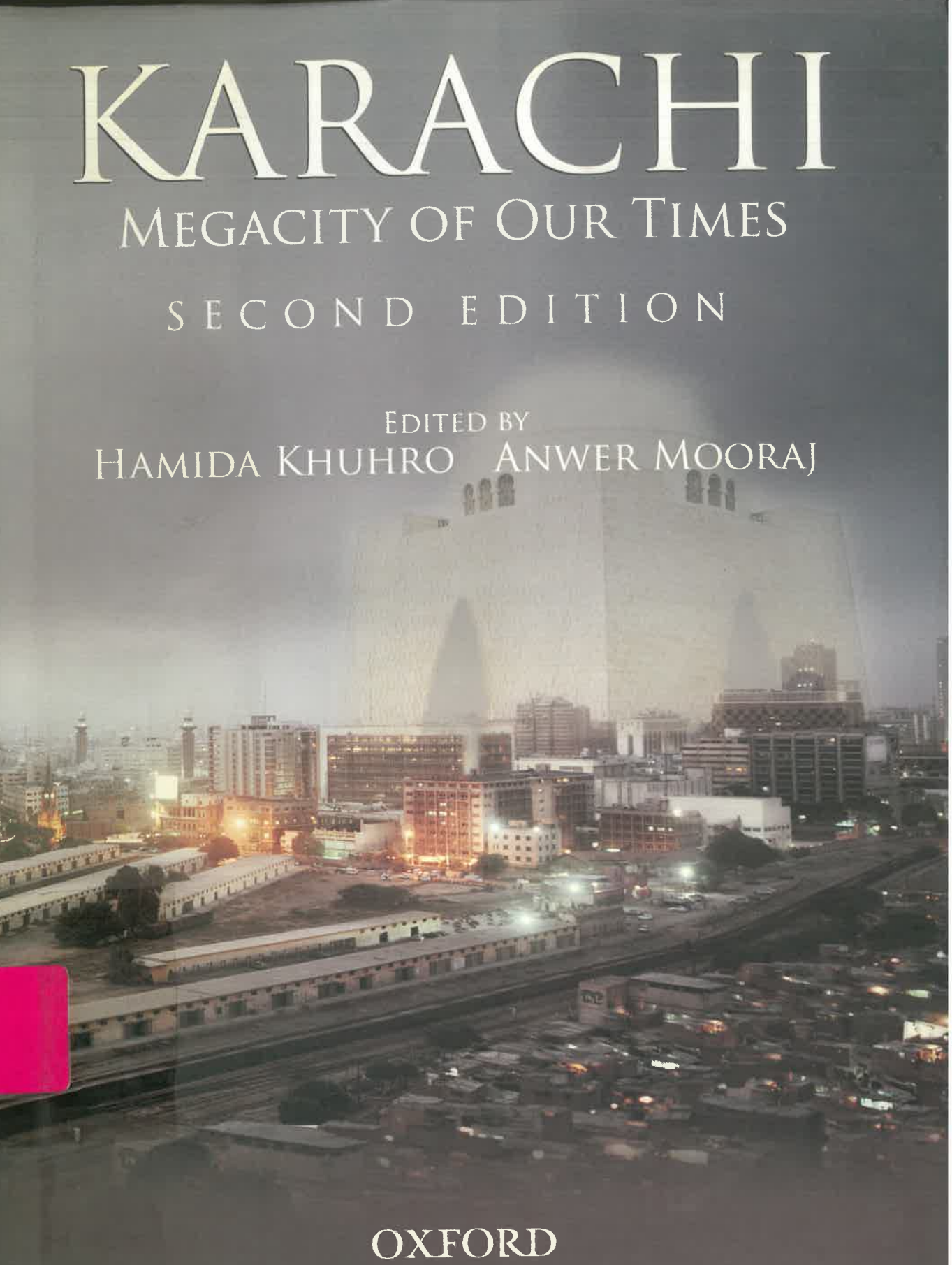
KARACHI

MEGACITY OF OUR TIMES

SECOND EDITION

EDITED BY
HAMIDA KHUHRO ANWER MOORAJ



OXFORD

RACHI
CITY OF OUR TIMES
D EDITION

amida Khuhro and *Anwer Mooraj*

an undisputed place in the economy of the country and in the affections of its citizens. capital of Sindh is loved in spite of its glaring shortcomings. In the imagination of its nds for a lifestyle that is at once modern and yet more leisured than the frenetic sewhere. Its citizens are capable of dealing with their problems. Karachi is a new city n its wisdom and tolerance. Above all it is a cosmopolitan city which demands civilized m its most unruly citizens. It is this mainstream Karachi that this book is about.

acity of Our Times is the story of the transformation of a sleepy town of under 20,000 a vibrant metropolis, one of the largest in Asia today. Thirteen prominent writers of the reader through post-independence developments in politics, economics, the arts, and architecture. Some of the articles are very personal, evoking nostalgia for the was; others are analytical, drawing on available data to predict the course that this y will take in the future. Part of the book is also devoted to the 'long nineteenth en the Englishman ruled and divided the city into 'white' and 'native' quarters, and there on people who have contributed to the city's welfare. The book is profusely illustrated photographs, and illustrations.

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INTRODUCTION

You will be the glory of the East; would that I could come again to see you Karachi, in your grandeur!

Sir Charles Napier uttered these well-known words with awesome perspicacity as he gazed at the congested small town perched on the edge of the Arabian Sea. This was Karachi, the newest seaport of Sindh, which he had captured for the British in 1843 and which had existed precariously for several centuries before. It had been a small fishing village in the territories of the Khan of Kalat which became part of the Talpurs' domain towards the second half of the eighteenth century and as the Indus abandoned its river ports one after the other, the Talpur rulers decided to establish a seaport at Karachi. For the first time in its history Sindh now had a port directly on the sea rather than a river port. The fledgling seaport with its small commercial town (and the Manora Fort) now became an integral part of the ancient, prosperous and settled civilization of great renown which had flourished on the banks of the river Indus.

It is hardly likely that Napier envisaged the thundering mega city that Karachi is today, but he imaginatively realised that it would play a hugely important role in the global world which the industrial and social revolutions and the upheavals of the nineteenth century were bringing about. In the hundred years the British fashioned Karachi into a successful commercial city, it was well planned and well run with wide streets, open spaces, a sufficiency of public buildings, and most of the conveniences that a thriving merchant class required. During that time, the foundations were laid for a growing economy based on the commercial activities of Karachi's port which the British quickly exploited and encouraged.

In 1936 the city became the capital of the province of Sindh when it was separated from the Bombay Presidency. This gave the city a focal point for the political activities and acumen of a generation of Sindhi politicians who had worked and argued with their imperial masters. Soon the arguments were to dissolve into the freedom struggle to remove the British altogether, and when they finally departed with the creation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947 Karachi was suddenly catapulted into becoming the capital of the newly made state of Pakistan.

This was an amazing turn of events for the small, neat, well planned and well looked after colonial port town and the capital of the smallest and most junior of the provincial

(KGA); to the late Mr Olaf Dias for supplying photographs of activities at the KGA; to Mr Farouk Rahimtoola for his pictures on horse racing; to Mr A.K. Siddiqui and Mr Tariq Mahmood of the Railway Hall Institute for allowing Mrs Shahbano Alvi, formerly of the Oxford University Press, to photograph the club premises; to the late Mr Muzaffer Hussain, a former secretary to the Government of Pakistan, for his useful comments on night life in the fifties; to Mrs Asma Ahmad, a former director of the cultural department in the Pakistan American Cultural Center, for providing useful background information on how Radio Pakistan informed and entertained the nation; Mr Fakir Mohammed and Mr Shafiullah, *ustads* of classical music at the PACC, for checking that the section on native style entertainment did not contain any inaccuracies; to Ahsan Yameen, M.A. Wali, Asif Noorani, Rabia Zuberi, Ali Imam, Shahid Sajjad, Mahmood Usman Khan, and Mubarak Ahmed whose photographs from the first edition have also been included in the second edition.

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schemes for elevated roads across the heart of the city have been much criticized for the environmental hazards and aesthetic horrors they would inflict on the city. In major cities of developing countries, such as Bangkok for instance, elevated traffic corridors have done virtually nothing to improve the traffic situation and have even worsened the environment. There is however urgent need for rapid transport systems in the city with minimum damage to the environment, such as an underground train system as well as a surface circular railway—this would solve much of the agony of citizens struggling with the transport and traffic problems.

Karachi today is a raw, new, turbulent, post-modern city. Its mid-twentieth century personality has been almost completely lost. In other British colonial cities of the subcontinent—Bombay (now Mumbai), Calcutta (now Kolkata), Madras (now Chennai) and even Delhi, the historic centre of the city remains almost intact while the growth takes place in the form of suburbs or slums or satellite towns (Delhi's Noida or Gurgaon) but in Karachi the historic centre is not safe so much so that Saddar the beautifully laid out heart of the town has completely lost its character and is now a mess of high rise apartments and overcrowded bus stations and has become a conduit of heavy traffic at all times of the day.

The city is not any longer the sum of its parts but just a scattering of neighbourhoods and slums. The preferred place of residence for the rich and powerful is the sprawling Defence Society of many phases, which covers a good bit of the coastal area of Karachi and goes deep into the interior. Different agencies such as Defence Society and even the Port Trust are working on schemes to reclaim land from the sea, changing and damaging the ecology and the environment of the coastal area of Karachi and destroying wetlands and mangrove forests which were a unique feature of this coast. The coastline, mangroves and the valuable treasures of fish in this area are in the process of being destroyed due to reckless development and the vast amounts of untreated sewerage being dumped in the Arabian Sea. It is up to the citizens of Karachi to save its ecology and the advantages bestowed by nature.

There is a new Master Plan for the development for Karachi 2020 which has recently been passed by the City Government but has not been adequately publicized. The public has had no chance of examining it and giving any critical input. For such an important plan, which would affect the lives of the citizens so fundamentally, consultation with the public, which is mandatory in most cities of the world, is sadly lacking. The future shape of the city could therefore leave many of its citizens unsatisfied and inconvenienced. It would be advisable for the city authorities to examine the result of experiments in infrastructure development in other big cities and to be more responsible and to consult the public when making plans.[3]

Five master plans for Karachi were prepared in the past century, two of which were prepared before partition. In 1923, a report on the development of Karachi was prepared

capitals in India. From a city of about 450,000 people, with a reputation for being one of the most well maintained cities of South Asia, it became the target of a demographic onslaught that only a few cities in the world have matched. Now at the beginning of the twenty-first century, even though it ceased to be Pakistan's capital city in the early sixties of the last century, it is likely that the population of Karachi is somewhere in the region of between 12 to 14 million.[1]

The city's headlong growth has resulted in an unprecedented, unplanned urban sprawl. Covering over 3527 sq km, for most of the sixty-one years of independence there has been hardly any attempt to examine the problems of the city, plan its growth and match the infrastructure and the spaces to its extraordinary growth in population. The city has suffered from under-funding and a serious lack of managerial capacity and the result has been pitiful living conditions for a majority of the city's residents. But still the migrants pour into the city. So much so that the United Nations, in a recent report on the world's population, estimates that by the year 2015 Karachi will be one of only five cities in the world to have a population of over twenty million. That hardly seems credible. Growth of such dimensions is just not sustainable. The city cannot possibly sustain the continuous impoverishment that has occurred in the last sixty-one years of its explosive growth. Innovative and imaginative solutions will have to be found for its problems.

