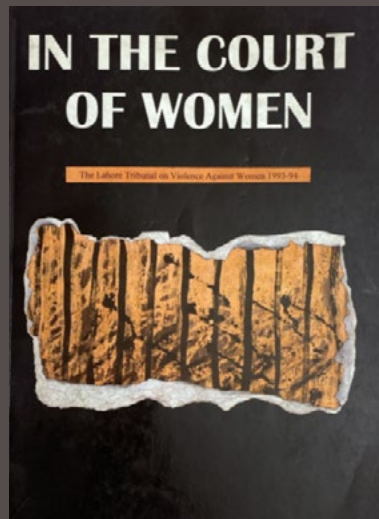


EDITING WOMEN IN THE ARCHIVES

Digital Handbook (2025)



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1: INTRODUCTION



Where does the Digital Handbook come from? What is its purpose?

This Digital Handbook draws on the *Editing Women in the Archives* project team's experiences of conducting initial archival research into "endangered" women's lifestyle, literary, and art publications in Pakistan. These were mainly magazines published in Pakistan in the period from the 1960s to the present which we considered as at risk of being lost and in need of presentation; they included *SHE: Journal for the Home* and *Paper* magazines, *NuktaArt*, and a variety of books, reports and manuals published by the [Simorgh Women's Resource and Publications Centre](#) in Lahore.

The research conducted has been incredibly rich, and more information on findings is being published elsewhere (see footnote 1 below). This Handbook's aim is to share insights into the *process* of trying to do this work of locating, obtaining, surveying, and documenting such precious but ephemeral materials while we work on providing open access to the digitised materials we have created. We want to do this in a way that will inspire and enable women editors, educators, journalists, academic researchers, and archivists who might wish to take up the baton in future. In addition

to building on and extending initial archival work like ours, we hope that they will take their enquiries in new directions, unearthing new histories of women's publication in a wider range of contexts, locations, and languages, beyond English, middle class, and metropolitan centres.

A note on the work that underpins the Handbook

The initial surveying work on which the Handbook is based took place in Karachi and Lahore in Spring 2024. It was conducted by four women with diverse backgrounds in writing, journalism, research, education, and creative practice: Hira Azmat, Tazeen Hussain, Mahnoor Jalal, and Veera Rustomji. Under the guidance of founding members of the Pakistani Association of Women Publishers and Editors (PAWPE) – Niilofur Farrukh of the Karachi Biennale Trust, and Mehvash Amin of *The Aleph Review* – but also, substantially, on their own initiative, these women researchers / project participants identified publications to target and visited public libraries, resource centres, and private homes that doubled as offices and storage facilities, to view rare copies of publications, interview those involved in their production, and beg to borrow them for a short while, with great persistence and determination.

During the project, Hira, Tazeen, Mahnoor, and Veera reflected on issues ranging from personal bias to the value of interviewing key contributors and researched the best methods for scanning and storing physical and digitised material. And they combined energies to record these, too, for the readers of this Handbook. Their passion and commitment, and those of their mentors, is itself inspiring, as participants in our knowledge-sharing event at the 2024 Karachi Biennale have witnessed.¹ What we include here is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to revealing what they found.

Disclaimer – what this Handbook isn't, and what it offers

The Handbook is not offered as a comprehensive guide, authored – despite the considerable expertise of participants – by formally trained archivists. Rather, it offers the reflections of a passionate collective, based on their eclectic, on-the-ground experiences. Please see the Notes on Contributors at the end for an understanding of our prior expertise and the reflections that follow for a clearer sense of where we are coming from.

The chapters that follow contain the team's combined advice, before embarking on an archival project like the one we've piloted, on understanding the context for archiving in Pakistan (Section 2). They offer some tips on getting started on an archival journey, scoping out what material might be available, and gaining access (Section 3). The Handbook goes on to consider more deeply some of the skills – both practical and interpersonal – that



Figure 1: Hira Azmat, Veera Rustomji, Madeline Clements, Mehvash Amin and Niilofur Farrukh at our archiving event during the Karachi Biennale Discursive Weekend, November 2024. Photo courtesy of Hira Azmat.

researchers might need to develop when doing work of this nature (Section 4). Lastly, it contains some concluding thoughts on where this work leaves us (Section 5). The Appendices include a brief Directory containing information on relevant libraries, archival projects, and women's publications identified through the *Editing Women in the Archives* work, and Veera Rustomji's generously shared list of *SHE* Connections, which we hope will be an aid and a spur to others aspiring to continue this work (Section 6).

An archive is a "repository or collection especially of information"; the term can be used to refer both to the "place in which public records or historical materials (such as documents) are preserved", and to "the material preserved" itself.² When the word "archive" is used in this handbook,

¹ For more information on the Karachi Biennale and knowledge sharing event, see Mehvash Amin's "Feast for the Eyes, Nourishment for the Soul", *The Aleph Review*, 11 November 2024: <https://www.thealephreview.com/post/feast-for-the-eyes-nourishment-for-the-soul>. The E-Catalogue containing an article by Veera Rustomji on researching and archiving She is available here: <https://karachibiennale.org.pk/kb24-catalogue/>.

it refers both to the individual collections of materials – from *SHE, Paper, Simorgh* and *NuktaArt* primarily – which have been identified, surveyed, documented, and scanned for the purposes of creating our own future digital archive, and to that envisaged larger archive of women-edited and women-centred literary, cultural, life-style, and art-focused publications itself, which is at yet incomplete.

What comes next?

Following the publication of this Digital Handbook, our work will continue as we consult with others (research students, academics, archivists/librarians, creatives) and reflect on feedback from our Karachi Biennale knowledge-sharing event, to co-design our web-based archive. This will not only house the materials we have documented and digitised in an accessible and interactive format, but also have the capacity to expand to incorporate readers' creative and critical engagements, as well as new archival additions.

- 2 "Archive." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/archive>. Accessed 7 Jan. 2025.

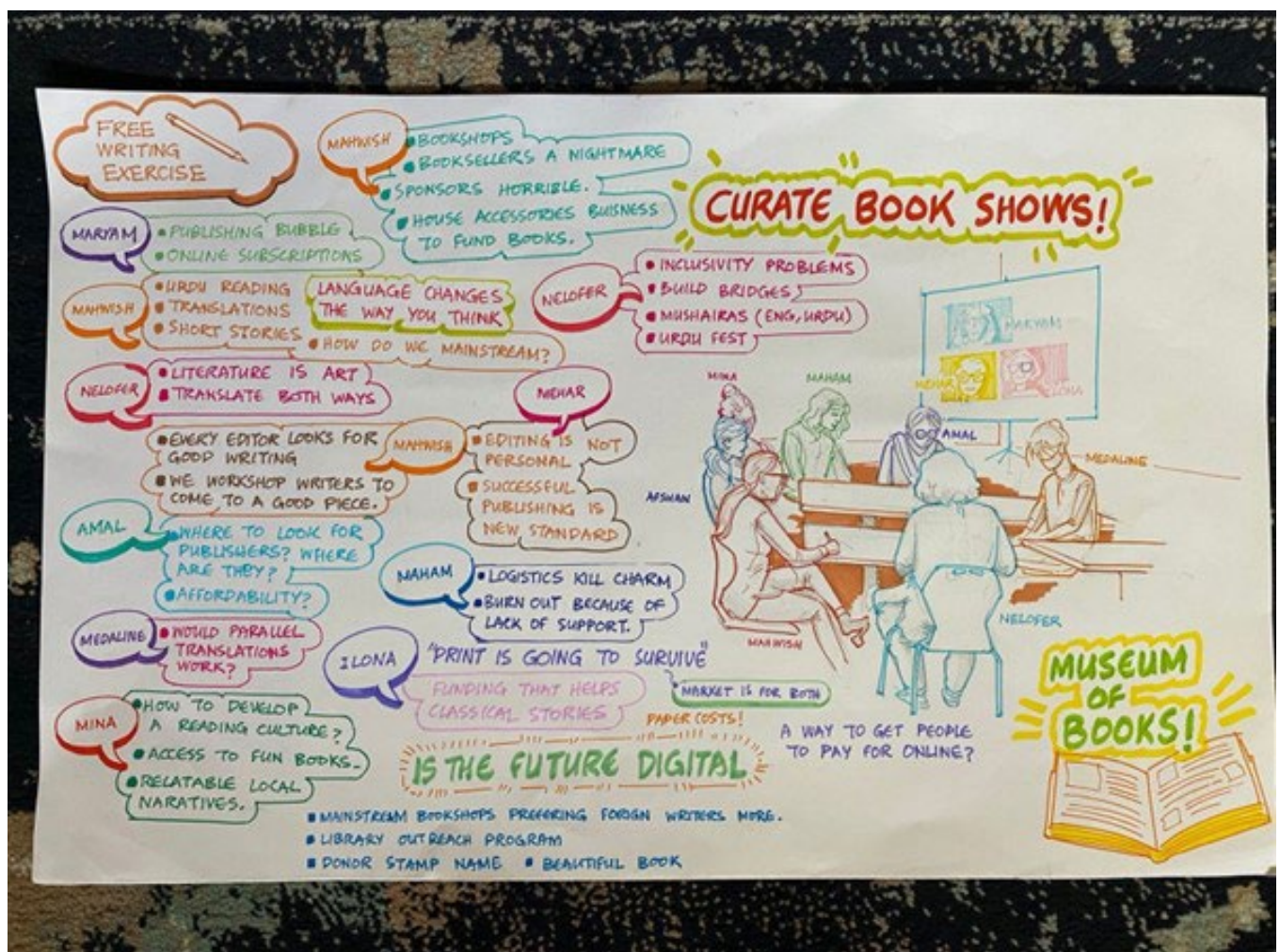


Figure 2: Editing Women Workshop Illustration by Moin Rehman, July 2022. Photo courtesy of Moin Rehman.

The project is supported by Teesside University via its Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) and devised and led by Dr Madeline Clements in conjunction with the [PAWPE collective](#). PAWPE was founded in September 2022 following the *Editing Women* workshop exploring challenges to sustainability for women editors and publishers, and continues to evolve ways to extend support, implement change, and foster growth for women in literary and art publishing.³

For more information, and to offer any valuable thoughts and feedback on the Handbook, or to register an interest in contributing to the development of the web-based archive, please get in touch with Madeline at: m.a.c.clements@tees.ac.uk.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

The PAWPE *Editing Women in the Archives* research team would like to thank all those who have supported the project by providing funding; guidance and support on the practicalities of archival work and digitisation and access to copies of precious publications; permitting the scanning/digitisation of materials; offering office space, administrative support and access to scanning facilities; consenting to be visited and interviewed, often in their own homes; and offering a host of other invaluable advice.

These include, but are not limited to:

Mehvash Amin of *The Aleph Review*; Neelam Hussain of *Simorgh Women's Resource and Publications Centre Lahore*; Niilofur Farrukh, Almas Bana and Bushra Hussain of the Karachi Biennale Trust; the founders of *NuktaArt*: Niilofur Farrukh, Rumana Husain, Amra Ali and Sabiha Imani (also Designer), and Seema Usman (Marketing Manager); the editors of, and contributors to, *SHE*: Pomme Amina Afzal Gohar, Najma Sadeque, Nighat Gaya, Nabahat Lotia, Naheed Yahya, Nyla Daud, Angeline Francis, Perviz Masani and Zuhra Yusuf; Gillian Murphy of The Women's Library, London School of Economics; Mahnaz Rehman of the Aurat Foundation; Nighat Saeed Khan of the ASR Foundation, who contributed an interview regarding the WAF newsletters to our archive; Meher Tareen and Samina Khan, former Editors of *Paper Magazine*; and author Tooba Masood-Khan who brought humour, wisdom, and solidarity to our Karachi Biennale event.

Huge thanks are also due to the dedicated team of participant-researchers: Hira Azmat, Mahnoor Jalal, Tazeen Hussain and Veera Rustomji, and to Sally Blackburn-Daniels, Research Fellow at Teesside University.

³ See "Investigating sustainable solutions for independent literary publishing in Pakistan", Teesside University, 26 July 2022. Available at: https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/news/pressreleases_story.cfm?story_id=7989

2: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT FOR ARCHIVING IN PAKISTAN



Why is archiving so important (now)? What infrastructure exists to support it, and why do we need more of it? Hira Azmat steps in to set the scene, reflecting on the archiving landscape and the gap that exists, which we seek in small part to fill.

Understanding the challenges posed by uneven art patronage

On the one hand, art on the Indian subcontinent benefits from a deep history of patronage; the patron-artist relationship remains a cornerstone of the cultural industries in Pakistan today. The elite are not just wealthy art collectors, but also founders and benefactors of institutions and organisations that form the ecosystem of its cultural industries. This includes financiers of art institutions of higher learning, gallery owners, festival founders, proprietors of performance spaces, as well as owners of publishing houses and presses, and magazine publishers.

