

The Wealth of Pakistan

By Sharon Hawley

*Had I the heaven's embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet.*

W. B. Yeats

A poor man, a poet
with only dreams
spreads them down
beneath his lover's feet
urging gently:

*Tread softly because
you tread on my dreams*

Impoverished poets and billionaires
equal under dreamy dots
all rich with starry nights

Town comes dark around him
but diamond bright above
he walks a moonless path
in a park called Pahari Chock

His town is called Faisalabad
the size of Pasadena
noctivagant, a nighttime walker
gazing up as much as down

Less able to pollute the night
with artificial light, for him
blue-dim embroidery
sets in silent silver Milky Way

While any park in Pasadena
blots out the sky with comfort
For me the wealth is mostly stolen
swept away in electric haze

His, the flame of cavemen
paintings of the gods and myths
ever since sparks of consciousness
ignited human brains

For him their light still flares
he stares with ancient eyes
ponders mathematics
myth and science from the source

while from my brightly lighted street
I read them from my books
Faisalabad is brighter, richer
studded diamond in the night