Karachi was run by a Municipal Corporation since local government reforms of the 1880s till the introduction of 'devolution' at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Its mayors have included such famous city fathers as Jamshed Nusserwanji who set the parameters for planning a twentieth century city with its wide arterial roads, housing set around garden squares and for urban cleanliness, features which were unique in the Indian subcontinent. The Municipal Corporation served the city well for over a century and it replaced the 'city government' at the beginning of the twenty-first century when municipalities were replaced by district governments with wide ranging changes in the system of local government. Karachi now acquired a City Government with a Nazim vested with major powers of administration and responsibility for the city. The City District Government of Karachi (CGDK) is at present the body responsible for the planning, the infrastructure and the administration of the city of Karachi.[2]

This book about Karachi, the only 'city' of Pakistan and its first capital, was first published in the golden jubilee year of Pakistan. We are proud that it had a good reception, especially from expatriate Karachiites now spread over the world. It is still in demand, and thus the need to do a revised version in the new millennium. In the ten years since it was last published much has changed in the architectural profile and infrastructure of Karachi. The city continues to expand with ever new towns and sectors: there are high-rises, shopping malls, underpasses and bypasses, bridges and elevated roads—vehicles on these roads are reputed to increase by at least 600 every day, making traffic jams a way of life in Karachi. The inadequacy of public transport and the lack of mass transit schemes are the most glaring omission in the development of the city. The publicized

were very hard on creative cultural activity and Karachi became a cultural desert. There was some Urdu writing in these years and the nineties did see the publication of a huge number of memoirs, biographies which now form rich source material for the history of Pakistan.

The wars in Afghanistan and the growth of extremism of all kinds, the sectarian killings, the drugs, arms, and the terrorist years of the seventies and eighties left Karachi exhausted and bewildered. It was only at the end of the nineties that the suppressed citizens were able to breathe again. The educated youth of the city forced a liberal life where young music flourished and Pakistan became known internationally as the home of innovative South Asian music. Karachi had its own bands; fashion, media and journalism have become the outlet of young talent. An enterprising group established the Kara Film Festival which brought movies from all over the world, giving Karachiites an opportunity not only to see internationally acclaimed films and documentaries but also to feel that their city was part of today's happening world.

Karachi has made a small but distinguished contribution to literature and poetry in the English language, particularly in poetry. Especially to be noted is the work of Maki Kureishi (1927–95), whose *The Far Thing* (1997) was published posthumously. There have also been a number of other published poets in English and also some novelists. In recent years young women writers have come to the fore, notably Kamila Shamsie, Bina Shah and Zeeba Sadiq, Uzma Aslam Khan, Shahbano Bilgrami, as well as Mohammad Hanif, and Shandana Minhas. The birth of contemporary young culture in Karachi can be attributed partly to their contribution to journalism and the extraordinary explosion of television channels in Pakistan, particularly Karachi where most of the channels have their headquarters. Writing for television, compeering, producing music and fashion, discussing politics and contemporary world affairs, created a huge following for television in the youth of the city and created an outlet for their talent.

The city of Karachi has many historic neighbourhoods that are home to different communities: the ancient coastal people of Lyari—the irrepressible Makranis—who take their name from the Makran coast of Sindh and Balochistan, indicating the common history of the two provinces; the Mir Bahar of the sea coast, include the Bhattis who live on the islands of Bhabha and Bhit and other coastal areas of Karachi; the Numrias, a major tribe of the area, including the Burfats; the Jam of the Jokhias with his headquarters in Malir who used to provide safe passage for caravans from the eastern borders of lower Sindh to the Lakki mountains of Sehwan and Dadu; the Palaris who live in the area through which the new 'Super Highway' passes; the Hindu communities, the Amils and the Bhaibund, who dominated the administration and the business of the city respectively. It was the Bhaibund merchants who came to Karachi from the interior, who brought the initial prosperity to the city through their trade. Very few members of this community remained in the city after 1947, but Karachi owes them as well as the Parsi community of

by A.E. Mirams, a consulting town planner and surveyor. The Karachi Physical Plan was prepared by a British surveyor, Lt.-Col. Swaine Thomas, in 1945. At the end of the Second World War, development work which had been on hold for nearly a decade during the war was allowed to go ahead. Mohammad Ayub Khuhro as the Minister for Post War Development had a particular vision for Karachi as the port of Sindh. He wanted to create an industrial zone so that Sindh, which was practically bare of industry, could go ahead and make a start in that direction, in keeping with other major industrial cities of India such as Bombay, adding considerably to the economic base and income of the province. The Sindh Industrial Trading Estate was thus set up in 1945–6.

The areas which were included in the new state of Pakistan, particularly Sindh, had no modern industrial infrastructure other than a few cement, oil, and tile factories in Karachi and some food processing factories in Sukkur. The setting up of SITE and also the funding of some industries by the Government of Sindh encouraged the growth of industries and soon SITE became the biggest industrial estate in Pakistan.[4]

The contributors and editors of this volume are thus keenly aware that they have had a difficult task in delineating the story of this sparsely documented city, and are very sensible that in their undertakings they have often moved in uncharted and unfamiliar territory. At independence Karachi lost its most 'urbane' group of citizens—who also were the foremost Sindhi writers and teachers, keeping the cultural nucleus of Karachi alive and intact. With their departure Karachi became a scattering of neighbourhoods and social and cultural segments with no cultural glue to hold them together and make a homogeneous core. For many decades Karachi's citizens, the old and the new, struggling to keep a grip on their lives and to deal with the daily problems of a newly created capital, could not find a common cultural ground. The Sindhi language had been weakened so much that it almost disappeared from cultural activities—no longer the college dramas of Shah Abdul Latif's immortal tales or the literary readings at the Frere Hall or the musical gatherings all over the city—(the last of these were kept going by Daulat Mehtani and his wife and the talented singer Sheila Mehtani—their daughter-in-law—till the late sixties and into the seventies). There was some Urdu cultural activity—traditional *mushairas* and *qawwalis* did have a presence in the fifties and sixties, but there was hardly any classical music, ghazal or dance. Some artists did come from India such as the great Bade Ghulam Ali Khan the classical singer and there were some based in Pakistan such as Roshan Ara Begum—but Bade Ghulam Ali Khan found no interest or patronage in classical music and went back to India, disillusioned. This was also the case with the distinguished Urdu writer and novelist Qurrat ul Ain Hyder who tried working in Karachi but eventually returned to her roots in Delhi. While East Pakistan was still a part of Pakistan, dance as an art form remained at least a marginal activity, but was virtually ignored after that. That it continues to have a small presence, at least in Karachi, is entirely due to the courage and persistence of Sheema Kirmani who has almost single-handedly kept classical dancing alive in the years of cultural repression. The last three decades of the twentieth century

Partition. These immigrants added to the talent pool in the city, and Karachi (as well as Khairpur in Upper Sindh) became centres of silk cloth making and wonderful gold, silver and *meena kari* or enamel embroidery.

As Karachi became the first capital of Pakistan, the Government of Sindh had to organize the city to house the capital of the newly created country of Pakistan at a short notice of three months—between June 1947 when the Partition plan was announced and independence day on 14 August. Work was undertaken on a 'war footing'. Army style barracks were built in all the open spaces between the Sindh Assembly building and Sindh High Court to house the Pakistan government. Sindh Government itself moved to a part of the Napier Barracks where the Chief Minister, Ayub Khuhro, also set up his office. The Assembly met for its sessions in the N.J.V. High School[5] building on Bunder Road (now M.A. Jinnah Road) while its own building was used by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.

All available housing space was allotted to the employees of the Central Government in private houses wherever there was space. Army housing recently vacated from the Second World War requirements was used; the chief minister gave government officers rooms in his own house. In this way the smallest province in the whole of India managed to host the Government of Pakistan. Along with the officials large numbers of refugees from the riot affected areas of India as well as people in search of livelihood came and settled in and around Karachi. For them also the Government of Sindh built temporary housing along Drigh Road now known as Shahrah-e-Faisal. This was also the time from which we can date the *katchi abadis* or the ad hoc housing, which grew around Karachi or in any open space in the city as the immigration continued. Although most of the emergency housing was cleared as the people were housed in new neighbourhoods, the *katchi abadis* continued to grow around the city progressively occupied by new waves of immigrants from inside and outside the country.

The history of communities living in and around Karachi, their customs and cultural activities would make a very interesting study, but falls outside the limited scope of this book as does any detailed history of the post independence immigrant groups. There is certainly scope for social and anthropological studies here that could form an endless supply of subjects for academic studies. Karachi has a large number of satellite *abadis* of immigrant groups from up country, such as Pathans and Punjabis, for instance who have played a very positive role in the development of Karachi, the former in physically building it and the latter in adding to the prosperity of the city through trade, industry as well as in crafts such as wood work. Foreign migrants, mainly illegal, such as the Bengalis, and innumerable other nationalities have also provided services to the rapidly growing city. Though resented for taking away jobs from the locals, they are in the process of being assimilated. To deal adequately with these new additions to Karachi's population would be an immense task requiring a different kind of book.

Karachi, a debt of gratitude for their public works and philanthropy, the signs of which remain visible to this day.