By contrast, it can be argued that, barring some notable exceptions, the state has largely been absent as a benefactor and patron (although its presence can be felt in terms of censorship). While state institutions certainly exist within the art production ecosystem – such as museums, libraries, and performance venues including the National Library of Pakistan, Alhamra Arts Council in Lahore, and National Academy of Performing Arts in Karachi – they are at once highly centralised,

and yet may not have the same power, prestige or resources that are the markers of such institutions in other countries that prioritize the arts on a societal level.

Elsewhere, for example in Western European countries, the state may function as a meta-patron, shaping public museums and systems of art education, mandated to support traditional artforms and sustain contemporary culture. This comes with its own pitfalls: state art patronage can be an exercise in soft power, a means to shape public opinion by arbitrating acceptable taste. Yet state support can have many social benefits. Artistic production driven by government investment and funded at least in part through taxation, means a greater sense of ownership of, and appreciation for, the arts. Public institutions are also more accountable, being beholden to making the ways they collect, preserve and exhibit culture more inclusive and accessible to, and more diversely representative of, the general public.

In Pakistan, this culture of preservation is under or unevenly supported, with the gap created by the state being filled by private local patrons, as well as grants funded by foreign governments (such as the US, UK, Germany), foreign organizations (Prince Claus Fund, Open Society Foundations, UNESCO) and universities. Many creative practitioners and local organizations – including some of those, like Simorgh, with which we’ve worked on the *Editing Women* project – rely on such funds for support. Others have access to private funds and strong social networks which they may leverage to kickstart creative initiatives which are often passion projects driven by personal interest – again, some of the publications producing coverage on art, literature, lifestyle, and culture which we have looked at, such as *SHE*, and *Paper*, fall into this category; others, like *NuktaArt*, relied on wealthy donors and subscriptions.

All this means that sustainability of their creative activities remains precarious and their legacy – what will happen to the

precious materials they have produced when those strong individuals pioneering them have moved on – uncertain.

Power to shape public attitudes to art currently rests largely in the hands of private individuals and institutions, or foreign patrons. By choosing publicly to share the work they support, and inviting others to engage with it, they can be instrumental in building wider appreciation, knowledge, and encouraging research and conservation. In Pakistan’s history, such instances have been very limited (notable examples include public installations by the Awami Art Collective, the Karachi and Lahore Literature Festivals, and the Lahore and Karachi Biennales). Additionally, the audience for contemporary literary and visual art consists of a small urban elite. Critics, patrons, and artists are often friends and act as gatekeepers, controlling access to cultural platforms and alienating not just artists at the fringes, but also the wider public. They also operate largely in independent silos, making collaboration and knowledge-sharing a challenge. This fragmentation hinders the growth of a cohesive arts community that could engage the public more effectively.

Meanwhile, cultural norms and expectations mean traditional forms of art are often more celebrated at a popular level than modern or experimental cultural production, which can be perceived as elitist and remote from everyday experience. This mutual disconnect can further discourage public participation, an apparent lack of public interest leading to a situation where cultural institutions see little to be gained by attempting to engage broader audiences.

These factors go some way towards explaining why concerted archiving efforts have largely been absent for the ephemeral, women-led publications in Pakistan on which we chose to focus, even by the very founders of these publications, who often lack the capacity and resources to plan for the future, or to support volunteers willing to undertake such work.

If we think that modern and contemporary art and literature do not belong to the people, the land, the country, but to the patrons who invested in it, then the idea of an archival project that seeks to preserve material published in past decades accessible, for free, to the wider public, may not have much currency. Access and permissions for researchers can be difficult to come by, as they were for us, and efforts need to be made by researchers to establish trust. These have not always been successful for us, and we were at times met with opacity and an unwillingness to even entertain such a conversation. But we persisted, as we hope will others.

Snapshots of the archival work: key insights and discoveries

Hira Azmat: Archiving activist publications at Simorgh

The materials I set out to archive for this project were publications produced by Simorgh, a women's resource and publication centre founded in 1985. Simorgh is a non-governmental, non-profit, feminist activist organisation created in response to General Zia's military rule and to the promulgation of retrogressive and discriminatory legislation that is active to this day in Pakistan. The organisation's focus is on researching and disseminating information that can enable women and men to challenge the dominance of ideas that perpetuate social and economic divisions based on distinctions between genders, class, religion, race, and ethnicity. Among its publications are several that focus on art and literature, primarily due to the organisation's founder, Neelam Hussain, having a strong academic background in literature, and the artist Lala Rukh having been one of Simorgh's board members.

Given that our area of focus was material on art and literature, I wanted to locate and document those particular publications. However, I quickly came to realise that this would be a challenging undertaking, given

how enmeshed the organisation's research and activism work was with their creative productions – there was no clear distinction between the two. For example, the manual for screen printing created by Lala Rukh, *In Our Own Backyard* (1987), was ostensibly an art-focused publication, but the reason for its existence is clearly political: local printers controlled by the government in Lahore refused to print the Women's Action Forum's (WAF's) protest materials and newsletters. As a response, Lala Rukh began screen printing, designing, and producing posters herself. During the late 1980s, she set up printmaking workshops to assist women involved in similar movements in the region. The screen-printing manual was devised by Rukh for these workshops, which would usually take place in the backyard of her Lahore home.



Figure 3: Neelam Hussain with posters by Lala Rukh. Photo taken by Madeline Clements, February 2024.

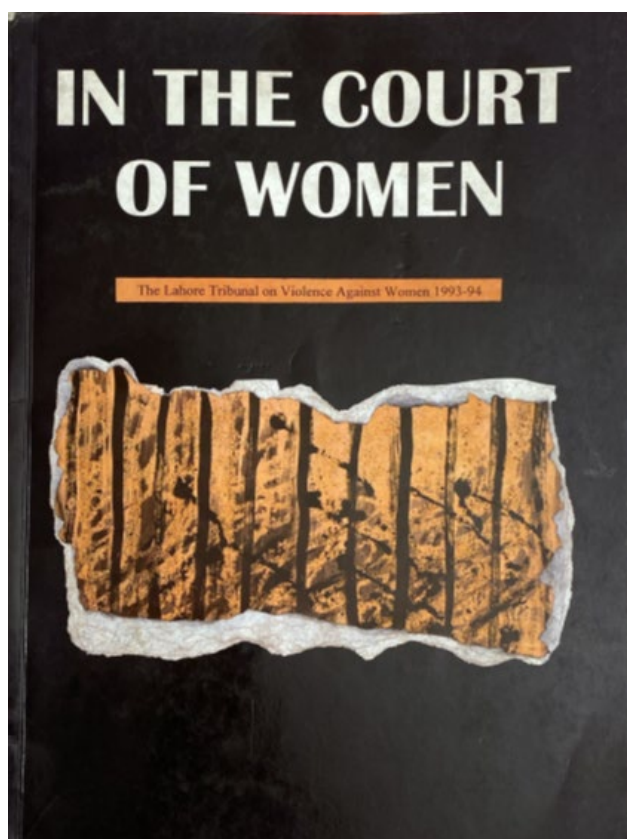


Figure 4: Cover of *In the Court of Women* (1995). Scanned by Hira Azmat, May 2024

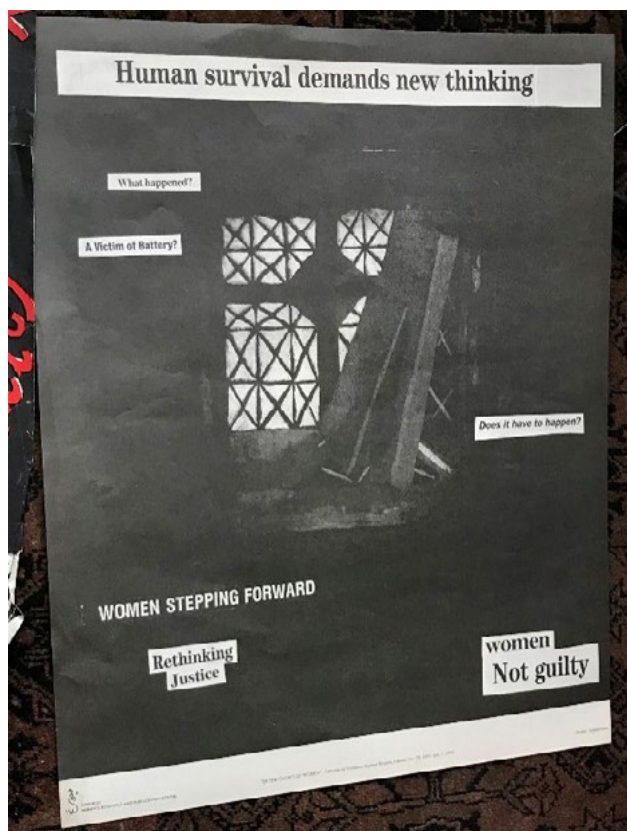


Figure 5: Inside *In the Court of Women* (1995). Scanned by Hira Azmat, May 2024.

Similarly, *In the Court of Women* (produced by the Simorgh Women's Collective and the Asian Women's Human Rights Council, 1995) is a report on a public tribunal on violence against women. I chose to include it in with the Simorgh materials I documented for this project because it led to twenty-five art therapy workshops across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa organised as a way of collectively documenting and releasing the trauma from stories of violence that had emerged in the tribunal. The culmination of these workshops was the Trinjan quilt project, designed to co-create a visual testimony to violence in the lives of Pakistani women. Over the span of a year, twenty-five panels were made by various groups of women, of whom the youngest child was five, and the eldest woman was in her seventies. The quilt travelled to schools, villages, poor urban settlements, affluent homes, and a number of women's conferences. *The Quilt Book* (by Anjana Raza, 1995), also included in the materials, is a poetic retelling of many of these stories and an homage to all the women who sewed this quilt together.

**Mahnoor Jalal:
Rediscovering *Paper*
Magazine and WAF
newsletters**

Herstories are important. We exist in the context of all that happened before we came into being. I call our shared past “herstory” instead of history because I want to emphasise the importance of recognising how our memories of past events have been framed, shaped and written by men, who champion the work of men. That is “history”, not “herstories”.

My research project revolved around archiving and analysing two different publications. These were *Paper* magazine and newsletters produced by the Women’s Action Forum (WAF). I picked *Paper* magazine because it had played an influential role in representing female voices during a critical era of media censorship in Pakistan. It was edited by Meher Tareen and Samina Khan and published between 2010 and 2013, during which time media platforms openly engaged in sexist, regressive narratives towards public personalities. The 2011 Veena Malik controversy, for example, played a monumental role in shaping sexist biases that are still prevalent today. Also, what sparked my curiosity about this magazine was how much outrage it attracted over



Figure 6 Cover Image of *Paper* Magazine (2010 issue). Courtesy of Meher Tareen and Samina Khan

some of the cover images and topics it chose to talk about. For instance, one of the covers featured a heavily pregnant Meesha Shafi, something that I vaguely recalled had made frontline news across the country when *Paper* released the issue. Also, as I poured over *Paper*, I was fascinated that despite the constraining era, this magazine spoke about things like colourism, body-shaming, mental health, and finding love after divorce – topics that still ruffle feathers today.

My efforts to archive this magazine met with a few challenges, for example when it came to getting in touch with the individual authors who had written for *Paper* to obtain consent to include their articles in our archives: more than a decade since publication, little contact information

was available. Nevertheless, my overall journey provided an incredible insight into the challenges of working in the publishing industry as a woman in Pakistan. This experience proved why it remains necessary to have conversations around the need for a more concerted approach to archiving, and how institutions can prevent our herstories from fading away into nothing.

The second set of publications that I chose to focus on for this research were the WAF newsletters published between 1982 and 1989. WAF was a feminist organisation that arose in 1981 out of dissent over the controversial President Zia's dictatorship – particularly against the Hudood Ordinances. The newsletters aimed to spread awareness about violence and harassment against women, and to keep the growing list of members updated with the organisation's policies.

I first learnt about the newsletters' existence in 2021 when going through files at Simorgh while looking for background information regarding the rise of the women's movement in Pakistan. It was later through conversations with some of the original members I understood how monumental these newsletters were: they were published secretly at the houses of feminist organizers because print shops were banned by governments at the time from publishing anything by WAF. Also, they featured exquisite essays and poems written by college students or current members that spoke vividly about the restraints they struggled with in a patriarchal society.

Through reading about our own archival journeys, I hope that future researchers can gain an insight into the state of archiving for publications like these in Pakistan, and some of the common issues we have faced. My desire to document herstories grows every day as I see women enter the front lines of progressive movements across Pakistan, and their efforts so easily are erased by those male voices controlling the narrative. I only hope that the work we have reflected on in this Handbook can initiate urgent discussions about the ways to preserve women's voices across Pakistan.

