GENETIC MEMORY

A memory present at birth that exists in the absence of sensory experience and is incorporated into the genome over long spans of time

Rodolfo R Llinas, I of the Vortex: From Neurons to self, 2001
• Need for **contact with nature**

• Desire to **be with people**

• Preference for **handmade** products & **local material**

• Longing for **blending-in & aspiration for personalization**

• Being at ease in human **scale of spaces**
A fluid landscape ...
NEED FOR CONTACT WITH NATURE
why not intimidated by the unfamiliar setting?

why this affinity to nature?
A person from a cold climate, who is used to be protected from nature, is instantly drawn to a tropical island where indoors cannot be separated from the outdoors.
picture window

where nature is enjoyed like a picture from the protected comfort of the warm indoors
Is it because for thousands of years we the human race have evolved in nature?

Our **intimacy with nature** has been for too long a period to be ignored or disassociated.
DESIRE TO BE WITH PEOPLE
PREFERENCE FOR HANDMADE PRODUCTS & LOCAL MATERIALS
We notice amongst people, irrespective of our geographical location, a general visual and tactile bias towards products where we can feel **a human touch**. Whether the product is an item of clothing; furniture; a household item we use every day or something we put in our homes to satisfy our aesthetic desires, we put more value on products that have **a human behind its creation**.
All forms of Art are valued the most.

Art, thankfully till now, cannot be factory produced.
Machine made mass-produced products, generally do not attract us to that extent even if the quality is better and price cheaper.

Mass produced items do not carry with them the story behind their creation. The perfections make them sterile.
Why do we inherently carry this prejudice?

Can we explain this apparently illogical preference by our genetic memory which passed through ages when we were exposed to hand made products only?

Nature has its informal order and deep inside each of us that is what we crave for, not a manicured sterile environment.
We often see industry trying to mimic nature in its products to cater for this inherent demand within people.
Handmade buildings have become impractical; expensive and therefore, are no longer feasible in most developed countries in the world.

But we should not forget that this a “practical” compromise, and should not celebrate this compromise and take any opportunity afforded to us to keep the surfaces less sterile with the view that there will be comfort in it for the beholder.
In addition to our preferences for natural materials, we seem to also prefer materials which are readily from nature in the region. Spaces created with such materials feel soothing to our nerves. And generally, since natural materials are matt finish in raw state and enriched with imperfection we tend not to have long term liking for factory-produced glossy materials.
LONGING FOR BLENDING-IN & ASPIRATION FOR PERSONALIZATION
Two contradicting requirements both of which, we feel comfortable with:

In a setting where a design scheme blends in with its neighbouring development so that the overall experience becomes a comfortable whole, but again, we want to personalize our space, give it an identity of its own.
We are at ease with a piece of music where there are repetitions and few or no shocking surprises. We believe this desire is also imprinted in our genetic memory.
Typical Bangladeshi village huts
Personalization within Rules
Loud and dissimilar but still pleasing?
Nearly identical homes in a neighborhood.
While designing, we should allow in the design, certain areas for individual personalization, just as we as designers would prefer laws that allow individual freedom to be creative.
Personalization: Individual mark left as cave paintings to give identity.
BEING AT EASE IN
HUMAN SCALE OF SPACES
“This environment is the result of vernacular architecture.”
A British officer's Mess, Dhaka (1934)
Shahbagh-The Darbar Hall-now Modhur Canteen 1903
Bank of Bengal at Shahbagh-first Euro Bank-now Dhaka Club
Adamjee Jute Mill, Narayanganj (1957)
Contact With Nature
Contact with people
Hand made
Human Scale
CENTRAL LIBRARY BUILDING, DHAKA UNIVERSITY
MUZHARUL ISLAM
Residence for Gen. Osmani, Ar. Mazharul Islam
Jaipurhut Housing, Ar. Mazharul Islam
Own residence, Ar. Bashirul
Govinda Gunalanker, Chittagong, Diagram Architects
Nishorgo, Vitti Sthapoti Brindo
Office Café at Gulshan, Ar. Salauddin Ahmed
Mr. Karim Residence, Ar. Salauddin Ahmed
School cum Cyclone shelter, BRAC and UNDP
Café Mango, Architect Salauddin Ahmed
Two storied mud houses, Anna Heringer and Team
Response and responsibility