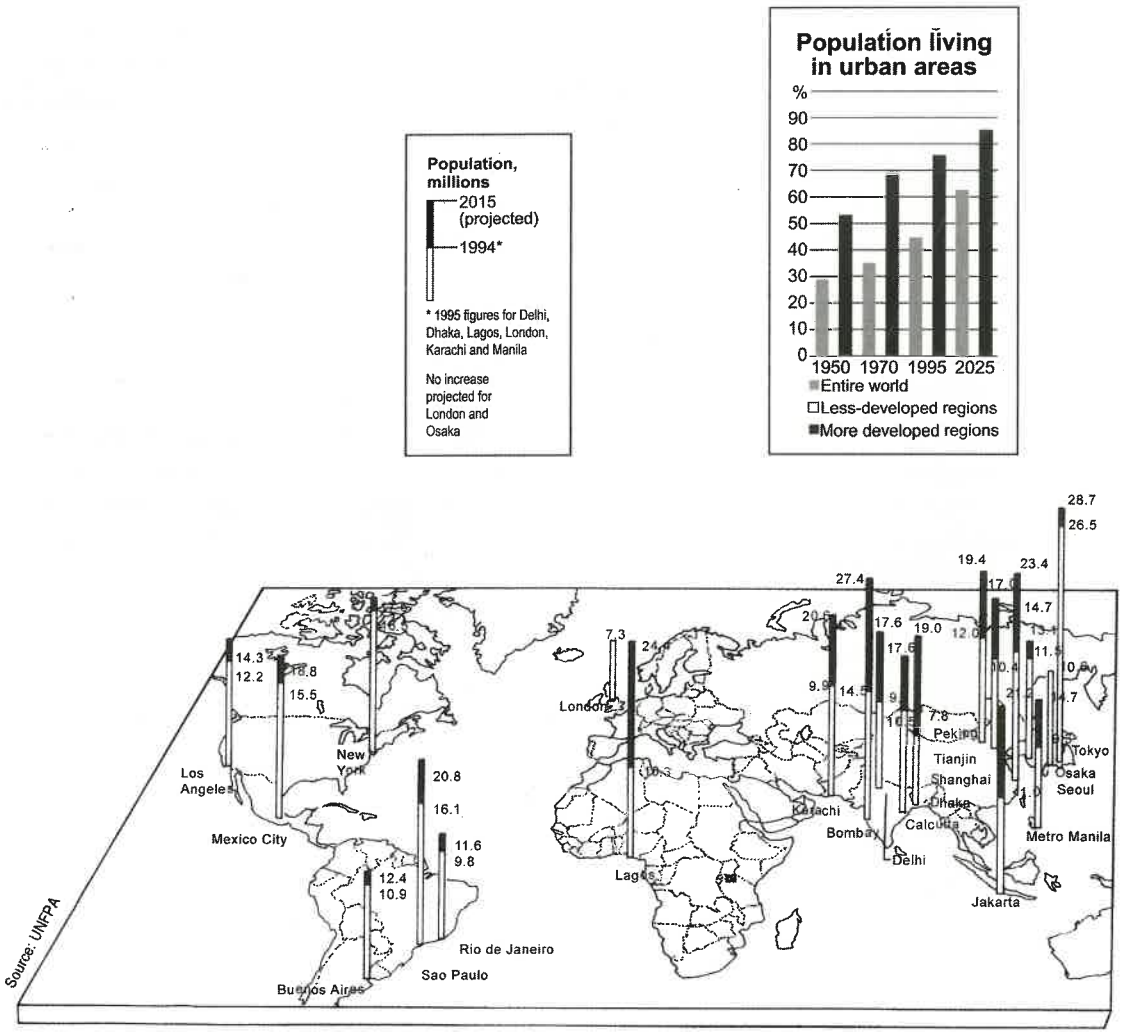
The town of Karachi has always been a conglomeration of neighbourhoods—villages or 'goths'—that included not only the ancient villages of Jokhias, Memons and Mir Bahars on the fringes on the old town, but also the picturesque and characteristic neighbourhoods of Silawats who live in the central area of the city. They immigrated centuries ago from Jaisalmer in Rajasthan as stone workers to live in the capital of Sindh: first Hyderabad where they made their unique contribution to that city, and then to Karachi when this city was being built in the nineteenth century. Ismailis (or Khojas), followers of the Aga Khan, live in communities around their Jamaat Khanas on Britto Road, and in the old town near Khadda Madressah and more recently in the Clifton area. Ismailis whose ancestral villages are mostly in Thatta and Badin in lower Sindh and Lasbela in the coastal region of Sindh, gravitated to Karachi for business and commerce in the nineteenth century.

The small Jewish community of the western coast of the subcontinent had their synagogue on Lawrence Road and lived around it and on the edges of the Karachi Zoo otherwise known as Gandhi Garden. The Bahai community that had come from Iran was among the more prosperous communities of the town. The Bahais owned the ubiquitous and inexpensive but excellent cafes, the Irani restaurants, so characteristic of Bombay and Karachi. The Roman Catholic community of Karachi (of Portuguese Goan descent, migrated from Goa which was part of Portugal until well after independence), lived around St. Patrick's Church in Saddar and in the Catholic Colony on Bunder Road and were mostly involved in education and government service. Here also was the upper middle class Parsi Colony, with its well built and good looking houses, bordering on Amil Colony and the minuscule upper middle class Muslim Colony. Parsis also came to Karachi from Surat in Gujarat and Bombay in nineteenth century and were mostly in trade and business. They had a number of Government monopolies such as salt, and were soon among the leading business communities of Karachi. The Bohras came to Karachi in the nineteenth century and were mainly a trading community, living in the city around the Civil Hospital, where they had their beautifully built mosque and spacious apartments around Bunder Road and Burns Road. These neighbourhoods of the city, unlike the new 'colonies' of Bunder Road Extension, were not exclusive and the Bohras, Khojas, Memons, and Hindus lived cheek by jowl, as near as possible to their places of business. There were also the itinerant groups of labourers, the Pathans, Brahuis, Bhils and Kolhis, the latter two permanent 'scheduled caste' communities. Apart from these many others came to this city to improve their lives and make their fortunes.

The latest immigrants to Karachi arrived in the aftermath of the Partition of the subcontinent in 1947. Apart from the government servants these included refugees from the violence in north India, Memon businessmen from Bombay and some people even from the south of the subcontinent, which had remained relatively peaceful during

This is, of course, an arbitrary selection due to the limitation of space which has restricted the number of major Karachi personalities that could be included. The economy and the expansion of the city in the last half century have been covered in chapters 6 and 7. The next four chapters give an account of the contribution of Karachi to the literature of English, Urdu, and Sindhi. Chapter 10 is a slightly revised version of Chapter 9. The chapter on Saddar describes the centre of colonial Karachi.

The world's largest cities in the 21st century.



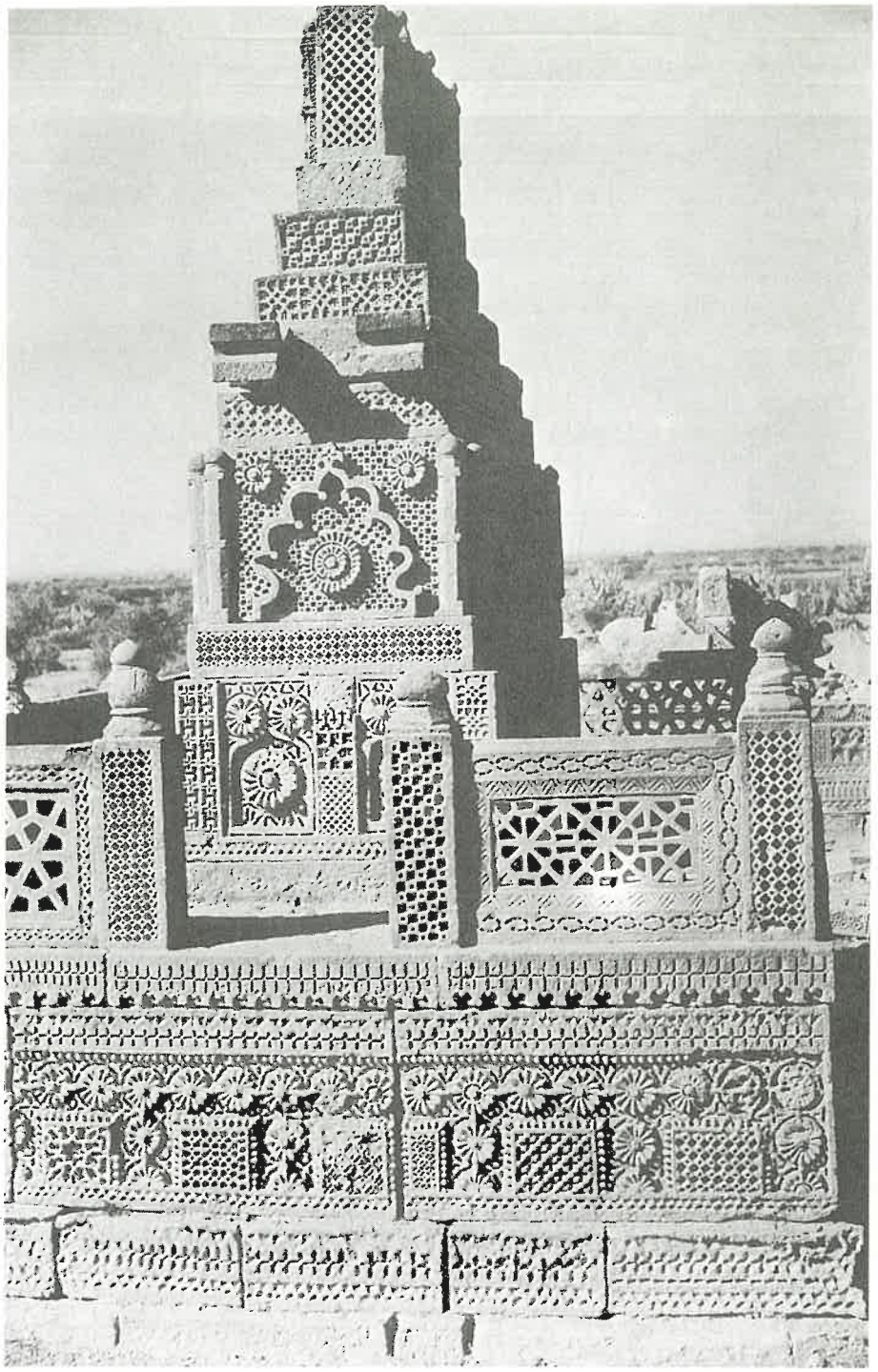
As generations of immigrants have discovered, Karachi is above all a city of opportunity. The immigrant either makes good as an entrepreneur in the city, or he tries to use it as a conduit to greener pastures in the Gulf or the West. The population of Karachi is upwardly mobile, at least in its aspirations. The middle class life of 'English Medium' schools for their children, a flat in a high rise building or a small independent 'bungalow' is the aim of the majority of Karachi's citizens.

No story about Karachi would be complete without an account of the pioneers of trade and industry in the city. Chapter 5 includes profiles of some of the early traders of the colonial period who used a part of their wealth to benefit the city. Haridas Lalji was an entrepreneur who organized the Buyers and Shippers Chamber for which he built the handsome building on Serai Road (opened by M.K. Gandhi in 1933) which is now the Chamber of Commerce building.

There was hardly any industry in the area which is now Pakistan and therefore hardly any industrialists to speak of. There was Dalmia in the cement and oil business, Nusserwanji with Sindh Patent tiles and sundry other interests, and Mohatta with Herman Mohatta Iron works—although of course smaller industries such as leather work, aerated waters etc. abounded. The decision to make Karachi the home of industry came in the post war world of 1946. Plans for an industrial estate were approved and investment in industry was encouraged. The Government of Sindh funded the first industrial unit to be set up in Karachi, the Valika Textile Mill. This was followed quickly by the Bawany Textile Mill set up in 1948 and the path was clear for the city to become the biggest industrial city of Pakistan, which paid seventy per cent of the revenue of the country in its heyday and still continues to be responsible for a large chunk of the national income. The majority of the industrial pioneers were Memons and these included some very distinguished names such as Adamjee, Ahmed Dawood, Rangoonwalla and others. Karachi's position as the finance centre was established by the pioneering banks such as Adamjee's Muslim Commercial Bank set up at the initiative of the Quaid-i-Azam and the Habib family's Habib Bank.

Two hundred years from its founding as Sindh's port, and sixty years from its position as the only port of Pakistan, Karachi has an undisputed place in the economy of the country and in the affection of its citizens. This glowing capital of Sindh is loved in spite of its glaring shortcomings. In the imagination of the people it stands for a lifestyle that is at once modern and yet more leisured than that of frenetic mega cities elsewhere. At the heart of the city is nostalgia for the calm oasis of a fifties' Saddar, and a tram journey from Keamari to Soldier Bazaar. Karachi is above all a cosmopolitan city which demands civilized attitudes from its most unruly citizens. It is this mainstream Karachi that this book is about.