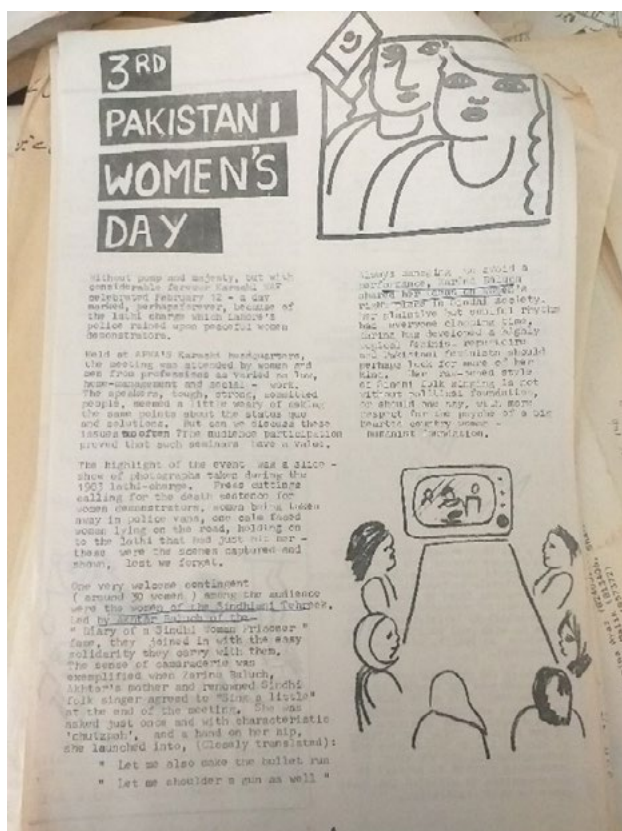


Figure 7 Extract from WAF Newsletter 9.4 (1985) from collection at Simorgh. Photograph taken by Mahnoor Jalal, March 2024.

Veera Rustomji: Understanding *SHE* magazine as the product of a close community of women readers and contributors

There are six decades or “eras” of *SHE*; the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s, the 2000s, and, finally, the period from 2010 to 2019. Sifting through various issues lent and donated to the Karachi Biennale Trust and sourced through previous *SHE* employees, I found myself immediately struggling to formulate a shortlist for digitisation to include in our archive. It was difficult to prioritise one particular story or article over another when, evidently, each contribution to the magazine was a reflection of the considerable time and critical thought devoted by contributing authors, editors and designers. *SHE* was not just a lifestyle magazine of its time, but a cornerstone of the literary and artistic interests and desires of English-speaking-and-reading Pakistani women. It simultaneously responded to what these women wanted to read and engage with at the time of publication, and also reflected the Editor and Founder Zuhra Karim’s personal and professional connections and strong feminist approach.

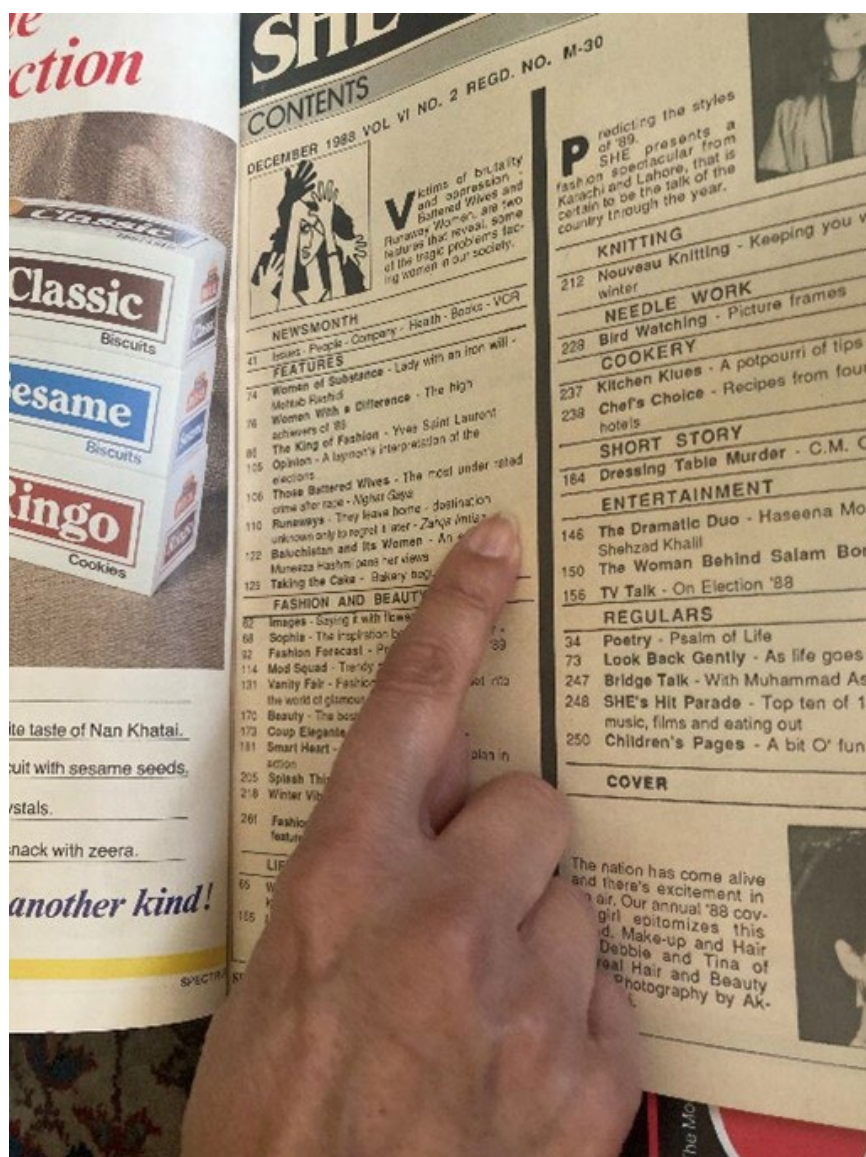


Figure 8 Contents Page of *SHE* Magazine (December 1988).
Photograph courtesy of Veera Rustomji, May 2024.

It is inevitable in Pakistan, and within such a small-scale publication that the editor’s voice will echo to an extent. However, the significance to the overall meaning of the magazine of the method of production or, rather, the ways in which the magazine was manually constructed by the designers, illustrators, and editors behind its pages, only became clear to me *after* having interviewed the women who worked for *SHE*. *SHE*’s long-term editors, writers and designers included Naheed Yahya, Pomme Gohar, Nabahat Lotia, Nighat Gaya and Nyla Daud. It is through my conversations with them, and their insights into working with Zuhra Karim, that my understanding of the challenges which the magazine posed towards patriarchal society – through literature, art, and written opinion – became more nuanced.

I also sensed that the life-long friendships which emerged from the collaboration in the magazine's editorial board could be traced in the pages of the issues. The more I talked to the women who made *SHE*, the more I saw *them* in the magazine: in the thematic, content, design, and even in the inclusion of their friends and family members, who used to model, assist with interviews, act as stand-in employees, and intern for *SHE*.

This dynamic is something Zuhra Karim herself recognised and acknowledged in the December 1983 "*SHE* briefing", by stating: "*SHE* Is your forum: a platform where all may hear, as well as your sounding board." She ends by stating that feminism is really a universal cause, while also acknowledging that there are varying extents to which women around the world can comment, support, and engage with feminism. Such words, retained in an archive, may illuminate how, more than four decades ago, magazines like *SHE* were grappling with ideas about women's differing needs that, even today, many fail to fully appreciate.

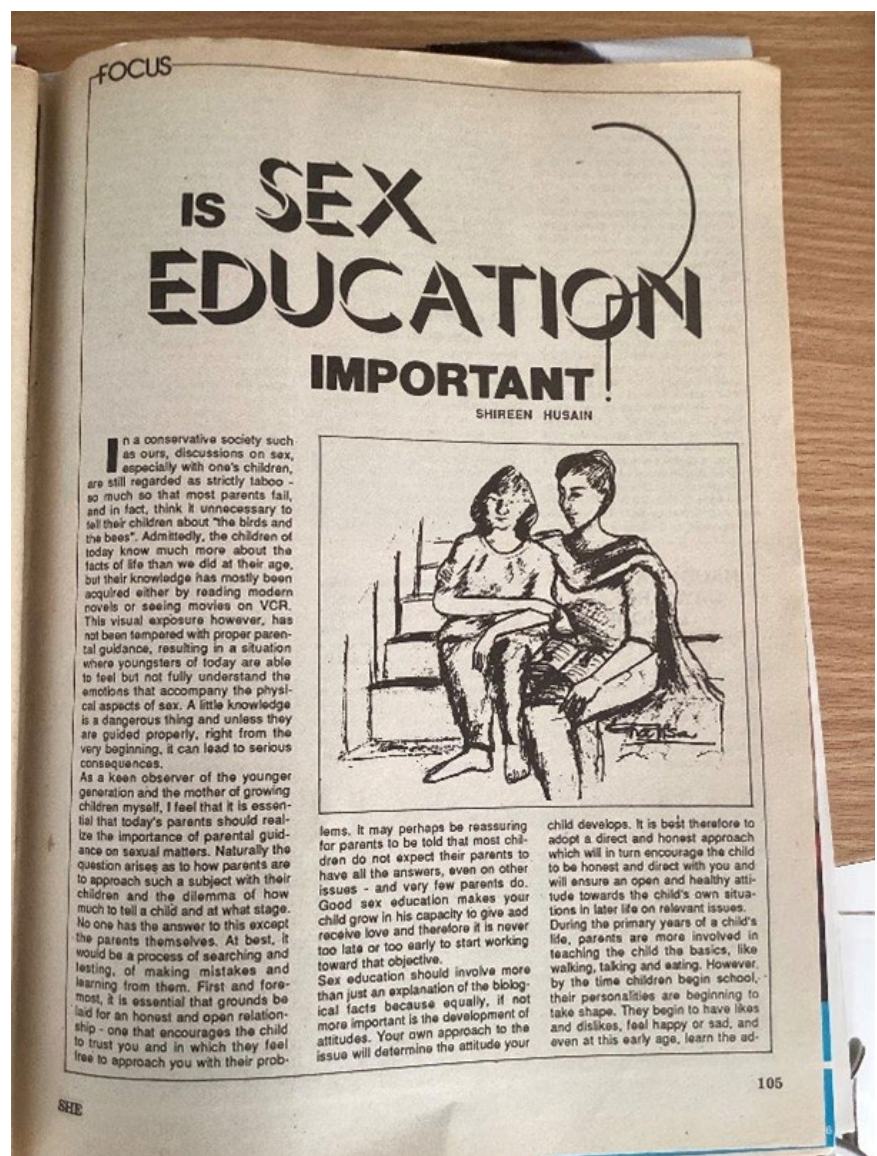


Figure 9 *SHE* Magazine, January 1988, Volume 5, No. 3. Photograph courtesy of Veera Rustonji, May 2024.

Tazeen Hussain – Unfolding *NuktaArt*'s contribution to art discourse

NuktaArt was an English-language, art, design, and culture magazine, eighteen editions of which were published between 2005 and 2014 by four Karachi-based women, including Niilofur Farrukh, who mentored me on the archives project. My task was to locate and identify material to be digitised in accordance with a theme pre-defined by the publication: the change in the perception of art in Pakistan during the magazine's lifespan. *NuktaArt* provides a vital record of these women's efforts to create wider engagement with art through exhibitions, prizes and seminars like *One Mile Square*, *Faiz Art Prize*, and *The Anxious Century: Discourses Waiting to Be Born*.

Given my training in design, I am naturally inclined towards pages and layouts that speak visually. *NuktaArt* stood out with its novel design, breaking the template followed by others at the time and playing an important role in its perception as a quality publication. Sahiba Imani, founder and designer, experimented with new ways of presenting information, using tight-knit fonts, unusual layouts and images, and high-quality printing to increase audience engagement.

The *Nukta@Art* section provided a rich source of information on art activities, seminars on art and art criticism, residencies, awards, and individuals and institutions involved in art discourse and publication. Volume 1, published in April 2007, for example, reports on an international seminar hosted by the Fine Arts Research Centre, Lahore, which highlighted individuals and art activities during the Mughal and post-Mughal period. Presentations covered the art of chronograms under the Mughals, topographical paintings produced in Akbar's time, and miniaturist Imam Buksh Lahori's illustrations of work by European nobility.

