

MAZAR TILE WORKSHOP

Report on visit by SPACH representative Robert Kluyver on Wednesday 19 April

Working procedure

- The mud comes from the Dasht-e Shadiyan
 - It is mixed with water
 - and put in a wooden form (many different ones exist) -
 - It is left to dry 2 to 5 days out of the sun.
 - And then polished and trimmed/cropped to conform to an exact measure -
 - Then it is fired in a furnace heated by *chinar* wood (plane-tree; no smoke) for ten hours
 - A regular form is made by shaking ink powder through a piece of paper with a pattern on it (small holes), then with blackish paint the form is completed. There are some 750 different forms on the Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa shrine alone.
 - The surfaces are painted also, by mixing water with different metals:
 - Lapis lazuli from Germany
 - Maghl (Bdellium) is used to make the blackish paint
 - Glass (shishe)
 - Copper (mis)
 - Iron (ahan) and lead (sorb)
- With these elements they make 6-7 colours.
- Then they bake it again in the furnace for 18 hours at about 2000 degrees Celsius

Main problems encountered:

- Lack of market development
- The furnace is old and it's difficult to keep the temperature at a right and constant level, causing many losses among the pieces

Self-sustainability

- The tiles are sold at 30 to 50\$ per square meter. Orders at present are few, but there is a large potential market, if restoration projects are funded. There is only one other traditional tile workshop in the country, at Herat, that currently is very successful. Participating in highly visible restoration projects might also open up the private market.
- The workshop also produces all kinds of cups, vases, jugs, ashtrays, candleholders etc. which they can (and do) commercialise locally. Quality of the products is rather low because of the bad furnace.

Project description: place a big order, monitor the working methods, have the director of the Herat Tile Workshop come over and exchange experiences, counsel for upgrades, including the furnace.

In order to make the Mazar Tile Workshop fully operational it would need a good furnace, money to buy some equipment and ingredients (such as lapis lazuli) and money for salaries. The intention is to make the Workshop self-sustaining after one year.

Budget:	Furnace	3,000.00 \$
	Working instruments	1,500.00 \$
	Lapis Lazuli and raw materials	1,000.00 \$
	Salaries for teachers 150\$ pp x 3	5,400.00 \$
	Apprentice fees 50\$ pp x 12	7,200.00 \$
Total		18,100.00 \$