

**Where was the river?**

**Tell me, so I can make this map.**

**Where else?**

**The river flowed from this point to there.**

**Where else?**

**From here another channel?**

**A stream.**

**From here?**

**Yes, from here.**

**All the way till Mul creek.**

**Yes, till Mul.**

**Now tell me, where was your village?**

**My village was here.**

**Here.**

**And where was the shrine?**

**The shrine is here.**

**Over here.**

**Sharks would swim here?**

**Giant sharks came here.**

**Saint Sanwlo would walk out into the river.**

**Right, mother?**

**Yes he would take the form of a shark.**

**Now tell me, is this area still around,  
or has it changed completely?**

**No, the last time I went to Mul creek**

**I saw that it had all vanished away.**

**Disappeared completely.**

**These graves too.**

**The graves disappeared into the sea too.**

**The sea swallowed them.**

**So this whole area is destroyed?**

**It's all finished.**

**So, all that remains here now**

**is Saint Sanwlo's shrine.**

**Yes.**

**Whatever was here**

**has been destroyed, right mother?**

**Yes, its all destroyed.**

**The streams, homes and jungles, the sea took it all.**

**Only this shrine remains.**

**And some of the graves initially.**

**But even these graves descended into the sea.**

**The sea swallowed them one by one...**

**The graves of our fathers and their fathers...**

**Only the shrine is remaining.**

**Everything else...**

**Villages, homes and even jungles were swallowed up.**

**See, this is the work of nature and God.**

**How only the shrine remains.**

**Only Saint Sanwlo, he is the one who saved this land.**

**All else was swallowed up.**

**Is this not a sign of the mercy of the Almighty?**

**The shrine itself is a sign.**

**Every year, a festival is still held at the shrine.**

**Our relationship with the sea and the river is ancient.**

**In Sindhi indigenous means maqami.**

**Maqam means 'grave'**

**and maqami means 'people with graves'.**

**Our entire identity is linked with**

**the presence of graves and shrines.**

**Ever since dams and barrages were made,  
our graves, our settlements, our area,  
everything the sea has swallowed.**

**When I see these murals, these lines,  
these houses, the river...**

**I feel as if we are living inside the paintings.**

**The land is alive again.**

**Without these paintings,**

**I feel we are walking empty-handed by the riverbank.**

**All alone.**

**As the manifest world reaches its limit,**

**it is now through painting and drawing**

**that our relationship with our saints**

**and shrines still flourishes.**

**And when I see these paintings,**

**I feel as if I am walking in my land again.**

**My homeland looks beautiful, feels complete.**

**Our original village feels exactly the same as before.**

**The boats are floating.**

**People are living.**

**Without them, all of this is absence.**

**Only the shrine's paintings**

**bring light and presence.**

**I am in search of that secret,**

**that map,**

**which my ancestors knew to be**

**the art of making prayer talismans.**

**Through which, they said,**

**lost things could be found.**

**Elders say that the tradition of drawing is very ancient.**

**When Allah expelled Prophet Adam**

**and Bibi Hawa from the heavens,**

**he descended them in separate corners of the earth.**

**Distraught and grief stricken, Adam prayed for God's mercy.**

**One day, Archangel Gabriel appeared to Adam**

**bearing a gift from God.**

**It was the gift of Ilm ul-Raml:**

**the knowledge of the dot and the line.**

**Gabriel drew four dots in the sand with his fingers,**

**and asked Prophet Adam to repeat this drawing.**

**He explained to Adam that these dots**

**hold within them all mysteries of the universe.**

**Gabriel then drew four lines between the dots**

**and told Adam that**

**drawing is a spiritual practice.**

**"Remember, it is a way of returning to the Beloved."**

**It is through the dot and the line that**

**Prophet Adam apprehends the entire cosmos,**

**and finds his way back to Hawa.**

**Through Ilm ul-Raml,**

**Adam finally understands**

**what it is to know,**

**what it is to remember,**

**what it is to love,**

**what it is to protect.**

**There, in the Delta,**

**were the homes of our ancestors,**

**the boats,**

**those waters,**

**those trees,**

**those boatmen.**

**Through this talisman, I want to**

**form a relationship with that landscape again.**

**So that I can feel I am living inside that life.**

**With the help of painting,**

**the shrines that we have seen and witnessed,**

**we bring them to life through images and paintings,**

**to show them to others.**

**So that they can know that all these shrines**

**are still present in the creeks.**

**From here, turning like this,**

**the sea will cut and swallow all this land,**

**making a small island out of it.**

**The next time I paint this,**

**the sea will have swallowed all this green land.**

**Only a small island in the center will remain.**

**After the people fled, their homes were destroyed too.**

**After that, here, at the shrine of Saint Qasim Shah  
a few flags remained, while all else was washed away.**

**These flags, this shrine, remain protected and  
guarded.**

**This bank, by God's grace, expanded forward.**

**The sea did not touch this land.**

**But everything else is swallowed by the sea.**

**A river is like a blessing from God.**

**Whether you are a fisherman or come from far,  
the river's sight fills everyone with joy.**

**A river is one such image from God  
that every human being has a desire to see the river.**

**Whether it is a fisherfolk or a city dweller,**

**or a visitor from another country,**

**whether it is an old man or a child,**

**everyone wants to see the river.**

**God has made the river such a site of beauty!**

**So, us painters, through color,**

**we are able to show people**

**the past flows and lives of the river.**