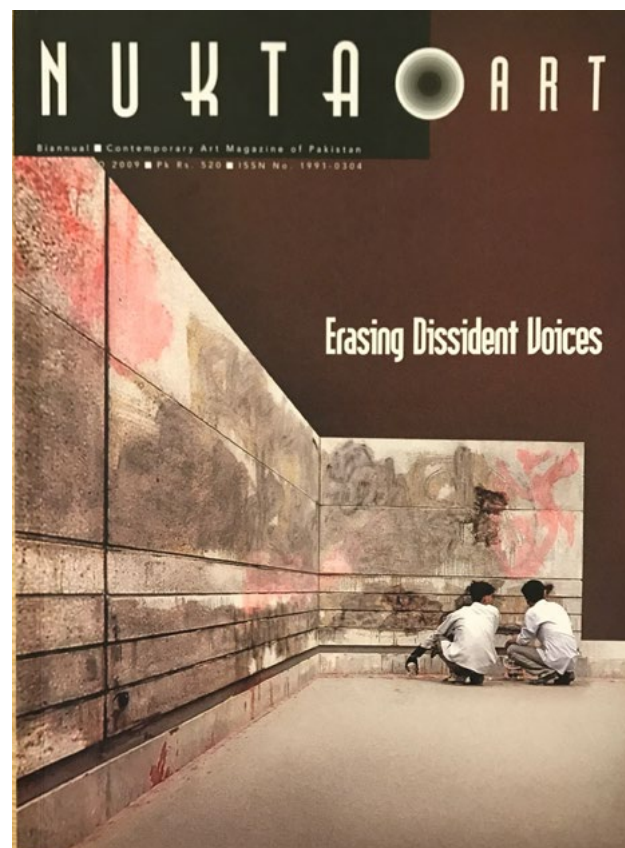


Figure 10 Cover of *NuktaArt* Volume 4, Two: *Erasing Dissident Voices* (2009). Courtesy of *NuktaArt*. Scanned by Tazeen Hussain, June 2024.

In our context, books on art are very rare, and *NuktaArt* is a vital source of information on them. Its book review section featured non-mainstream titles like Shamim Akhter's book on children's drawings, *Pakistani Children's Art – A Documentation* (2007). Coverage of this unusual book brings an important source of information on children's art to the attention of those working on our art and design curriculum, art therapy, and cognitive learning. Another book reviewed is *The Romance of Raja Rasalu* (2007), a collection of oral stories accompanied by illustrations published by Simorgh Women's Resource and Publications Centre.



Figure 11: Tehrik-e-Niswan article, *NuktaArt* Volume 4, Two (2009). Courtesy of *NuktaArt*. Scanned by Tazeen Hussain, June 2024.

The founders regard *NuktaArt* as a resistant and decolonizing project, providing space for perspectives, critical dialogue, and contributions from artists and writers from the Global South, and revisiting history to understand the form and trajectory of contemporary practice. The reprinting of writings and translations by authors like Mulk Raj Anand, Marium Habib, and Inayat Hussain, along with profiles of artists such as Kohari, Shahid Sajjad, and Mussarat Mirza, introduced a new generation to local scholars and artists. Additionally, articles drew attention to emerging practices such "neo-miniature" and the evolving methods of contemporary miniature artists and offered insights into the sidelining of sculpture and ceramics due to religious and socio-political influences. *Erasing Dissident Voices* (Volume 4: Two, 2009) was a covert response to censorship and its impact on art and society. It featured political cartoonists like Vai Ell and Feica, who faced censorship, and discussed Tehrik-e-Niswan, a theatre group, including a photograph of a backdrop painted by M F Hussain specifically for the performance of a play on violence sweeping Karachi at the time.

3: GETTING STARTED – TIPS AND CAVEATS



What were the project team's considerations when getting started on their archival projects?

1. Where did we look when identifying resources?

Veera Rustomji: Notes from Karachi

Karachi is undoubtedly a colossal city and its physical and social fragmentation results in multi-nodal repositories or networks of culture which may not coincide with thousands of others. For this reason, it would seem impossible to evaluate or archive the city's culture in its entirety. This very quality of division through community structures, religious factions and, most of all, the agency of money, determines access to and mobility within these networks.

When approaching a body of investigative research, such as the one I embarked on with *SHE* magazine, which ran from 1963 to 2019, I have found that class and privilege can be the determinants of "success". Being situated in an environment where there is limited investment in archiving print and digital materials requires one to have a sense of foresight and understand archiving as a form of structuring and saving information, that can appear in diverse visual and tangible forms. In a city strained for resources like Karachi, one must also be prepared to deal with shut doors and significant gatekeeping which is usually a side-effect of individuals not wanting to see valuable archives go beyond singular ownership.

Navigating *SHE*, I immediately found myself drawing on the core networks to which I was already privileged enough to have access. As I was born into a small, close-knit religious minority, I have always found value in accessing community resources or intelligence. In fact, my first contact, Perviz Masani, who worked at *SHE* in the 1990s and 2000s, belonged to the same Karachi Parsi community. This was a great starting point as she opened access to subsequent contacts and interviewees.

Publications which span decades, like *SHE*, can have a far-reaching effect in large, fragmented cities like Karachi. My second and more expansive network was the art community in Karachi, which continues to intersect with publications, writing and critical thought.

When it comes to accessing the readers, writers, designers, and former subscribers of a magazine like this, which was in print for about six decades, my experience of having lived for 27 years in Karachi is that all projects that deal with art, literature, design, and architecture somehow converge around such centres as the art university. Sourcing and pin-pointing core individuals who have spearheaded both these and other galleries, publications, and collectives, tends to lead back to academic and art institutions. In fact, researchers and archivists should aim to start by having dialogues or connecting with members of the art or literary academia, be they faculty or alumni, when undertaking archival or other projects within the humanities field. This dynamic can be seen in other cities and towns in Pakistan and South Asia. The art school is truly a hub of freedom and critical thought, both in written and visual dialogues, as it usually goes unnoticed by the state, perhaps because art and literature are seen as unimportant or sometimes even unnecessary.

These networks proved to be the core facilitators in researching and analysing *SHE*. The agency in networks is also



Figure 12: Naheed Yahya, Art Editor for *SHE* in the 80's with her expansive archive at home. Photograph by Veera Rustomji, 2024.

important to appreciate when looking at the results of the interviews with former *SHE* employees. After my first meeting with Naheed Zahra Yahya, Art Editor of *SHE*, I realised that working on the magazine was not just any old job for its production team; rather, *SHE* was a rare space for a cluster of women who formed, in each era of its production, a family or network around the magazine, from the 1960s to the 2000s. As *SHE*'s mini "work/office families" came to light in my research, each conversation seamlessly led to further contacts of more women (and, sometimes, men) who were involved with the curation and content of the magazine because they had built personal relationships with each other through the work.

Much of the making of *SHE* was down to the working relations between women of similar age, backgrounds, and interests. Interestingly, few stayed at *SHE* for long in their roles as full-time, permanent employees, but they maintained their friendships far beyond shifting office spaces. Therefore, the researcher also should be aware of the importance of positive and forthcoming references from interviewees when “entering” these tight knit friendships and relationships behind a body of work as it is the trust garnered by the researcher and, to be quite blunt, sometimes even their likeability, which can determine the next list of contacts who share congenial qualities with the original or core interviewee.⁴

Mahnoor Jalal – Reflections from Lahore

When this project began in February 2024, the team based in Lahore – myself and Hira Azmat, mentored by *The Aleph Review*'s Mehvash Amin, who had previously worked for *Libas* magazine, had – after some disappointment over hopes of accessing back issues of *Libas* – prioritised a woman-led publications centre and more recent lifestyle magazine, a which seemed more positive and potentially productive place to start. These, as already mentioned, were Simorgh Women's Resource and Publications Centre, run by Professor Neelam Hussain, and *Paper* magazine, which had a short run from 2010-2013, and was edited by Meher Tareen and Samina Khan.

As journalists, researchers, and writers at different career stages, we had various connections with the editors of these publications, which meant that obtaining access to materials and permissions to scan/photograph and digitise them for our archival project was not problematic. In addition, we were also able to draw on these connections to visit Simorgh, courtesy of Professor Hussain, and receive a personal tour to a wide range of publications – journals, pamphlets, handbooks, essay collections, folk tales, and creative writing – which it had produced over the years.

At first, it seemed as though *Paper* would be an odd choice because it did not have the more formal or academic tone that I associated with the kind of publications that Hira, Tazeen, and to some extent Veera, would go on to work on. But, as I began to look through issues of *Paper* loaned to us by its former editor, Meher Tareen, it became clear that the magazine played an essential role in providing a platform to speak up on social issues, human rights causes, for example through the profile on the Ahmedi scientist Dr Abdus Salam. Essentially, *Paper* also provided a voice to the issues women cared about during a time when sexism in the media was rife.

There were some challenges I faced when getting in touch with the writers for permission to include their articles in the archives. Meher Tareen was able to help a lot by providing some of the contacts, and recommended that I sought out the rest by getting in touch with their social media accounts but, given the time frame of the project, it did not seem like a viable option. The response rate was quite low: of the nine I reached out to, only four responded. This presented us as an archiving team with a dilemma: what should we do with material we saw as essential to our project of preserving the efforts of women editors for posterity, if we could not gain the permissions needed to provide public access to them?

⁴ A list of connections is included in the [Appendices](#) at the end of this Handbook.



Figure 13: Paper Magazine, 2013. Photograph by Madeline Clements, February 2024.

We had discussed this issue previously in a project team meeting with Nilofur and Mehvash, and Madeline had additionally sought advice from contacts at libraries in the UK, such as the LSE Women's Archive, about their approach to obtaining permissions when creating digital archives, as well as her University's legal department. The response was, broadly, that we needed to attempt to obtain consent from authors/copyright holders if the work was within copyright (i.e. within 70 years of the author's death for written material, and 25 years from first publication for layouts), and to document this before sharing material for research purposes.

As a result, we agreed to add a disclaimer when creating our own *Editing Women* digital archive/website, stating that we had taken steps to reach out and obtain permission within the allotted time frame for the project, and that if any author wished to come forward later to grant formal permission or request the removal of material, they would be welcome to do so. Thus, we would hope to avoid any conflicts of interest and ensure our efforts receive a positive reception.

2. Who did we speak to for advice/support?

Mahnoor Jalal – Networks in Lahore

One of the pressing issues I faced when archiving the WAF newsletters was where to find the complete publications, because the ones left in Simorgh were tattered and torn, with several pages missing.

When we met with Simorgh's Executive Co-Ordinator, Neelam Hussain, in February 2024, she discussed at length the difficulties of archiving in Pakistan because of a lack of awareness and limited funding options; this is why documents and historical artefacts had been spoiled or damaged. The conversation provided some incredible insights and contacts, making me aware that my journey to finding the complete newsletters might not be an easy task, but also connecting me with people like Naila Naz, the WAF Human Resources person, whom I could email for permission to include the WAF newsletters in our archive, as I discovered that they were [all already stored on the WAF website](#). Once this permission was received, I was careful to ensure I saved the details securely into our project's shared Teams folder.

Talking to journalist colleagues at *The Current*, where I was also working at the time, and speaking to fellow feminist activists, was also beneficial: they provided me with additional contacts and information (for example regarding Nighat Saeed Khan's ASR (Applied Socio-Economic Resource Center) archives. However, it was heartbreaking to have to accept on occasions that certain leads might need to be dropped. This was a case with a Lahore-based newsletter produced by the Aurat Foundation in or around the 1980s, a collection of which I rediscovered while searching through documents I had saved on Google Drive for a previous

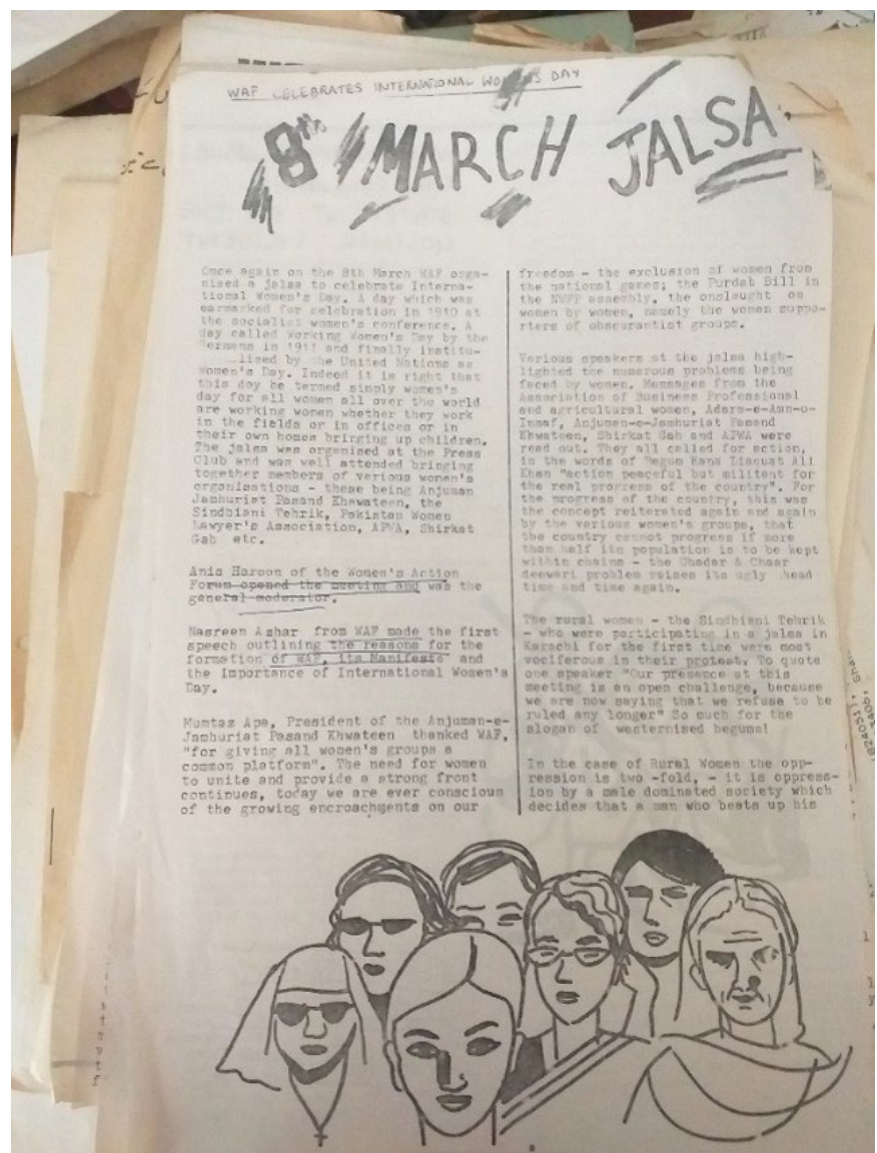


Figure 14: WAF Newsletter from 1986 from collection at Simorgh. Photographed by Mahnoor Jalal.

research project. I wanted to include these in the *Editing Women* archive but had no contacts with Aurat Foundation, nor did I know anyone who had worked at that place. Veera in Karachi helped me get in touch with Mahnaz Rehman, the founder, but although initially it seemed that I would be granted permission, the situation changed when Ms Rehman left her role. I sought guidance from Mehvash and, in the end, as we were also working within a limited time frame, I had to agree to drop this lead. This decision broke my heart because the newsletters were exactly the kind of content that deserved to be archived: they provided some excellent insight into advice provided through such publications to women in the 1980s, such as how to open a bank account, and how to file a divorce case. These also echoed issues raised by lifestyle magazines investigated through *Editing Women*, such as *SHE* in Karachi.

