stories from different regions of Pakistan. Pakistanis have an obsession with the stories of jinn's and supernatural beings. There isn't a single person in our community who has not heard of such stories since their childhood. Many writers in

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Pakistan have been writing on such topics, they include Sana Pirzada, Sami Shah and Shazaf Fatima Haider.

Another article by Muhammad Huzaifa Nizam covers the mythological beliefs of the Chitrali region of Pakistan. People believe in fairies, Giants, pixie and phoenixes. They believe these creatures existed. Such as the fairies (Paris), they believe the Hindu Kash Range also referred as Koh e Kaf of eastern mythologies is believed to be the land of fairies. They believe that each markhor herd there is guarded by the fairies. If a hunter doesn't seek permission from them before hunting, they can be punished by them as well. They also believe that the fairies assisted the Chitrali worriers in the battles too. Another fairy is known as Khangi often regarded as Domestic fairy. They believe this fairy helps with the household chores and protects their

houses. Furthermore, Jashtan is known to be the special pixie. They are believed to help in agricultural chores throughout the autumn.

Furthermore, creatures like Banshee are believed to have existed in the Shoghort Valley inside an old fort. They believe they heard the wails of this creature before the death of a king. It is also believed that the torches and mobile phones don't work in the cave where the prince and the fairy hid from the deo from the folk of Saif-ul-Malook. There's another lake situated in Kaghan Valley known as Ansoo lake. It is believed that the lake came into existence because of the tears shed by a fairy's Demonic lover, a white Giant named Deuo Sufaid. The tale is interlinked with that of Saif-ul-Malook because it's believed that he loved the fairy Bad-Jamal, but she fell in love with Prince Saif and wanted to get married to him. Thus, out of jealousy the giant shed tears and the lake formed. This was discovered in 1993. For the Katas Raj temple in Kallar Kahar, near to Talagang, Punjab, Pakistan. There is a pond in it that has green water and around that pond are temples. The Hindus believe that the pond was created when their lord Shiva cried so much

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because of the sorrow due to his wife Satti passed away. He cried so much that he created two ponds as a result, the other one is situated in Ajmer, India. They believe that bathing in this pond can be a way for them to get their sins wiped away, believing the water to be having magical powers. Another tale is from the Manghopir Sufi shrines in Karachi. There are many crocodiles that have an interesting tale associated to them. They believe that a peer had head lice, and he was very irritated by them, when he stamped his feet on the ground the sulfur springs came into existence, and the lice turned into crocodiles.

One of the Pakistani writers Shazaf Fatima Haider wrote a book named "A firefly in the dark" This book is entirely based on the supernatural beings and the stories we all used to believe

in our childhood that were told by our parents and grandparents. Such tales were always the most fascinating ones. This story of her book revolves around all of those tales we heard as children. However, this book portrays the more fantasy depictions of such creatures rather than realistic. The story is of a twelve-year-old girl named Sharmeen. She moved into her grandmother's house after her father had a car accident and her mother went through depression. The tales and stories about the mythological creatures fascinated her until they came into existence in her actual life. There's some humor, horror and nostalgia for the adults who've been through such incidents and heard such tales as children.

There's another similar book by Pakistani writer Sami Shah. The genre of this book also is based on the paranormal incidents and fantasy for the young and adult. This story is based on the main Character Wahid who is born as a half-human half-djinn hybrid, born of smokeless fire, he was raised in Karachi. He was adopted by a family in Karachi. He falls in love with a girl named Maheen in a party and on his way home he's attacked by djinns which led him to discover his own identity and existence. This book also includes the depictions of various Islamic mystical creatures,

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the djinns, dajjal, Pichal Pairee. These books are a great depiction of the beliefs of Pakistani culture and the mystical creatures they believe in.

In conclusion to the discussion, we have done so far, we conclude that mythical beliefs and folklores of mystical creatures have a significant part in our lives as Pakistanis. They have become a part of the culture.

### **2.4 Work of other artists:**

There are many artists who worked on the mythological creatures and fantasy. I seek inspiration from some of the most brilliant artists, they amaze me through their wonderful

creations and portrayal of such supernatural entities.

### **2.4.1 Scylla and Charybdis:**



This is one of the most fascinating illustrations by an artist named Guillem H. Pongiluppi, an artist from Barcelona. He designed it for mythic battles pantheon. He creates multiple characters like this unveiling his wonderful capacity.

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### **2.4.2 Salmon mermaid:**



This is an underwater scene illustration with a mermaid-like creature with lights shining on her body by an artist from United Kingdom Sandra Duchiewicz

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## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

I have conducted qualitative research. I will design illustrations with characters depicting the visuals of mythological creatures based on their tales. I will analyze the information on how people believe in their existence due to their own beliefs and stories I will create different compositions on how they can possibly look like through the lense of my imagination.

#### **3.1 Research approach:**

I collected the data through articles and books online published by Pakistani authors and through the local residents of my area. I will create my illustrations based on their myths on supernatural beings.

#### **3.2 Chosen Practice:**

I will use my traditional miniature painting techniques and mix it with digital art. I will be using mix mediums for my miniature illustrations but will keep the traditional miniature technique the center of focus in my illustrations.

#### **3.3 Practice Procedure:**

The tools I will be using for my illustrations are traditional miniature painting supplies such as watercolors, safaida, round brushes and watercolour sheet. Along with that for the digital painting I will use Procreate drawing application.

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## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

To sum up my study “Unveiling the realm of mythical creatures”, I concluded that the mythical creatures and tales of their existence I explored does not exist in reality. They are often

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conveyed in order to create a sense of horror, courage, bravery, or protection from evil and harm, they are commonly based onto the religious beliefs of some groups in order to fulfill their own desires. They are passed down every generation and are believed commonly. Hence, they have no relation with the reality and do not exist whatsoever

## CHAPTER 6

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