The first four chapters of the book cover the history of the city from its early barren beginnings to the middle of the twentieth century when it became the capital of Pakistan. In the fifth chapter profiles of some of the founding fathers of Karachi have been given.



Burfat woman's tomb with omega or mirhab motif, rosette, Chaukhandi, Karachi.

Karachi has often been accused of philistinism—of indifference to culture. In addition to the literature and poetry, we have gathered up the admittedly fragile strands of culture and entertainment in the chapters on art, entertainment, theatre and cinema, which include both elite and popular cultures of the city. A notable omission is the popular folk culture of he different communities of Karachi such as Lyari and the Makrani community that includes wonderful dances, games, and donkey races. Also, unfortunately, it was not possible to have a chapter on sports activities in Karachi. We have tried to capture the contrasting mood of the city over the last sixty years by giving two personal accounts: that of being young in the fifties by Anwer Mooraj and of being a young working woman in the first decade of the twenty-first century by Ayela Khuhro.

Though Karachi is constantly referred to 'as the most dangerous city' in the world in the international press and shocking events like the murder of the journalist Daniel Pearl have taken place as have the Nishtar Park bombings, and some years later the bombings in the homecoming welcome procession of Benazir Bhutto, the youth particularly have shown a lot of resilience. The assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007 has been a body blow for the citizens of Karachi. The city mourned and found itself in the grip of unprecedented violence for some days. The shock and gloom continue and it will surely take a while for the city to get over it. The continued incidence of violence and bombing is likely to dampen the ebullience of Karachi for a while but the resilience of this great commercial city is likely to assert itself. Terrorism remains an ever-present danger but a cultured life is also a possibility.

The spirit of this book is optimistic. We feel that the citizens of this mega city are capable of dealing with their problems. Karachi is a new city but it is old in its wisdom and tolerance. It is the capital of a supremely tolerant land—the land of Sufi saints. Before it ever became a city it was a land of shrines. Pilgrims came to Rambagh—a stage in the journey of Rama and Sita,[6] as well as to old saints like Mangho Pir. They would then continue on the journey to legendary shrines like Hinglaj. The patron saint of Karachi—Abdullah Shah Ghazi—came with the Arab armies and was buried on what was then a tiny island near the coast. The legacy of the saints must prevail. Solutions which bring peace and tolerance and allow the city to grow in a smooth progression without the shocks of extreme violence and intolerance cannot be out of reach for the citizens of Karachi, and indeed for all the inhabitants of Pakistan, because for all of them the city is the gateway to life in the globalized world of the twenty-first century.

ONE

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

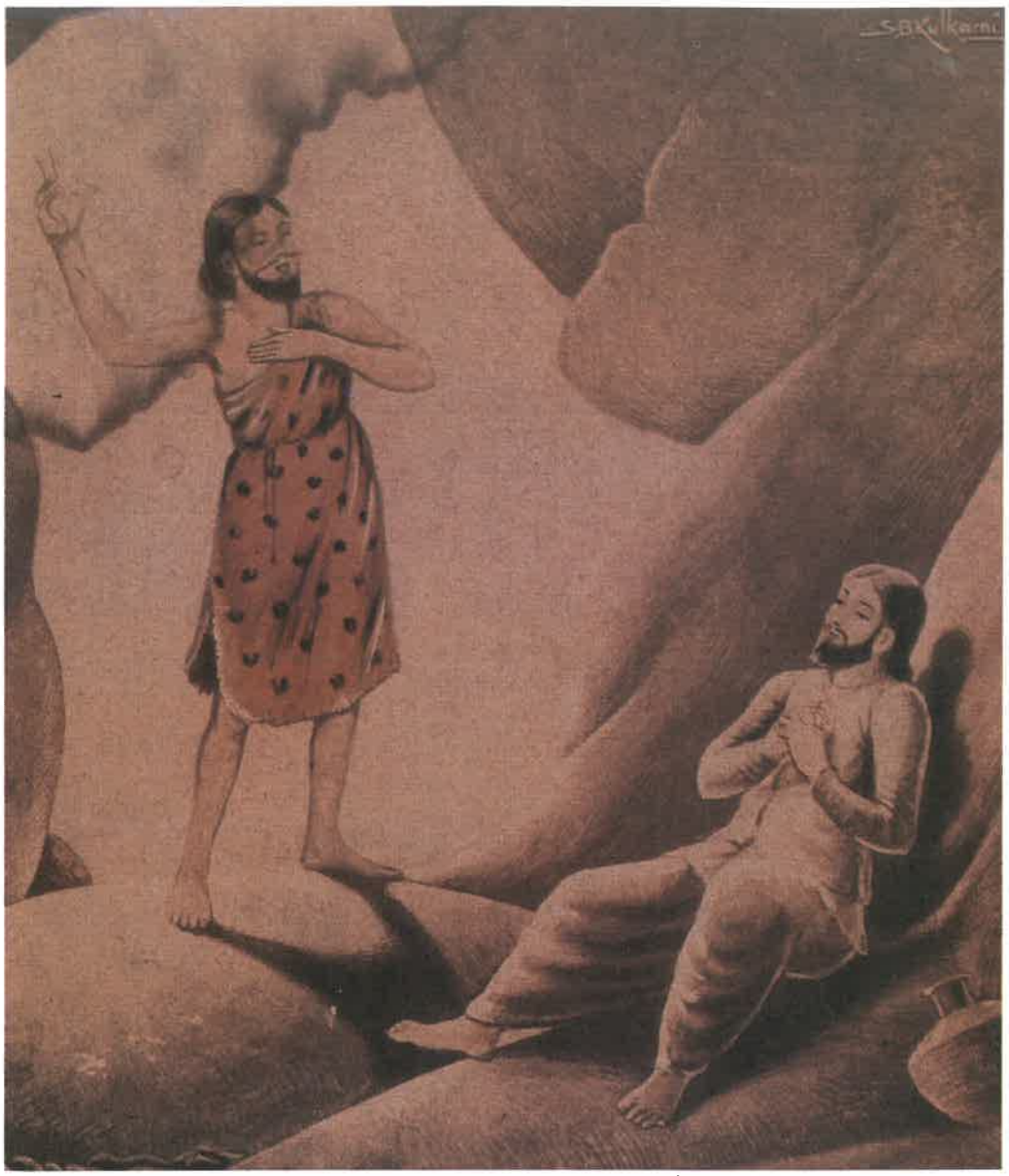
HAMIDA KHUHRO

Although Alexander himself did not set foot in Karachi or any of its ancestral townships, and Krokala cannot be identified with Karachi, it is a historical fact that the commander of his fleet, Admiral Nearchus, anchored very close to the harbour of what is now Karachi. We know that Alexander explored the Indus delta and chose a river on the eastern side for Nearchus to sail down to the ocean with his fleet.[1] Thus Nearchus set out from Patala, some distance north east of present day Nasarpur and sailed down the Indus (Sinthus or Sindhu) to Barbaricum, a harbour at the mouth of one of the eastern branches of the Indus, and then went on to the island of Krokala in the Gulf of Eirinon. The Gulf of Eirinon is identified as 'some portion of the mangrove swamps extending along the delta coast from some spot to the east of Barbaricum up to the eastern Indus branch or even beyond'.[2] It is mentioned by Arrianus as 'Crocala, the promontory called Eiron and Alexander's Haven.' About Alexander's Haven, a recent historian of Alexander's campaign in India says:

> In the course of time Nearchus' choice of Alexander's Harbour proved to have been a good one. Its star rose high in the history of commerce. It lost, though, its original name which was replaced by the name of the island which lay at the heads of the harbour. By popular etymology the name of Bibacta or Bibaga changed into Barbaricum....[3]

and further that:

> The Gulf of Barace represented only a small portion of the wide bay of the Arabian Sea between the island of Cutch and the Indus delta. The Gulf of Eirinon was situated along the delta coast adjacent to the Gulf of Barace, and it derived its name from the dangerous mangrove swamps. As to the chain of hills, which rose high above the coast and both the Gulfs, its fame was perpetuated throughout Antiquity by the Altars of Alexander, which were erected, most probably, on top of the promontory near the northern entrance to the Gulf of Barace.[4]

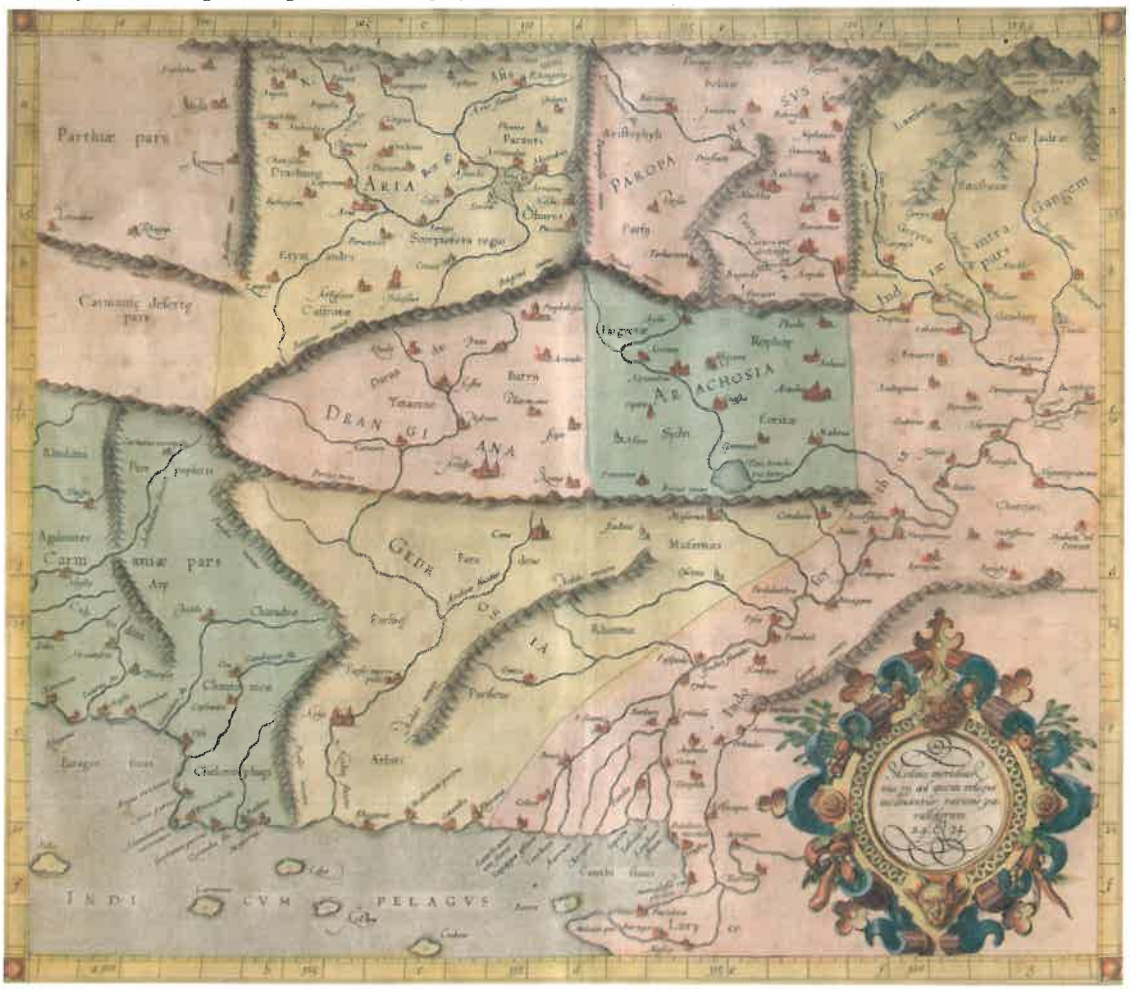


Shah Abdul Latif, the 18th century Sufi poet reciting his verses to a disciple in a cave near Karachi.