Reflecting back on all of this experience of trying to obtain access, information and permissions, my best advice to any new researcher or journalist is to ensure you keep a careful record of all your interviews and discussions, as well as email and other text correspondence, such as What's App messages. This way, you can check back over what has been said and provide evidence if it is needed. If you are conducting a phone interview with someone, keep writing notes down and then send a transcript back to the interviewee so they are aware of what goes into the final record, information is accurate, and misunderstandings can be avoided.

Veera Rustomji – Connections in Karachi

Again, personal connections – peers, past supervisors, and mentors – proved important in obtaining advice and support with this archival work. As I teach on a part-time basis at the Fine Art Department for the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS), I had discussed the project with my colleague and former teacher, Dr Asma Mundrawala, and she outlined that the first person I should connect with was Naheed Yahya, for former Art Editor at *SHE*. Yahya was my primary lead in understanding the impact that the magazine had for women working there. My first conversation with Yahya laid the foundation for understanding *SHE*'s modus operandi and, in particular, the “behind the scenes” dynamics that existed between the women of the editorial and design staff and its chief editor, Zuhra Karim.

Incidentally, Yahya was also one of my former IVS teachers and taught me basic design at art school. In a way, she represents a generation of artists and designers who took a lot of risks to establish the preliminary blueprint for creative practices in Karachi in the 1980s and 1990s. Much of what she, Asma Mundrawala, and other contributors to the making of *SHE*, such as Pomme Gohar and Nabahat Lotia, did in art, theatre, fashion, design, and publications was done out of determination to create something new and unique without the expectation of it being commercially successful as they pushed back against a lack of opportunities or access to technological advancements in the restrictive climate for women of the 1980s. Understanding the importance for these women of pushing boundaries in literary and artistic creation helps us to understand the far-reaching significance and impact of *SHE* for its readers.

3. How did it help to acknowledge how background (class, language, discipline) can help and hinder who we can talk to and how we look?

Veera Rustomji – English as an enabler, and an inhibitor

During my search for copies of *SHE*, I came to know that an Urdu version existed during the 1980s. However, no issues of this were recovered: despite awareness among former contributors to English *SHE*, none of my interviewees save Mahnaz Rehman had read or contributed to the Urdu magazine. The difficulty in recovering Urdu *SHE* made it quite clear that speaking, being educated in, and working in English was a class distinction that provided access to



Figure 15: Mahnaz Rehman with her copy of the December 1983 edition of *SHE* at her home in Karachi, February 2024. Photograph by Madeline Clements.

issues and interviewees in English, but not beyond it. Interviewees including Khawar Mumtaz, Kausar Khan, Zohra Yusuf, Nighat Gaya, and Nyla Daud all commented on how the English-speaking Pakistani woman, at whom English *SHE* was targeted, was understood to be a different type, whose lifestyle, opportunities, and crises were framed in a certain way because of her assumed education and privilege. It is also important to add that neither of the interviewees bought or read Urdu *SHE*. Meanwhile, Niilofur Farrukh, who has co-led our archiving project, talked about how another magazine, *Akhbar-e-Khawateen* (also known as *Akhbar-e-Jehan*), published in Urdu, printed content which pushed for women to fight and to not accept their fate – in contrast to *SHE*. From my discussions with women on its editorial board, I came to see *SHE* as more focused on equipping and empowering readers through educative articles, than issuing a call to arms.

It seems imperative we develop a better understanding of how class, economic privilege and sensibility are intertwined with the ability of Pakistanis to read and speak in English when investigating and dissecting feminist publications like *SHE*, and their history. The distinction that English provides created a market for English-language magazines like this, but other editions and publications also existed, and catered perhaps to other audiences, which we must not neglect but may need alternative networks to access.

Tazeen Hussain: Bias in the archives, and my efforts to archive *NuktaArt*

I've been sensitive to biases residing within existing archives, particularly in Pakistan, where the majority of archival material has been the outcome of the efforts of colonial and post-colonial individuals and institutions. As Haitian Historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot has noted, "colonialism was not only about the economic and political domination of non-European peoples; it was also about controlling the past, present, and future by producing a history that

legitimised European dominance”.⁵ When viewed through this lens, the archiving of *NuktaArt*, a publication from Pakistan which aims to document contemporary art and culture, is important, as the magazine claims to be inclusive of viewpoints and to give salience to voices which are under-represented or remain peripheral in Pakistan’s mainstream art and culture scene. I strongly believe that such archives can contribute greatly towards the decolonization of art and design.

We are the recipients of a doctored history. Archives produced with a consciousness of this can be that political space which offers a counter to state narratives and social hierarchies, which remain embedded within us and our society. Identifying the archive as an important component of historical production, Trouillet also writes:

*“Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance).”*⁶

In the Pakistan context, two main issues deserve attention. First, the art scene is characterised by the dominance of artists practising in two main centres of art production: Lahore and Karachi. The voices and concerns of artists belonging to the periphery remain under-represented both in exhibitions and critical publications. Given my own background, I know I am less aware of the views of the periphery and those that have been published in languages other than English. Secondly, archiving also creates a silencing of its own, as what is archived inevitably depends on



Figure 16: Tazeen Hussain at the VM Resource Centre, Karachi, Pakistan, with copies of *NuktaArt*, February 2004. Photograph by Tazeen Hussain.

the selections of an individual and, in my case, the requirements of the publication being archived. What I include is what is preserved, and what I choose not to select may get lost in time. I must also take into consideration the future users of the archive, a potentially diverse body of people, who will be experiencing the Pakistani art scene from 2005 to 2014 via this archive. In this way, it will contribute towards the making and authentication of history.

I am particularly aware of my identity as a design educator from an elite art educational institution, steering conversations on art and its purpose in society towards a critical viewpoint. My institutional affiliations and cultural capital – the ideologies and social groups I was born into – determine to a great degree my ideas about the form and purpose of art and

⁵ Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and The Production of History* (Beacon Press), p. 7.

⁶ As above, p. 26.

consequently influence what I choose for the digital archive. Archives therefore may be less likely to present a comprehensive picture of the material they archive so much as a reflection of the interests of the archivist or archival institution.

When beginning work on *NuktaArt* for the *Editing Women in the Archives* project, the greatest source of tension that I could see was the fact that I was from the field of art and design. Being tasked with deciding what to archive from *NuktaArt* was a tough call. The parameters were set by Niilofur Farrukh, former Editor-in-Chief. The main idea was to archive (scan and digitise) selected content which brought about a change in perception about art in Pakistan. This meant that I needed to try and set aside my own natural inclination to dwell on the magazine's novel design and prioritise documenting its critical content.

Discipline as bias, or benefit?

However, as I proceeded systematically to analyse the contents of the magazine, I realised that design itself played an integral part in creating that critical change in perception. I was able to understand how the designer had experimented with new ways of working with fonts, page layouts, choice of images and high-quality printing to hold the reader's attention. Here my disciplinary training helped me better to recognise the importance of this relationship between design and text. The founders of *NuktaArt* also emphasised the role design played in bringing their vision of a magazine of international quality to fruition.

Letting the archive speak

While proximity to *NuktaArt*'s founders and editorial team allowed me access copies



Figure 17: Covers of *NuktaArt*. Image courtesy of Sabiha Imani, founder and designer of *NuktaArt*, 2024.

of the publication and information about the context in which it was produced, it could also skew my decisions about what to archive. As art writers, their preference might be to focus on preserving the main features and literary essays over the other sections in the magazine, like news sections, book reviews, and so forth. In fact, I was encouraged to start with the editorial section, which focused on the longer articles and features.

My way to address this emphasis on archiving critical writings was to conduct an initial audit or survey of contents of *NuktaArt* focusing on those articles which I felt contributed to a change in perception of Pakistani art. I thus discovered that the *Nukta@art* section covered activities like exhibitions, seminars on art and art criticism, residencies, and awards, contributing to an expanded perception of the remit of art activities, while other sections, for example book reviews, enabled readers to expand their understanding of art as a discipline through discovering other art resources.

Practicing “triangulation”

Once I had surveyed and read the critical content to be housed in our archive and interviewed *Nukta's* founders, I decided to reach out to the magazine's readers and competitors to hear their views on what they felt was impactful. “Triangulation” refers not only to the employment of various methods and data sources to qualitatively understand a particular phenomenon; it can also be used to point to the strategy used to cross-check an idea's validity. Reaching out to competitors and audiences would help me to see whether our focus on was meaningful for them, or if their perspective might suggest that other material should be prioritised.

Speaking to both groups yielded new insights. From looking at other magazines contemporary to *NuktaArt*, and interviewing their production/editorial teams, I gained a better understanding of the readership

for art and design magazines and hence of their standing in Pakistani society. While there were similarities in terms of structure, content, physical attributes (size, paper quality) between publications, there were also critical aspects which, it could be speculated, had their beginnings in *NuktaArt*, which itself was influenced by other precursors. *NuktaArt's* initiatives included the Faiz Award, an attempt to reconnect the tradition of poetry with art activity. Through an open call professional artists and art students were invited to read and respond to Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poetry.

ADA/Iconica and *Nigaah Art*, two other contemporary art publications, which hold awards to encourage and acknowledge local artists, and seminars on art, are now part of the art scene. Both have stated that *NuktaArt* became a source of inspiration in terms of writers and themes. As a result of these revelations, I added the contributors page and the award and seminar catalogues published in *NuktaArt* to the archive.

Meanwhile, interviews with readers validated my archival focus and allowed me to understand more about how the magazine circulated and its life beyond distribution. Readers recalled gallery talks organised by *NuktaArt* to engage audiences in critical dialogue: this is how they became familiar with new forms of art and art terminologies. Others mentioned how the presence of *NuktaArt* in high school art rooms and art schools libraries changed their perception through exposure to local and global artists. The design and high quality of production seem to have been important pull factors, especially for art students. This validated my decision to include representation of new formats and typographic design in the archive. Thus, looking beyond the contents of the publication itself, to what they meant to a wider audience, led to new insights and the compilation of a richer archive.

4. What can be done when materials are scattered or dispersed, and doors to access close?

Veera Rustomji: Scouting for copies of scattered *SHE*

While most of the women members of *SHE*'s editorial and production team whom I contacted were quite forthcoming about their experiences and views of the magazine's content, I only managed to get photographs or physical copies from five key women: Perviz Masani, Angeline Francis, Naheed Yahya, Pomme Amina Gohar, and Nabahat Lotia. The 1970s copies were all provided by the LSE Women's Library through their digitisation request system. A significant problem in locating physical issues of *SHE* was that women, including the daughters of frequent contributors (such as Moneeza and Salima Hashmi, daughters of Alys Faiz, who wrote for almost every issue from the 1970s to the 1980s), just did not keep the magazine for archival purposes. This could be because of a variety of reasons: a lack of space in private homes; the length of time that has passed since the publication was printed; a lack of certainty over where the copies might have been stored; or lack of realisation that this ephemeral publication might be worth physically storing and archiving.

Below are insights into two hurdles I faced, and reflections on strategies adopted to overcome them:

#1: Lack of contact with Editor's family

In my case, all leads that connected with *SHE*'s longstanding Editor Zuhra Karim's family ran dry.

[Please note that since the initial research was completed and the Handbook published in 2025, the project team have been able to make contact with the family of Zuhra Karim through her daughter in London, Ayesha Karim, who has supported the project through providing formal permission for digitised material to be published on our website: editingwomenarchive.org.]

#2: Tracing content from the 1960s *SHE*

I was unable to get enough information about the type of articles published in the 1960s *SHE*, especially as my one lead stopped responding. However, we do find snippets of the 1960s *SHE* reprinted in the 1980s issues. In this regard, I would recommend to any researcher that they try and pivot around missing sections of the archive and mine the sections which are accessible for what they can tell us about those that are unavailable. For example, in the March 1988 25th anniversary issue, an article by editorial staff called "The Best of *SHE*" tells us how *SHE* was formed, how it evolved, and what difficulties it had to wrangle with. It was founded on providing everything the modern, urban Pakistani woman wanted to know.

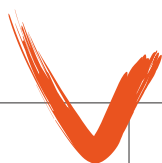
A particularly interesting article in this regard is Dr Zarina Fazalbhoy's article on "Sex and Human Relations" (April 1968), which concludes "let us carry the message forward that sex is good, sex is clean, sex is healthy, sex is creative". We don't read articles normalising sex by Pakistani journalists let alone doctors in 2024, so this seems courageous. In *SHE*, articles like these coexisted with harrowing real-life stories of women in bonded labour, accused of *zina* (adultery), and undergoing unfair trials, as well as features and profiles on philanthropists, such as Abdul Sattar Edhi and Dr Ruth Pfau, who became



larger-than-life figures in the 1980s and 1990s. We also have perspectives on the inner workings of *SHE* from Javed Jabbar, Zuhra Karim's Assistant Editor since 1966. In "*SHE and I, Memories and Hopes*" (January 1984), he observes that *SHE's* success in its first decade is both amazing and peculiar given around 20% of the female population at that time spoke and read English. Perhaps this is one of the most complex aspects of *SHE: Journal for the Home*: it had a statistically small readership, yet the reverberations of content were felt throughout the following decades, making it possible also for the careful researcher to form a fuller picture of what it covered in its lifespan.

Figure 18: "The Best of She" from the March 1988 edition.
Scanned by Veera Rustomji, May 2024.

4: DOING THE ARCHIVAL RESEARCH



What do we do once we've found a potential archive?

1. How did we figure out a methodology for selecting materials to digitise or cataloguing contents?

Mahnoor Jalal – Surveying *Paper* Magazine

Once I had received copies of *Paper* Magazine from its Editor, Meher Tareen, I set out to create an inventory of the issues and their contents as a first step in deciding what to prioritise for inclusion in our archive. I had three print copies; the rest were sent in a digital form. These I uploaded to a secure, shared space on MS Teams which was backed up by the Teesside University server.

Our brief was, broadly, to focus on literary, art-related material. *Paper* did not just solely focus on culture and entertainment, but also included a range of articles discussing human rights, feminism, and social issues, as well as art and design, and books and authors. I created a system for categorising the contents of each magazine as a means of narrowing down which articles or sections to select (our initial aim, given the potential volume of material we might have to sift through, was to scan and digitise only the most relevant material to our art + literature brief).

I used the checklist below to survey the content of both print and digital copies of *Paper Magazine*:

- Year of publication
- Time/period of publication (helpful when contextualising and analysing content)
- Key themes
- Identity of chief editor
- Social issues covered
- Literary content
- Arts content
- Did any issues cause controversy at the time of publication?
- Were articles written by women?

Using these criteria made it easier to narrow down a number of articles to scan and include in our shared space online, and to identify which authors I needed to reach out to for permission.

Veera Rustomji – Creating a publication database for *SHE*

As *SHE* was in print for many decades, printing multiple editions per year, I followed a database model to keep track of the material. This included columns reflecting the criteria prioritised by the *Editing Women* project, and also informed by my prior experience of creating archival databases. Past projects I had worked on included: creating a digital library for the Inventory of Maritime Archaeology in Pakistan Project (IMAP) funded by Arcadia; and laying the foundation for gathering documentation from alumni of the Fine Art Department for the Urban Repository Archive at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Finally, in my own time as a researcher and artist in Karachi, I often frequent libraries where books which are accessible as reference-only. I have found that cataloguing and archiving them in a list on my phone and via an online repository like Google Drive means that I can have immediate access to something I don't own or can't physically bring back home.

The *SHE* Publication Database I produced uses an Excel Sheet in which all issues which I have seen are tabulated. This is stored, like the materials Mahnoor collected, securely on MS Teams. Additionally:

- It is organised chronologically, by decade, year, and month.
- It contains details of where we have obtained issues from, their current location, and form, including:
 - Bi-weekly issues from the 1970s which were recently digitised by The Women's Library at the London School of Economics (LSE).
 - Some issues from the 1980s which were lent to me for scanning.
 - Some issues of which we only have photographs (e.g. from the 1980s, supplied by Dubai-based Perviz Masani).
 - Some print issues which remain unscanned because we don't have the physical capacity to scan all of the 1980s volumes.
 - Where to find these and their scanning status is also identified in the Publication Database.

The notes on "scanning status" in the *SHE* database indicate that the project of accruing copies of *SHE* for safe-keeping and digitisation is a complex business: some paper copies remain with their owners, but have not made it to the KBT office yet to be scanned; other borrowed copies are with KBT, but await scanning before being returned. We had limited time and budget to complete the work, and so some remains unfinished.

When it came to the practicalities of digitising magazines, having access to a good scanner was very helpful. I was lucky to have free access to a scanner at the university where I teach, so was able to scan about 20 magazines myself in the first phase of the project. Later, KBT obtained a scanner at their offices, which speeded

up the work, which was then delegated to office staff.

In addition to scanning materials, I also chose to photograph all the covers, content pages and Zuhra Karim's "*SHE* Briefings" (her editorial note) from December 1983 - December 1988 (save 1985, which was missing because the owner of the 1980s editions was out of the country). My aim was to make a quick picture-based record of all the covers so I could easily check what I had obtained for each decade, where the gaps were, and organise them into designated folders. I also needed to have access to images of the articles, layouts, and content pages to formulate my writings and analysis without waiting for the selected

materials (up to 60 pages per magazine) to be scanned and PDF versions created as the scanning had necessarily to take place towards the end of the project.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Month	Year	Volume	No.	Owner/In Possession of	Location of Magazine	How to Access
4	August 14	1970	VIII	5	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
5	September 1	1970	VIII	6	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	SHE Scans and Photos'
6	September 15	1970	vIII	7	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
7	October 1	1970	VIII	8	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	SHE Scans and Photos'
8	October 15	1972	X	10	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
9	March 1	1972	X	18	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
10	May 1&15	1972	X	23&24	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
11	June 1	1972	X	1	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
12	June 15	1972	X	2	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
13	July 1	1972	X	3	LSE Womens Library	LSE & Teeside Unive	Select photographs in 19
14		1980s					
15	December	1983	I	4	Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	SHE Scans and Photos'
16	January	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	SHE Scans and Photos'
17	February	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
18	March	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
19	April	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
20	May	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
21	June	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
22	July	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
23	August	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
24	September	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
25	October	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
26	November	1984	II	3	Pomme Amina Shahbaz Gohar and Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	SHE Scans and Photos'
27	December	1984			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
28	January / Febr	1985			Nabahat Lotia (Assistant Art Editor) & Naheed Yahya (Art Editor)	Personal possession	SHE Scans and Photos'
32	June	1985	II	9	Pomme Amina Shahbaz Gohar (Asst. Editor and Fashion Editor)	Personal possession	SHE Scans and Photos'
38	December	1985	III	III	Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned
39	January	1986			Nabahat Lotia (Assistant Art Editor) & Naheed Yahya (Art Editor)	Personal possession	Borrowed - To be scanned
40	February	1986			Naheed Yahya/Zahra (Art Editor)	Personal possession	To be scanned

Figure 19: Screenshot of SHE Publications Database created by Veera Rustomji, April 2024.

Analysing the *SHE* archive: some key findings

My compilation and analysis of the *SHE* magazine archive, era by era, has so far:

- Considered how stories are indicative of editorial staff's dedication to *SHE*.
- Recognised how interviewees are a key source of information for the 1970s and 80s editions.
- Reflected on how *SHE* briefings reflected the attributes and vision of Zuhra Karim as a businesswoman and feminist (a dynamic identified by Niilofur Farrukh and underscored by LSE Women's Library's interest in tracing Karim's career trajectory).
- Identified connections between *SHE*'s written content and political backdrop to assess its relevance and vitality to readers.
- Noted comparisons between the difficulties feminist audiences deal with today and those previously addressed in *SHE* through various features. The tone and approach of articles focused on women's rights seems slightly sanguine, perhaps, reflecting Zuhra Karim's reluctance to criticise government officials. However, my interviewees all commented on Zuhra's tenacity in balancing a critique of women's rights and status with glamour and commercial viability for the magazine's survival. This is something I would like to explore further in future.
- Identified art sections by Marjorie Husain (a KBT priority for digitisation and analysis), which became a pillar of cultural appreciation in *SHE* during the 2000s.
- Realised how listening to contributors' and editorial board members' experiences can not only provide insight into the life-long friendships which emerged from working on *SHE*, but also guide an approach to creating

an archive. Afterwards, I worked to document and highlight pieces quoted by my interviewees as important in their careers or collaborative efforts: these made them, as they made *SHE*.

- Explored how fashion and advertisement aesthetics – typography, layouts, models, and illustration – were defined by the era of publication and the needs and tastes of women.
- Recognised the extent of the artistic labour needed to produce manual or hand-drawn illustrations and typography. Preserving *SHE* alongside oral evidence of the physical engagement of the Art Directors, Fashion Editors, and their assistants in making the magazine in the 1980s, results in the creation of an archival testament to hand-made production which valorises modes of assembling and printing in a pre-digital era. This is something that tends to get sidelined because we are constantly focused on the meaning of the printed word. However, layout, imagery, font style, photography, and supporting illustrations are, in fact, a form of social art history.
- Noted the inclusion of specific advertisements by businesses, such as Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), producers of fabrics and textiles, and champions of socio-political causes like Prisoners Aid Foundation. These are quite telling of the Editor and her family's business connections (her first husband Omar Kureishi had an important position in PIA and was a cricket commentator); men profiled for the "*SHE* Man" subsections also provided sponsorship and advertisements to the magazine. Their inclusion helped to anchor *SHE*'s social status, although some of the businesses have had somewhat challenging narratives in Pakistani history.

2. How did we scan different types of materials (large, small, colour, fragile) at low cost and to a high quality?

Mahnoor Jalal – Scanning a tightly-bound magazine in colour

An issue that I faced with scanning articles from physical copies of *Paper* was how to do this at a reasonable price and with minimal harm. Each edition was tightly bound and getting a scan of the full page would mean causing slight damage to the spine. Additionally, I wanted to produce colour scans rather than black-and-white photocopies to capture the photographs and artwork printed in *Paper*. At first, I had tried to take photographs to upload, but the quality was mediocre, so I decided to visit the local print shop in my area. There, I was

able to find a professional who was able to scan a complete page without affecting the spine or damaging the magazine overall. Of course, this assistance came at a cost (PKRs 50 per page), which would need to be factored in when budgeting for work on a project like this.



Figure 20: *Paper* Magazine (2012). Photographed by Mahnoor Jalal, March 2024.



Figure 21: *Paper* Magazine (2012). Photographed by Mahnoor Jalal, March 2024.

3. What did we need to think about when borrowing and storing physical materials and handling fragile items?

Veera Rustomji – Handling deteriorating paper editions

After receiving copies of *SHE* from the 1980s to scan from Yahya, Lotia and Gohar, I realised that the physical condition of the paper is in fact very thin and prone to tearing. Even though their owners have kept their collections stored in plastic bags and cardboard boxes, I suspect that 10 to 15 years' more dust and sun exposure could result in serious deterioration. Bearing this in mind, we need to consider incorporating proper archival storage practices into the

current and any future archiving project, including use of acid-free materials by researchers and owners.

I don't think this research project will be anywhere near as useful as it might be, if we do not emphasise the need for updated and accessible knowledge of physical archival storage methods, which can be shared and disseminated through workshops and expert guidance. This is the utmost need of archival research in Pakistan as digitisation may preserve materials electronically, but is not a preventative method: it doesn't safekeep or pave the much-needed way for the sustainable conservation of endangered archives.



Figure 22: *SHE* Magazine (December 1983). Photographed by Madeline Clements, February 2024.

Tazeen Hussain – Capturing *NuktaArt*'s format in scanned form

When I started the task of surveying the contents of the 18 issues of *NuktaArt*, I had anticipated a focus on women and women-related themes. However, my systematic inventory did not reveal a particular emphasis on this. In a subsequent interview, *NuktaArt*'s founders explained that their concern was not specifically with gender representation. Rather, their goal was to establish a critical perspective and discourse around art, including marginalized art practices and artists and offering viewpoints on art which were not western-centric. Although they faced many challenges regarding the business and production side, they wanted to create a high-quality publication with good design and printing quality, factors that increased production costs and posed additional challenges, such as locating good printing facilities in Karachi.