In a paper on the origins of Karachi, the noted scholar Dr N.A. Baloch has used Arab authorities to prove that the earliest mention of a name on the Sindh coastline which resembles that of Karachi is in an early literary work in Arabic by Al Hasan bin Muhammad bin Al Hasan Al Saghani written in the thirteenth century. Probably settled in Lahore, he visited Baghdad twice, in AD 1220 and AD 1227:

> On both these occasions, on his way back, he acted as the emissary of the contemporary Abbasid Caliphs Al Nasir B'illah (AD 1180–1225) and Al Mustansir B'illah (AD 1226–1242) respectively, to the Sultans of Delhi. During these journeys, he not only happened to pass through Yaman four times, he also stayed there, mainly in Adan for three years (AD 1213–1216). The direction of his journeys would indicate that most probably he travelled by sea to Yaman from the coastline of Sindh. His sojourns in Sindh are also on record and he himself confirms that he stayed in Sindh for 'some years'.[6]

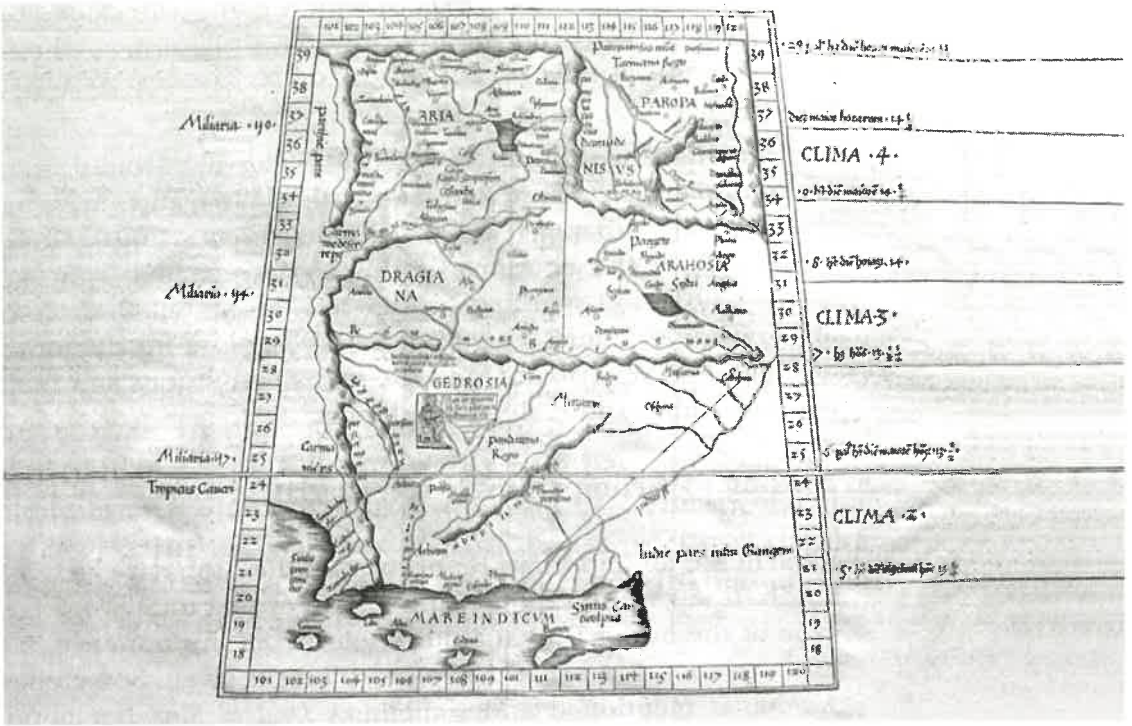
Indo-Scythia and neighbouring countries. Map by Mercator Ptolmey, 1584.



After a prolonged stay at Alexander's Haven, Nearchus sailed along the Sindh coast and reached a place near the Hub (*Arabis*) river. He anchored in a delightful harbour which he calls 'the ladies pool'. Arrianus describes the position:

> Then making their way through two rocks, so close together that the oarblades of the ships touched the rocks to ports and starboard, they moored at Morontobara, after sailing some 300 stades. The harbour is spacious, circular, deep and calm, but its entrance is narrow. They called it in the natives's language, 'the ladies' pool', since a lady was the first sovereign of this district. When they had got safe through the rocks, they met great waves, and the sea running strong; and, moreover, it seemed very hazardous to sail seaward of the cliffs. For the next day, however, they sailed with an island on their port beam, so as to break the sea, so close indeed to the beach that one would have conjectured that it was a channel cut between the island and the coast. The entire passage was of some 70 stades. On the beach were many thick trees, and the island was covered with shady forests. About dawn, they sailed outside the island, by a narrow and turbulent passage; for the tide was still falling. And when they had sailed some 120 stades they anchored in the mouth of the river Arabis. There was a fine large harbour by its mouth; but there was no drinking water; for the mouths of Arabis were mixed with sea water. However, after penetrating 40 stades inland they found a water-hole, and after drawing water thence, they returned back again. By the harbour was a high island, desert, and round it one could get oysters and all kinds of fish. Up to this the country of the Arabeans extends; they are the last Indians settled in this direction; from here on the territory of the Oreitans begins.[5]

Ladies Harbour has been identified as being near Manora and this brings Nearchus' fleet very close to the present day Karachi harbour. The river *Arabis* has been identified as the Hub River by Tomaschek and this has been supported by Sir Aurel Stein and confirmed by the twentieth century scholar Dr Eggermont. The 'high and desert island' has been identified as Churna situated about $4^1/_2$ miles off the coast at Cape Monze (*Ras Muar*) later called '*Ylha de Camelo*' by the Portuguese. The coastal area between the eastern and western branches of the Indus and the territory beyond the delta up to the Hub river was called *Aberia*, and its inhabitants a people called *Aberians* by Ptolemaeus in his description of Indo Scythia. The *Aberians* of Ptolemaeus have been identified with the *Arabeans* of Arrianus. The Hub River was known as *Arabis* after the *Arabean* tribe which occupied the coast of the Indus delta and its neighbouring area of Karachi at the time of Alexander's invasion in 325 BC. The coastal region of Sindh and Balochistan has had connections with the Arab regions of Arabia proper and the Persian Gulf and has shared common characteristics of race and close economic ties of trade since times immemorial. Indeed the coastal people of Sindh could well be the *Arabeans* found in the text of Arrianus. So although Alexander himself did not step into Karachi and did not found an Alexandria on the site of the city, it is certain that the commander of his fleet, Nearchus, did sail near by and that he anchored close to the present day Karachi harbour. He certainly knew the Hub River and that the name of the residents of the area was Arabeans.



Indus and the Indian Ocean. Map by Mercator Ptolmey.

> no exact relationship between the two places is given. Sometimes *Karashi* is mentioned and sometimes *Diul al Sind* but never together...Portuguese and early European maps and charts never refer to Karachi but only to *Diulsinde* or Diulcinde, etc. The position given by them to the place would seem to indicate that this was the same as Karachi. Perhaps 'Diul al-Sind' was the bay which was in actual fact an estuary of the Indus delta, and Karachi the town on the estuary—nothing is certain.[10]

The conclusion that Dr Baloch comes to prove is that by the early sixteenth century and possibly even earlier in the fifteenth century, Ras Karashi was well known to navigators of the Indian ocean as an anchorage. It was variously known as Karashi or Karazi or even Kaurashi.

Locally the name which seems to be longest in use is *Kalachi* which is the name used in the ancient Sindhi legend *Of Morriro and Mangar Machh* or the story of a fisherman Morriro and the whale. According to this legend, a ferocious whale had swallowed up six brave brothers of *Kalachi jo kun* (the whirlpool of Kalachi) who were the most daring fishermen of the day. Eventually their youngest brother Morriro avenged them by killing the whale. The story puts the event in the days of King Dalura (*c.* AD twelfth century) one of the earlier rulers of the Sumra dynasty. This legend has been used by the sufi poets of Sindh, notably Sindhi za*kirs* in the *sama* performance before Saint Shaykh Abdu Jalil

Dr Baloch quotes as evidence the description Al Saghani gives of the delta of the Indus from the knowledge he gained of the area from his journeys there. The great Arab navigator Ibn Majid who died *c.*1500 refers to *Karazi* in his work *Al Fawaid*. The next reference to the early existence of the port of Karachi comes from the work of a celebrated Arab navigator Sulayman al Mahri's *Umdah* (AD 1511). In this book he mentions *Ras al Karazi* and also *Ras Karachi*. Al Mahri gives the route to be followed from Pasni to *Ras Karashi*. On reaching the latter place, he advises, 'There cast your anchor, and the *doongis* and the fishermen (in their boats or *doongies*) will come to you.'