I therefore turned my attention back to the inventory and examined it in light of the goals of the founders of *NuktaArt*.

- I was particularly interested in the *Art@Nukta* section as this allows us to map out an ecosystem of art activity during the 10 years of publication.
- My preference was for local authors or authors of Pakistani origin as their voices and viewpoints need amplification.
- I tried to leave out the essays which are being republished by [The Karachi Collective](#) or have been published by the authors in other forums/publications.
- Inside the pages of *NuktaArt* one can see the many interactions carefully designed to create a tactile engagement for reader. Foldouts for photo essays, postcard-style subscription cards, bookmarks and so forth all added to the *NuktaArt* experience.

Final shape of the *NuktaArt* Archive:

- Covers.
- Editorial notes.

- Table of contents.
- Contributors lists.
- Selected reports from smaller version of *NuktaArt* ("Small Nukta") – *Art@Nukta*.
- Selected articles from large version of *NuktaArt* ("Big Nukta") – essays.
- Design / Promotional material from *NuktaArt*, giveaways, ads, trivia, etc.
- Distribution - Subscription cards and subscription lists.

When creating digital archives from print magazines like *NuktaArt*, one challenge was making the decision as to whether to scan them as double-page spreads or as single pages. A spread is a set of two pages viewed together, just like when you look at a magazine with both pages open and showing.

In *NuktaArt* the design was opulent and visually enticing. Typography often followed across spreads as did the images, binding together theme, text content and visual elements. For Sabiha Imani, the designer, *NuktaArt* was also a labour of love, with little money for her efforts. Scanning the magazine spreads would enable me to capture some of the design aspect which was so central to the experience of *NuktaArt*. However, that also required a scanner which could cope with a size larger than even A3, and so would prove costly and time consuming. In the end, we – myself and my mentor, Niilofur – settled on [CamScanner](#), a mobile app for scanning single pages.

Another issue that came up was that *NuktaArt* is staple-bound thick volume and the pages are not flat, so the scanning surface remains bent and therefore scans do not yield ideal results. Taking copies apart for scanning might have been an option. However, we did not opt for that as it would have been more time-consuming and require special handling by a professional. In projects which are image and colour heavy, scanning jobs require trained people who can understand scanner

settings, to enable closest possible reproduction of images and colours. Due to financial constraints, we could only dedicate a KBT staff member to work part-time on scanning the required documents to the best of his capacity.

The resulting *NuktaArt* scans followed a single-page scroll-up format which does not do justice to the design aspect. Due to this limitation, I chose to exclude some material (such as photo-essays and photographic catalogues including one of vintage posters of Pakistani Films from the collection of Citizens' Archive of Pakistan (CAP) beautifully set in a fold-out format spread across four pages), which was a great loss in my opinion.



Figure 23: Example of Foldout layout “Sunehray Sapnay: Pakistani Cinema in the 1960’s - Shanakht Festival 2009” in *NuktaArt*, Volume 5: One (2010).). Video and photograph courtesy of Tazeen Hussain, November 2024.



4. What interpersonal skills were important for maintaining trust and access?

Veera Rustomji – the importance of attentiveness and careful communication

When conducting interviews for *SHE*, I found that most of the women knew each other, and I made my way through the research as each one referred me to the next interviewee. In this situation, Naheed Yahya was very helpful and opened access to all contacts and references she had for *SHE*. Perviz Masani in Dubai was also pivotal in getting the research started by connecting me to Angeline Francis, the secretary for *SHE* during the early 2000s. Communication skills required to obtain a good reference from interviewees include:

1. Realising that you are indebted to the interviewee: we are not paying them for their time, and so need to acknowledge and show appreciation of their work, which may often have gone forgotten and unrecorded. This is essential in laying the foundation of trust.
2. Being aware of mental and physical boundaries: I had to conduct interviews within people's private homes and was contacting and visiting them outside of usual working hours. Showing gratitude and acknowledging that it is a privilege to be permitted to enter someone's private life is crucial.
3. Recognising the importance just of really listening to an interviewee. As researchers, we usually have many questions to ask, but it is much more important to set these aside, gauge what the interviewee wants to say, and then reflect carefully on the implications when it comes to selecting articles and evaluating the significance of the magazines' contents.

4. As important as it is to listen and be the person who talks the least in the room, it is also important to be fully alert 100% of the time and responsive to what the interviewee is saying. Go with the flow of conversation but also encourage them to share whatever they want by ensuring that, yes, you are interested, and you want to very much listen to whatever they bring forward.

Mahnoor Jalal – interviewing by email, and in person

When I was preparing to interview Meher (and hopefully Samina) regarding their vision for *Paper*, I looked up on the internet to see if there were any previous interviews they had given for some insight. After a quick scan, I found out that most of the interviews they had given were related to fashion opinions – and very little about the magazine. To prepare my questions, I had first gone through all 9 magazines to pinpoint the pieces I was interested in asking Meher about. My questions focused on the vision behind *Paper*, what was the experience like running a women-centred magazine during a time of censorship and sexism, and how did she respond to backlash certain pieces had faced. In this instance, I preferred sending the questions via email rather than having a face-to-face interaction, because past experience has taught me that it is better to keep a track of all your interactions in case there is any doubt about editing or clarity.

I had also had the opportunity to get a meeting with Ms Nighat Saeed Khan: since she was one of the core founders of WAF, she could provide some essential insight into what went behind the creation of the newsletters. Prior to reaching out to her, I spoke with my friend Leena Ghani, who advised me that I had a better chance of speaking to Ms Nighat if I visited her at her house as she might be too busy with looming deadlines to speak on the phone.

I believe that the essential traits of a good interview are sticking to the process that interviewee feels comfortable with, so there is some trust built between you. So, I visited Ms Nighat at her house and prepared a set of questions beforehand while going through the newsletters. I kept a journal and pen with me and wrote down everything she said, which I later edited and uploaded.

Tazeen Hussain – group vs individual interviews

I was lucky to have access to all four founders, three of whom were also the main writers in the magazine, and the fourth of whom was the designer. Their views on perception change would be a great help when it came to identifying important materials to include in the archive. However, I made a conscious decision to schedule my interviews with them towards the latter half of the research, after I had carried out my survey and selection of contents. My aim was to ensure my selection remained independent of their own ideas and orientations concerning what was most significant about the magazine's contribution to art discourse.

Before interviewing them, I had read an interview with the *NuktaArt* founders published on another online platform. This helped me identify themes to explore further with them. However, often interviewees will repeat the information from a previous interview. Familiarizing yourself with these in advance can help you prepare questions which might initiate a deeper engagement. This said, sometimes it is difficult to steer conversations, and so having a follow-up question may help. In my case I moved from a collective, group interview to individual interviews with all the founders, where I further explored themes related to their personal roles in *NuktaArt* and individual motivations. These proved very insightful as, like Veera's interviews with *SHE* contributors, they revealed aspects of the personalities involved and how that

shaped *NuktaArt*, while also helping me to identify possible content I had initially missed.

Thus, we can say that while it is important to be aware of the different needs and priorities of those commissioning research which leads to the creation of new archives, speaking to those at the heart of a magazine's production will furnish rich insights contents and context, which can in turn lead an enriched, multi-layered archive which extends far beyond the individual researcher's personal biases.

5: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



1. Noting the Courage of Women Editors

Nilofur Farrukh, PAWPE Co-Founder and Co-Founder, Karachi Biennale Trust

The discussion with the researchers during the archives project was always interesting as their enthusiasm and curiosity raised questions critical to the process. In this notebook, there are two aspects that I feel need to be emphasized. The courage of these women editors and publishers who navigated a hostile terrain where censorship became worse from late 1976 onwards and all the print media came under heavy scrutiny. Under this constant treat to freedom of expression they found a way to continue to create a print forum for free speech. As that attack on women's rights mounted, with the introduction of the Hudood ordinances and the increase in social pressures as society became more and more intolerant of women in public spaces, these professional women continued to be true to their commitment as editors and publishers.

2. Emphasizing the Value of Tracing Creative Itineraries

Mehvash Amin, PAWPE Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief, *The Aleph Review*

For me personally, it was an exciting endeavour to be involved with Madeline Clements of Teesside University, Nilofur Farukh—Founder Managing Trustee of the Karachi Biennale Trust and CEO of the Biennale—and the four wonderful researchers—Hira Azmat, Mahnoor Jalal, Tazeen Hussain and Veera Rustomji—to embark on the process of archiving some material from four now now-defunct publications. I am publisher and editor in chief of *The Aleph Review*, a literary and art journal. This always includes an archive section, where we try to trace some aspect of the itinerary of a poet, artist or author who has passed away. The idea is to preserve a facet of work for posterity and for researchers. But this project taught me just how much work is involved in actual archiving. Although the lion's share was done by the girls and Madeline, Nilofur and I stayed with them on their journey, and

the former enabled a wonderful session on 'Editing Women in the Archives' in the 2024 iteration of the Karachi Biennale. In the future, I hope this archiving initiative continues. *The Aleph Review* is publishing an article on the process by Madeline Clements in its upcoming 9th volume, and we hope to also add a link to this digital handbook, as well as find sponsors to publish it, making it accessible to future generations of creatives.

3. Work Still to Do

Madeline Clements, PAWPE Co-Founder and Senior Lecturer in English Studies, Teesside University, UK

It is difficult to write a "conclusion" to a handbook like this, as this project is unfinished, and the task of archiving women-edited literary, lifestyle and art publications far too vast for one small team to achieve alone.

The reflections of Hira, Mahnoor, Tazeen and Veera emphasise the challenges they have faced, but also the awareness they've cultivated and the innovative strategies and solutions that they have evolved, when setting out to conduct archival work into at-risk publications in Lahore and Karachi. Their work has created a body of materials which we are excited to make accessible.

So, what can and will we do? We can share this Handbook, with the aim of offering future contributors to such a project some – hopefully helpful – practice-based insights into the process of doing this work. We can hope to inspire readers with snapshots of the kinds of material discovered and conversations conducted in private homes, libraries and research centres in Lahore and Karachi by the women undertaking this research. We – myself, Niilofur, and Mehvash included – can provide support and guidance, via PAWPE, to any future archival contributor or user who wants to seek it. Hopefully our researchers can do this, too.

We still have work to do in collecting and sharing insights in more broadly. Plans are afoot to publish articles on the Simorgh, *Paper*, *SHE* and *NuktaArt* archives in *The Aleph Review* in the Summer/Autumn of 2025. We are in the process of designing a website linked to via the Karachi Biennale Trust and *The Aleph Review* sites, which will preserve the archival materials in digitised form: scanned copies, contextualising photographs and videos, and (extracts) from interviews with significant contributors to the historic publications on which we have worked. We also aim to make this a space where users can comment, reflect on, and interact with materials in creative ways. As mentioned, we hope this will be a resource that can grow, contributing to the expansion of the historical record, igniting entrepreneurial ambition when it comes to publishing and editing, and inspiring creative imaginations.

Thank you for taking the time to read and be part of it.

Getting in Contact: Your Views Matter

If you would like to get in contact to share your thoughts on the handbook and archives project, we'd love to hear from you. Please scan the QR code below and complete the short feedback form with your valuable views.



To find out more about the project and PAWPE, please visit our website by scanning this second QR Code.



Alternatively, you can just send an email to Madeline at m.a.c.clements@tees.ac.uk

APPENDIX 1

DIRECTORY OF PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES IDENTIFIED BY RESEARCHERS THROUGH THE PROJECT

Libraries, Publication & Resource Centres, Groups, and Digital Archives



Academy Bazyaft ⓘ
Group · 184 members

Academy Bazyaft (What's App group sharing book news and fielding enquiries about publications and resources in English/Urdu).

Aurat Foundation (publication and information service): <https://www.af.org.pk/index.php>

Asia Art Archive (collections of material on the recent history of art from Asia): <https://aaa.org.hk/en>

The Citizens Archive of Pakistan (organisation dedicated to cultural and historical preservation of South Asian history): <https://citizensarchive.org/>

Dyal Singh Trust Library (some old periodicals/newspapers): <https://etpb.gov.pk/dyal-singh-trust-library/>

The International Centre for Pakistani Writing in English (ICPWE), Kinnaird College University for Women, Lahore: <https://icpwe.kinnaird.edu.pk/>

The Karachi Collective (platform aimed at propelling and documenting research on art): <https://thekarachicollective.com/>

Karachi University Department of Visual Studies Library: https://www.uok.edu.pk/faculties/visualstudies/ LUMS Digital Archive: https://archive.lums.edu.pk/ (includes pages on The Women's Action Forum: https://archive.lums.edu.pk/interactives/womens-action-forum/home) Print Archive Pakistan (archive dedicated to documenting and preserving Pakistan's history through print media): https://www.instagram.com/printarchivepakistan/ Punjab Public Library (houses old magazines): https://gppl.punjab.gov.pk/ Saida Waheed Gender Initiative (SWG I) at LUMS (building a National Women's Archive) https://swgi.lums.edu.pk/	<i>"I had helped set up the British Council Libraries in Pakistan, and as such, had visited many libraries throughout Pakistan, both public and private. But somehow, I had never visited this particular library [Punjab Public Library] before and I was frankly blown away by it. It is an oasis in the heart of bustling, loud, commercial Lahore: a quiet 16th century building with Mughal frescoes with people lounging quietly and reading. I have no idea how I didn't know of its existence before this.</i> <i>I went and introduced myself to the librarian on duty Mr Aqeel Ahmed Rizvi, who directed me to the room with the magazines. I told him what I was looking for (women-led Pakistani magazines that are no longer in print) but he said that while they had lots of magazines that were now out of print, he wasn't aware of any women-led ones specifically, and I should explore myself. I was pleasantly surprised by how polite the staff was, and open to queries, given my general experience with Pakistani men in government institutions.</i> <i>The library has an entire room dedicated to old magazines: five shelves, front and back. Some of the material dates back to the 1800s, and much of it is mildewed and falling apart. Most of the magazines are foreign (e.g. the National Geographic, British Book News, Edinburgh Review, Scientific American etc) but I spotted local magazines such as The Herald as well. There seemed to be a lot of publications from the British Raj era as well, including legislative assembly debates, the Calcutta Review, and the Indian Annual Register."</i> Hira Azmat – Reflective Diary
Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, Lahore (historical archives pertaining to women's and minorities' rights and laws from Pakistan's early years): https://shirkatgah.org/ Simorgh Women's Resource and Publications Centre, Lahore: https://simorgh.org.pk/ VM Art Gallery Resource Centre, Rangoonwala Centre, Karachi (houses archives serving as a site for research and study into Pakistani Art History): https://vmartgallery.org/	Women's Action Forum website (has newsletters): https://womensactionforumlahore.org/ The Women's Library, London School of Economics (has copies of <i>SHE</i> in print and digitised format): https://www.lse.ac.uk/library/collection-highlights/the-womens-library

Magazines and art publications aimed at / edited by women

Akhbar-e-Khawateen and *Akhbar-e-Jahan* (women's magazines in Urdu; holdings in National Archives of Pakistan from late 1960s - mid-1990s:

<https://studylib.net/doc/7839993/newspaper-and-periodicals---national-archives-of-pakistan>).

ASR (Applied Socio-Economic Resource Centre, founded by Nighat Saeed Khan, archives recently donated to LUMS, see: <https://lums.edu.pk/news/archives-preserving-history-women-pakistan-behoused-lums>).

Harem (Urdu magazine, c. 1970).



Figure 24: *Harem*, November 1971, provided by Mahnaz Rehman, photo by Veera Rustomji, February 2024.

Libas (fashion / lifestyle magazine edited by Sehry Saigol c. 1980s).

The Mirror (founder and editor Zaib-un-Nissa Hamidullah, 1951-1972).

Niche Magazine (lifestyle magazine, founded c. 2008: <https://niche.com.pk>).

Nigaah Art (art magazine, founded by Tauqeer Muhajir: <https://www.nigaahart.com.pk/index.html>).

NuktaArt (co-founded by Nilofur Farrukh, Rumana Husain and Amra Ali, 2005-2013).

Paper Magazine (co-founded and edited by Meher Tareen and Samina Khan, 2010-2013).

SHE (founded by Zuhra Karim, 1963-2020).

SHE Urdu (c. 1980s).

Theera (bilingual art magazine, founded by Subaita R Khan).

Women's Own

"So when one door is closed, you look for the next one and surprisingly I came across one this weekend. I decided to work all weekend at the office, and took a small break by waddling to the archive room where we stored all the old editions of Niche Magazine. A friend of mine, who also worked here, told me that Niche used to primarily have a social/fashion and art angle back in 2014 when it first started. Sparked with curiosity, I began closely inspecting all the old copies and going through the contents, and did find out that there was originally a section called 'Art Life' which included interviews of up and coming artists in Pakistan. During our meeting on Tuesday, I shared this revelation with Professor Madeline and Nilofur, since the magazine did meet our criteria of having an all women editorial board, along with the art angle..."

I do remember why Niche chose to completely abandon the focus on social issues and art, because my senior editor told me it was because of low readership, that they decided to focus entirely on fashion and celebrity events."

Mahnoor Jalal, Reflective Diary

APPENDIX 2

SHE CONNECTIONS LIST (COURTESY OF VEERA RUSTOMJI)

Below is a list of connections and persons providing them in chronological order:

Perviz Masani:
(Feb-March 2024)

- Angeline Francis: secretary for *SHE* who worked at the office for 19 years (she provided 6 issues and multiple food-related articles (recipes and restaurant reviews) from *SHE* which were torn from the magazines she collected).
- Bobby/Masood Sheikh: the last owner of *SHE* and Zuhra Karim’s son’s father-in-law, who lived with Zuhra Karim in Dubai during her last years. Most interviewees have linked a change in *SHE*’s quality and content with this switch of ownership (no response).

Dr. Asma Mundrawala
(Feb 2024)

- Naheed Zahra Yahya, Art Editor and Senior Art Editor for *SHE* during the 1980s (She taught me in 2012 during my undergraduate studies and I already had her contact number. She is later referred to in this handbook as Yahya).

Naheed Yahya
(Feb–April 2024)

- Pomme Amina Shahbaz Gohar: *SHE*'s first Fashion Editor, later referred to as Gohar. Gohar frequently worked on “Fashion Hotline” pages and collaborated closely with Bilquis Nasarullah, Senior Fashion Editor and Fashion and Business Consultant for *SHE* in the 1970s and 1980s. Nasarullah was Karim's sister-in-law from her first marriage to Omar Kureishi, a well-known cricket commentator and writer for *Pakistan Standard* who headed PIA's Public Affairs department from the 1960s to the 1980s.
- Nighat Gaya Bajwa: Editorial Staff, based in London and later referred to as Gaya.
- Nabahat Lotia: Assistant Art Editor for *SHE*. Later referred to as Lotia.
- Sabahat Zheej: Nabahat Lotia's sister from Lahore and New York, an early subscriber to *SHE* in the 1960s.

Naazish Ata Ullah
(March 2024)

- Moneeza Hashmi: Editorial Staff, Alys Faiz's younger daughter and Lahore correspondent for *SHE*.
- Khawar Mumtaz: former *SHE* model in the 1960s and contributing writer in the 1980s. Also an active women's rights activist.
- Kausar Khan: sister of Khawar Mumtaz and former Women's Action Forum (WAF) member; editor at *SHE* for just two months.
- Salima Hashmi: a well-established artist, Alys Faiz's elder daughter.

Moneeza Hashmi:
(April 2024)

- Nyla Daud: writer who first started as Editorial Assistant for Moneeza Hashmi as correspondent for *SHE* from Lahore. Continued to write for *SHE* into the 1990s.

Gillan Murphy,
The Women's Library,
London School of
Economics (April 2024)

- Razestha Sethna: Editorial Staff for *SHE* in the 1990s or early 2000s. Sethna went to school with Ayesha Karim, Zuhra Karim's daughter (no response).

Niilofur Farrukh:
(Feb–March 2024)

- Mahnaz Rehman: Resident Director of Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation, one-off contributing writer for *SHE* Urdu and *Harem* magazine.
- Shamim Akhtar (no response).
- Zohra Yusuf: contributing writer for *SHE* and Editor of *The Star*, and WAF member. Yusuf subscribed to *SHE* in the 1960s and 1970s. She later wrote an article on Zuhra Karim. Referred to as Yusuf.
- Saira Sultan: Editorial Staff at *SHE*, connected but did not want to speak and was not able to provide access to issues of *SHE*.
- Uzma (last name not known, no response).

Zohra Yusuf:
(April 2024)

- Ghazala Adhami/Ahmed: Assistant Editor for *SHE* in the 1970s (did not respond)
- Javed Jabbar: Assistant Editor from 1966–1968 and contributing writer for *SHE* in the 1970s and 1980s. Initial contact met with positivity, but no follow-up regarding copies from the 1960s.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS



Figure 25: Mehvash Amin.
Photo courtesy of
Mehvash Amin.

Mehvash Amin is publisher and editor in chief of *The Aleph Review*, a print art and literature journal with a concurrent website (www.thealephreview.com). Her publishing house, Broken Leg Publications, has currently published two works besides *Aleph*, of which there are eight volumes. She is a Pushcart-nominated poet whose works have appeared in various international journals and anthologies, and a member of The Taufiq Rafat Foundation, founded by the family of the Pakistani poet to perpetuate his legacy. She is also a member of PAWPE (Pakistan Association of Women Publishers and Editors).



Figure 26: Hira Azmat.
Photo courtesy of
Hira Azmat.

Hira Azmat is a writer, editor, and a Pushcart Prize nominated poet. She has been working in the cultural industries in Pakistan for over a decade, as a curator of cultural spaces, and as an international arts manager. She is interested in arts and culture, movements and subcultures, literature and good design. She is currently working as Features Editor at *Dunya Digital*, Poetry Editor at SAAG, and as a freelance communications consultant. She can be reached at hira.azmat@gmail.com.



Figure 27: Madeline Clements. Photo courtesy of Karachi Biennale Trust.

Madeline Clements is Senior Lecturer in English Studies at Teesside University, UK. Her research investigates the intersection of contemporary Pakistani cultural forms with questions of minority rights and representation. She is the author of *Writing Islam from a South Asian Muslim Perspective* (2015), and articles on contemporary visual art, life writing and fiction from Pakistan. She is currently Principal Investigator on the AHRC-funded research network *World Making Words: Connecting women's literary agency, activism and enterprise*. In 2022, with Sadia Akhtar and Maham Khan, she organised the *Editing Women* workshop, which led to the foundation of the Pakistan Association of Women Publishers and Editors collective.

<https://research.tees.ac.uk/en/persons/madeline-clements>.



Figure 28: Niilofur Farrukh. Photo courtesy of Niilofur Farrukh.

Niilofur Farrukh is a Karachi-based art interventionist whose work has expanded the space for art publication, curation and public art in Pakistan. She has three books to her credit, the most recent being *A Beautiful Despair: The Art and Life Of Meher Afroz*. Niilofur co-founded *NuktaArt*, Pakistan's Contemporary Art Magazine and was its founding editor for 10 years. She has served two terms as Vice-President on the Board of the International Art Critics Association and is the current chair of the Censorship Committee. In 2023, Niilofur joined the jury of the Shanghai-based International Public Art Prize. She is a Founder of Karachi Biennale Trust, has been its Managing Trustee since 2016, and was CEO of Karachi Biennale (www.karachibiennale.org.pk).



Figure 29: Tazeen Hussain. Photo courtesy of Tazeen Hussain.

Tazeen Hussain is an Associate Professor of Practice, Communication and Design, Habib University, and Actor. Her interests include the re-examination of design education in relation to its socio-political impact, environment, and sustainability in Pakistan. Her projects include Critical Design Education and Practice, funded by US-Pakistan University Partnerships Grants Program with IVS; Karachi Art Directory with Karachi Biennale Trust; and Imparting education on Climate Change to vulnerable communities, funded by UN GRIP with Indus Earth Trust. She is a founder member of The Karachi Collective and has published her research nationally and internationally. In addition, Tazeen is Chair of Design, ADA Awards (4th cycle), Advisory Board member, Gandhara Film Festival and on the Board of Studies for design institutions across Pakistan. She also works as an actor and voiceover artist.



Figure 30: Mahnoor Jalal.
Photograph courtesy of
Mahnoor Jalal.

Mahnoor Jalal is a researcher, journalist, and social media strategist from Lahore. She holds a BA degree in Liberal Arts from Beaconhouse National University (BNU). She has been working with some of the leading digital platforms for the past four years such as *The Current*, and *Niche Lifestyle*, where she covered various topics ranging from human rights causes and gender-based violence to culture and education. Her research interests focus on feminist revolutions, media censorship, queer theory, and South Asian history.



Figure 31: Veera Rustomji,
photo courtesy of
Veera Rustomji.

Veera Rustomji is a Karachi-based artist. She holds a BFA from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS) and an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts, London. Her practice takes reference from stories and archives creating scenarios that deal with gender, geographical power structures and religious iconography. Veera has extensively researched the multidimensional nature of Zoroastrian migration stories, comparing them with archaeological studies. She has been the recipient of the UAL Postgraduate International Scholarship Award (2019) and Mead Fellowship (2021-2022), and collaborated with the Citizens Archive of Pakistan, the Maritime Archaeology and Heritage Institute, Karachi Biennale Trust, and Vasl Artists' Association. Veera teaches at IVS and is co-director of the Urban Repository Archive housed at its Fine Art Department and supported by Art South Asia Project.



Figure 32: Hira Azmat, Tazeen Hussain, Veera Rustomji, and Mahnoor Jalal at our archiving event during the Karachi Biennale Discursive Weekend, November 2024. Photo courtesy Mehvash Amin.