He also gives the formula of the *quadima* (i.e., the ancients or the navigators of previous ages) how to circumnavigate *Ras Karashi* but his own advice is that, 'It is better' to halt at *Ras Karashi*'.[7]

Based on his work as well as that of Ibn Majid, the Turkish Captain Sidi Ali Reis in his famous work *Muhit* (*c.* AD 1553–1554) which was a compendium of sailing directions for a voyage from Diu, formerly a Portuguese island south of Kathiawar, to Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, mentions *Kaurashi* which indicates that a harbour with a name closely resembling Karachi was familiar to navigators of the sixteenth century and even an earlier period:

> What is said of Indian whirlpools is all a tale except the whirlpool in the gulph of Jaked, and in the Barbarian channel near Kardafun, where ships falling in are unavoidably lost. If you guess that you may be drifting to Jaked you must take before your precautions, and endeavour to reach from the coast of Makran, either the port of Kalmata or Kawader, or Kapchi Makran; Bandar Kawander (one of the three Bunders on the coast of Gujerat) is the place where coconuts grow; or you must try to get to Kaurashi, or to enter Khur-diul Sind, that is to say the Port of Lahore, to get rid of the fear of Jaked. In Sind are a great number of liver-eaters, against whom you must be on your care; because if they meet a man who eats his dinner in public, they have the talent of eating up his liver with, their eyes, and so kill him. This is not to be slighted.[8]

Capudan mentions a whirlpool which is indicated also in the Greek texts with reference to the Gulf of Barace, which says:

> A promontory stands out from this gulf, curving around from Eirinon towards the East, then South, then West, and enclosing the gulf called Barace, which contains seven islands. Those who come to the entrance of this bay escape it by putting about a little and standing further out to sea; but those who are drawn inside into the gulf of Barace are lost; for the waves are high and very violent, and the sea is tumultuous and foul, and has eddies and rushing whirlpools.[9]

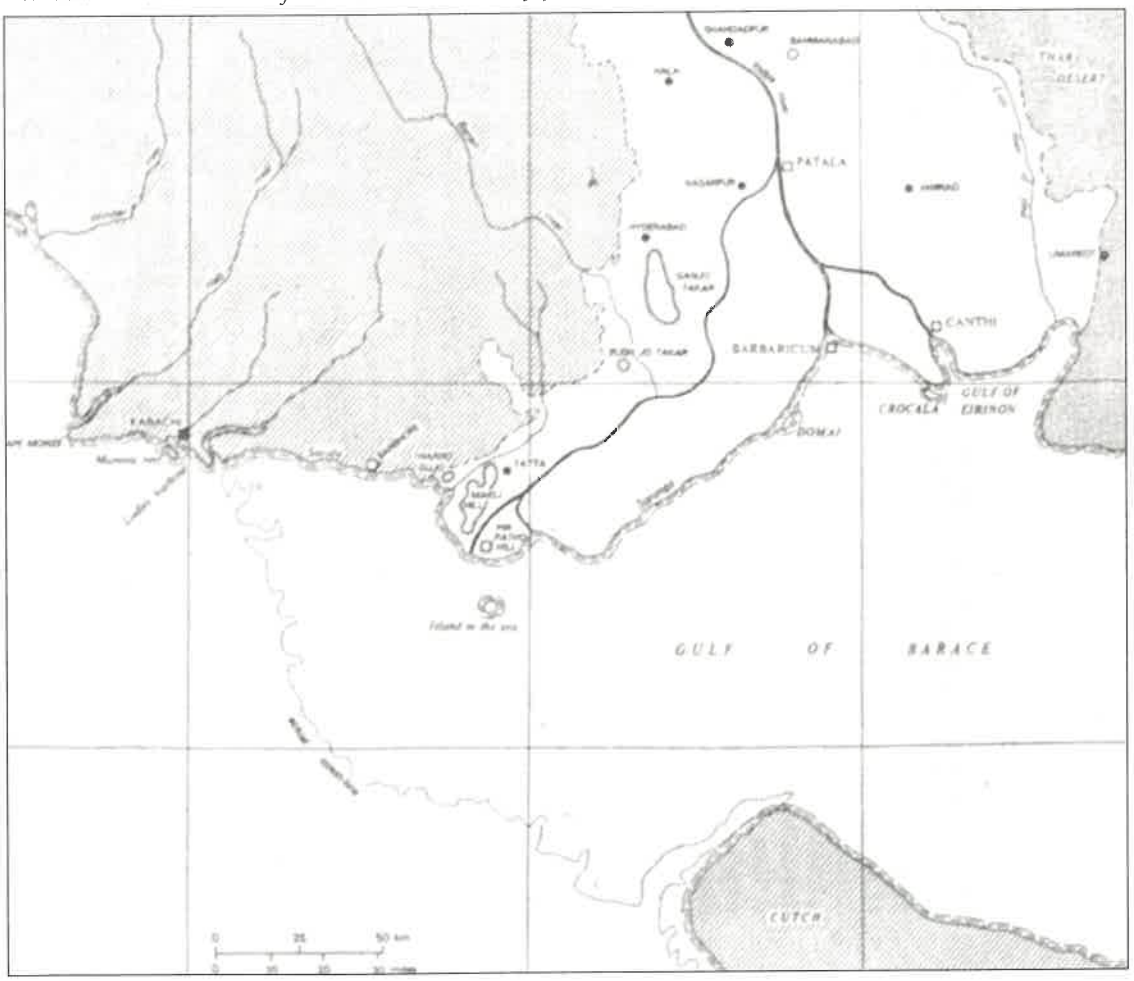
According to a comparatively recent writer:

> Karachi was an important rendezvous of the Arab navigators in Sindh. It was written *Karashi* and was according to Sulayman, a cape of the bay of Diut al Sindh. Apart from this sentence,

serving the saint whose tomb stands high on a rocky eminence above the pool enclosure. The saint's name is Mangho Pir. The hot springs which gush out of the rocks under the shrine are popular with pilgrims who hope for a cure for all kinds of illnesses.[13]

The Karachi area was until the eighteenth century, controlled by the chieftains who ruled the coast and hilly region of the Sindh and Makran coast. In the eighteenth century it was part of the chiefdom of the Kalmati Maliks. The rise of the Kalhoras from Larkana district in the early eighteenth century and the unification of Sindh, under their rule, saw the control of Karachi passing to them in this period. There is evidence to suggest that at some point the Karachi region passed back into the hands of the local chieftains, but by the third quarter of the eighteenth century, when Lieutenant John Porter visited it in 1774–5, it was definitely in the hands of the rulers of Sindh. Porter gives what is

The Indus Delta at the time of Alexander's invasion, c. 325 BC.



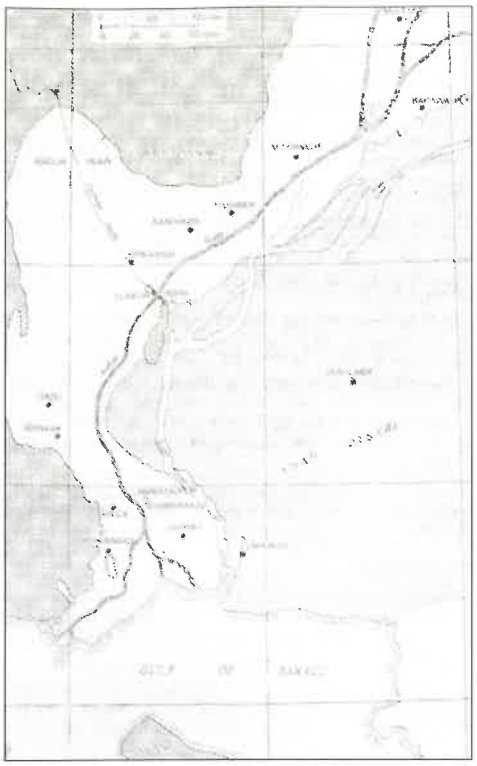
Chuhar Bandagi (AD 1504) who use the name Kalach, by Shah Abdul Karim who writes of the *Kun of Kalachi* (*c.* 1560–1634) and by Shah Abdul Latif in his *Risalo* (*Sur Ghatu*) where he talks of *Kalachi* or *Kun Kalachi*.

Karachi lies in the foothills of the Khirthar range of hills and is not part of the Indus delta. It has formed part of the territories of the chieftains who have controlled the Hub Malir region and the Makran coast, which, though part of Balochistan, has been a Sindhi speaking area right up to the 'Jam-dom' of Lasbella, the most important chiefdom of the region. In the seventeenth century, the region was in the control of the Kalmati Maliks who had dominated the area perhaps since the thirteenth century.[11] The spectacular tomb sculpture of the region bears witness to the domination of the Kalmatis and the later Jokhias in the region right up to the Indus delta.

Karachi was an important centre and route for pilgrims who not only came to the ancient shrines in and around the town, but it was also used as a route for the journey to the ancient shrine of Hinglaj in the Baloch mountains just beyond Karachi. Shah Abdul Latif, the eighteenth century Sufi saint and the premier poet of the Sindhi language, made a pilgrimage there in the company of *jogis* and *sanyasis*. The oldest Muslim shrine in the subcontinent was the tomb of Abdullah Shah Ghazi who came with one of the invading Arab forces, earlier than the successful one led by Mohammed bin Qasim in AD 711. He was martyred here and buried on a promontory which was some way into the sea off the coast of Karachi. As the sea recedes from the coast line of Karachi the shrine is now on the mainland in the Clifton area still high on its hill but with no other sign of its ancient heredity. An ancient Hindu pilgrimage site which is reputed to be mentioned in the *Mahabharata* is situated below the Kothari Parade at Clifton and was perhaps on an island cave centuries ago when the ancient Hindus built it.[12]

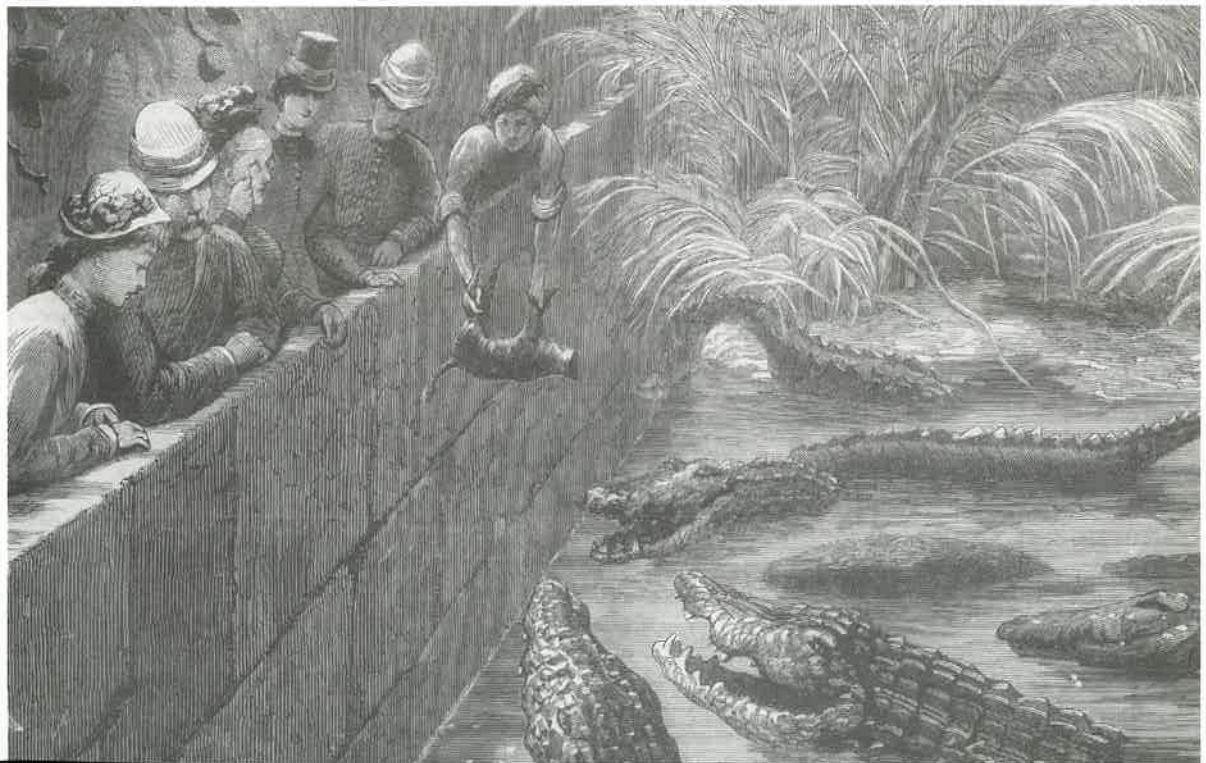
There are ancient Muslim and Hindu shrines as well as those belonging to both the communities, such as Hinglaj and Mangho Pir. The shrine of Mangho Pir is on a rock in a hot spring oasis about ten miles north of Karachi. Its most well known feature is a crocodile pond where the oldest crocodile is reputed to be six hundred years old and is known as *Mor Sain* or Mr Peacock. Both Hindus and Muslims traditionally sacrificed goats at the shrine and fed them to the crocodiles which were considered to have holy status. The springs and the pond are at present surrounded by shanty towns. But even in the mid-fifties the area was as it had been for thousands of years:

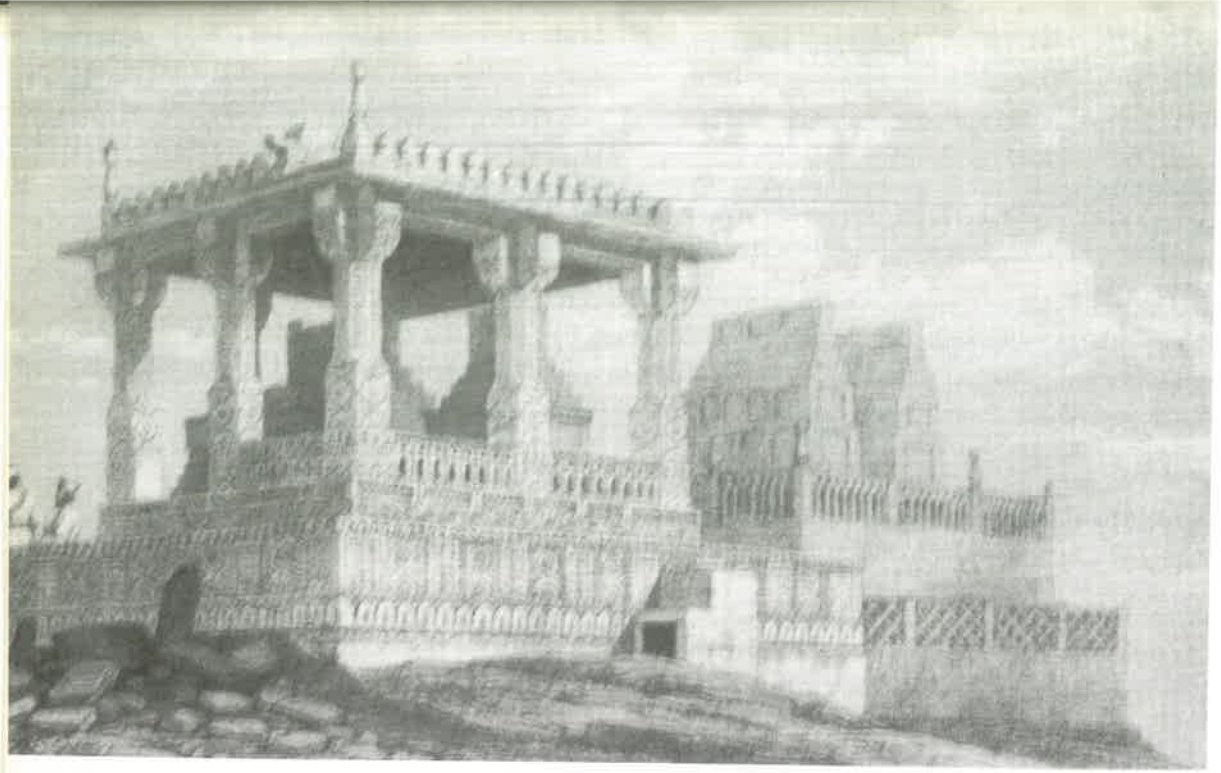
> Mr Peacock lives some ten miles north of Karachi, in the foothills. It is arid, unrelenting country, but he has the best of it. He lives in an oasis, with a pool of dark water surrounded by rocks and palm trees...
>
> Crocodiles like to lie about in heaps, as if they were spillikins but heavier and less innocent... Mister Peacock...is famous in the neighbourhood. He is the biggest and most splendid crocodile here, and some people consider him sacred... [He is] six hundred and something years old, for it is claimed that he arrived here in the thirteenth century with the intention of



The lower Indus valley, c. 325 BC.

Feeding the Crocodiles at Mangopir, near Karachi in 1878. Woodcut engraving published in The Graphic, 28 September 1878. Caption reads 'A Public Breakfast Party'.





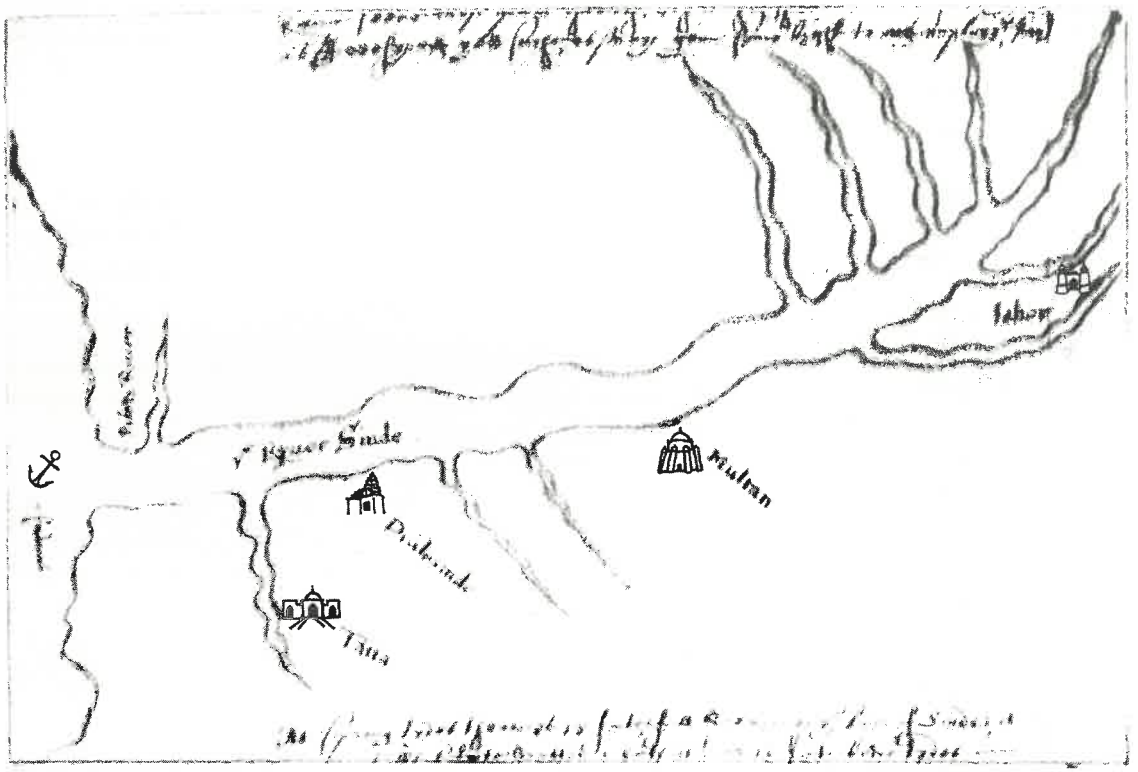
Carval stone tomb, (probably Kalmati), Karachi area.

perhaps the earliest description of Karachi, the small town which has developed into the modern metropolis

> Crotchey Town is situated about five or six miles from where the vessels lay, and about a mile from the side of a creek which has not water in it for anything else than small boats. It is fortified by a slight mud wall and flanked with round towers, and has only two cannons mounted in all, and those so old, and their card ages so crazy, as would render the firing of them unsafe.[14]

Porter also mentions the fact that it formerly 'belonged to the Bloachees' and then says that the 'Prince of Scindy, finding it better situated than any part of his sea coast for the caravans from the Inland Countries; made an exchange with some other place for it.'[15] It is therefore certain that at least from the time of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro, who died in AD 1772, Karachi was the major port of Sindh.

Karachi is the first port of Sindh which is situated directly on the sea coast. Historically the ports of Sindh, as befits the land of the Indus, have been river ports situated just above the delta proper. The earliest recorded river port is Patala where Alexander's fleet started its homeward journey. The port at the time of the Arab conquest is generally given the name of *Daibul* (or Dabul) as the port of Sindh which was conquered by the Omayyad General Mohammed bin Qasim in AD 711.[16] This was the first time in the written history of the subcontinent that a successful invasion of an Indian region had been mounted from the sea. Most of the conquerors earlier, and for a thousand years subsequently, came from the passes of the northern mountains. Daibul continued to be



Diul Sinde mid-17th century.

> on the Indus, from times immemorial, new riverine ports have been utilized; have had a certain period of existence; have died a natural death; generally because the waters deserted them;[18]

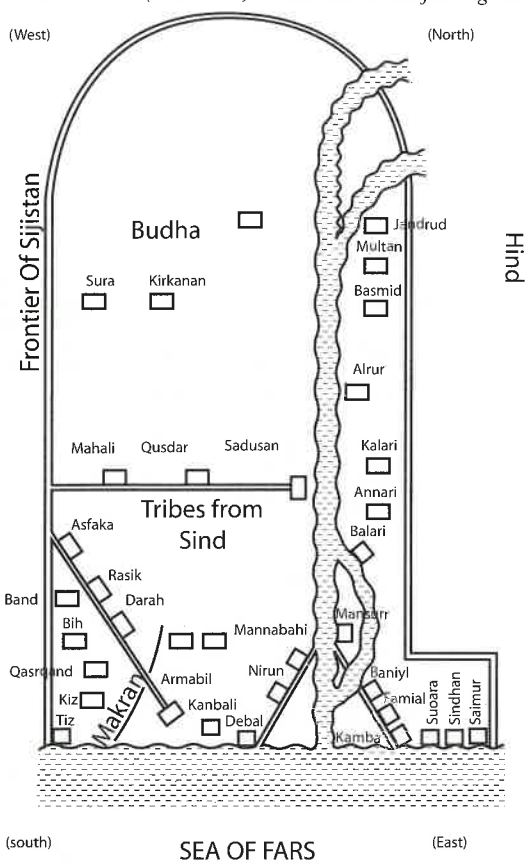
Diul Sinde (or *Daibul*) appears to be the generic name for the major port of Sindh and in many accounts *Diul Sinde* has been used to describe Thatta as the port of Sindh. But at some point this port became difficult of access and a number of other ports became the *Diul Sinde* in succession. The first of these is Lahri Bandar which is first mentioned by Al Beruni in the early eleventh century AD. In the early seventeenth century it was approximately three days journey away from Karachi. At the time of Aurangzeb another port Dera Jam was renamed Aurangbandar and became the most important river port of Sindh. When the river deserted Aurangbandar, it was succeeded by the port of Dharaja in the principality of the Rana of Dharaja. This principality was conquered by the Kalhoras in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Shahbandar on the eastern bank of the river also remained an important port of Sindh for some time. The river ports of Sindh throughout the medieval period served Sindh and the regions around particularly the ports of Thatta, the capital of lower Sindh from the Samma period in the thirteenth century.

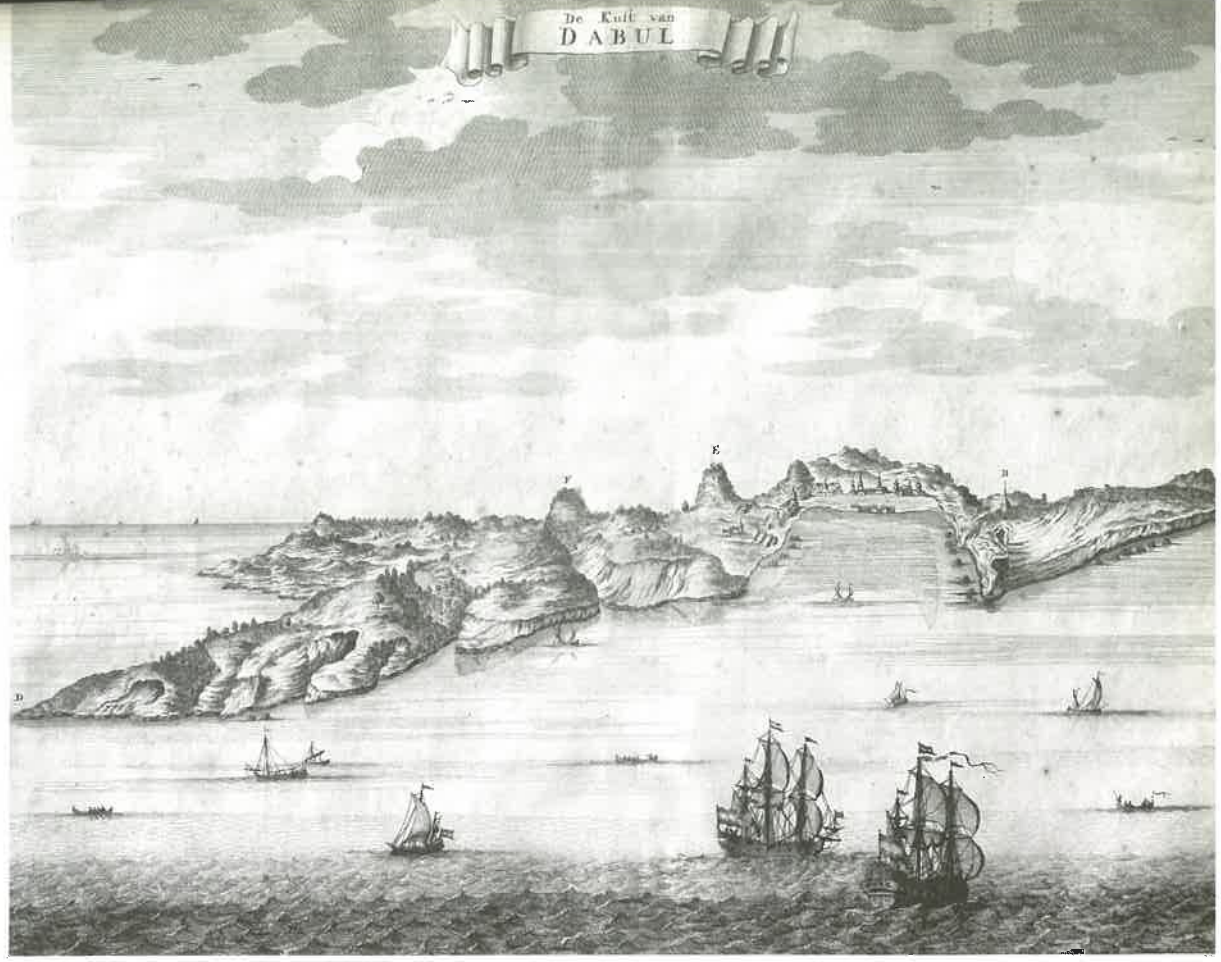
an important and commercial centre for many centuries. The Arab geographers and travellers who journeyed throughout Asia, particularly during the pax Islamica from eighth century AD onwards used the port of Daibul and mention it frequently. The commercial revival of the region from the tenth to the thirteenth century when the Mongol invasions destroyed the Abbasid empire,

> received its impetus from two centres, one located in the north, that is Kabul, and the other in the south, that is Kandahar and Daibul. The contact with foreign trade, maintained at these points continued unabated and the routes converging to or forking from these places became much frequented tracks henceforth.[17]

The most likely site for Daibul of AD 711, complete with the first mosque in the subcontinent, is that of Bhanbhore about forty miles north-east of Karachi. The commercial traffic which was carried on from Baghdad and Basra and went throughout Asia, came to the Indian subcontinent, either to the mouth of the Indus (i.e., to Daibul) through Balochistan or to the Punjab through Kabul and Ghazni. The ports of Sindh were changeable however:

Ashk-ul Bilad (c. AD 1100) Sindh and the adjoining countries.





A Dutch print of Daibul. This could be a depiction of Daibul (on the coast of Sindh), or Dabul, which is further down the Malabar coast.

> Currachee is fortified with a thick mud wall upon which some guns are planted. No vessel can batter it from the sea as they are obliged to be at a distance of at least three miles from it but their guns could cover the landing of the troops abreast of the place of anchorage. A vessel of more than two hundred tons could not safely cross Currachee bar and if she entered in a hostile manner, she might expect to find herself surrounded by all the dinghies then lying there and they would often be more than a dozen, carrying guns, some of them as heavy as her own and each of perhaps more men, for such an occasion of attack there would be no scarcity of volunteers.[19]

In 1830 the deserting soldier, inveterate traveller, and possible spy, Charles Masson, visited the town of Karachi and left behind a description:

> Karachee, although not a large town has much trade; it is surrounded by dilapidated mud walls, provided with towers, on which a few crazy guns are mounted. The suburbs, extensive, and generally comprising huts, are inhabited by fishermen and mariners. The port has one hundred vessels, of all sizes and descriptions, belonging to it, and its dunghies venture to Daman, Bombay, and Calicat, also to Gwadar and Maskat. The harbour is commodious for small craft, and is spacious, extending about two miles inwards, at which distance from its mouth, the town is seated.[20]

Thatta suffered a terrible fate when the Portuguese, coming in at the request of a 'King of Sind' in AD 1555 ravaged, looted and destroyed this highly civilized city of 400 colleges and started the decline of the region. This infamous act of the Portuguese clearly indicated the future of the history of the Indian subcontinent where a highly developed civilization would be a helpless prey to the naval powers of Europe. The decline of the Mughal power in the eighteenth century and the rising importance of trade with the Europeans who came to Indian ports by sea, made a more permanent sea port necessary for Sindh. The eighteenth century Kalhora and Talpur rulers of Sindh decided to develop Karachi, a suitable natural harbour, as the port of Sindh.

In 1799 Nathan Crowe of the Bombay Civil Service landed in Karachi and proceeded inland to set up his factory. He was, however, not allowed to live in Karachi, he believed because of the jealousy of the merchants of Karachi but possibly because the Amirs of Sindh were well aware of the track record of the East India Company with regard to the ports of the subcontinent. It was after all several decades since they had used the Calcutta and Madras settlements to establish their dominion over sizeable portions of India. Crowe gives a description of Karachi at the end of the eighteenth century which clearly indicates the intentions of the British towards the city:

Shah Abdul Latif examining a patient. Late 18th century. A painting by Kalkurni.

only important states outside British control. Ranjit Singh had established his powerful Sikh kingdom in the Punjab taking his control right up to Peshawar. The British were anxious to maintain friendly relations with him and did not expect to use his state as a passage for their army whenever the need arose. The alternative route was obviously Sindh and the Indus. The rulers of Sindh were less militarily powerful than Ranjit Singh, although they had successfully maintained their independence and even added to their territories in the face of the Sikh threat. Well aware of the expanding British power they, nevertheless, hoped to maintain their independence and neutrality through a mixture of diplomacy and avoidance of direct involvement in British Indian affairs. In the face of the realities of the politics in the subcontinent this was to prove a vain hope. Already Nathan Crowe had hinted at the use Sindh could be put to for the British in the developing 'great game' in Central Asia:

> It would make Sindian help likely if attack on Afghanistan became necessary; it would make it possible for the British to foment a revolution against Kabul, if this proved necessary or desirable; it would preclude the entry of the French, Afghans, or Marathas; it would be an excellent centre from which to spy on Afghanistan.[24]

A fakir of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. A 19th century print.

The importance of the island of Manora as the strategic point guarding the harbour of Karachi was realised by Mir Fatehali Talpur who became the ruler of Sindh in 1797. He fortified the island and appointed a separate governor for it. About the island of Manora, Masson says

> On a high hill, or eminence, overlooking the entrance to the harbour on the left hand, as it is approached from the sea, is the fort or castle of Manorah, garrisoned by a small party of Jukias; it is said there are many guns in it, but it is unexplained who are to work them. The eminence slopes to the beach, on the town side, where there is a circular tower, on which four guns are said, whether true or not, to be placed. These constitute the defences of the harbour, whose entrance is well defined, having, opposite to the hill Manaroh, five detached rocks and a sandbank exposed at low water. Karachee has a cool climate.[21]

To Masson also is attributed a description of the town of Karachi itself at this time

> The town is enclosed by a low mud wall strengthened by unshapely circular towers on many of which a piece or two of unserviceable ordnance is mounted. It has two gates on the opposite sides of east and west. [Masson is obviously referring to the two gates of the town Mithadar (sweet water gate) and Kharadar (salt water gate) which faced the green belt and wells and the sea respectively.] The principal street or bazaar extending from one to the other. Within the walls are wells but the water is too saline in taste to be available as beverage and the inhabitants get supply themselves from pools of water without the town. There is a large tank always abounding with water near the gardens on Tatta road, but the liquid is reputed 'sungheen' or heavy, and is seldom used. The bazaar of Karachee is narrow and in many places covered to exclude heat. It is fairly supplied with shops, and in it are several respectable merchants and bankers.[22]

Commander Carless who was deputed with the task of surveying the coast of Karachi also wrote an informative description about the town at this time

> The population of Karachi consists of seamen and fishermen, and their total number is nearly 14000.... The Hindu merchants and traders of Karachi are wealthy and resourceful. Their trade offices are doing roaring business as far away as Multan, Hirat, Kabul, Qandhar and Muscat.... Mohana clan is very brave and hard working and is settled in Karachi in large numbers. Mirs of Sind have appointed two governors in Karachi, one is Hasan bin Bachho Khan Sobedar and the other one is Khair Muhammad who is the Commander of the Manora fort.[23]

By the last quarter of the eighteenth century Karachi thus had been established as the main port of Sindh which the caravans from the north used as the port of their sea borne trade. The Talpur rulers were well aware of the rising importance of Karachi. They had appointed a governor for the town and a separate governor for Manora island.

The development of Karachi as the port of Sindh coincided with the rise of British imperial interest in the area. By the second and third decades of the nineteenth century the British had become the 'paramount power' in India. Sindh and the Punjab were the

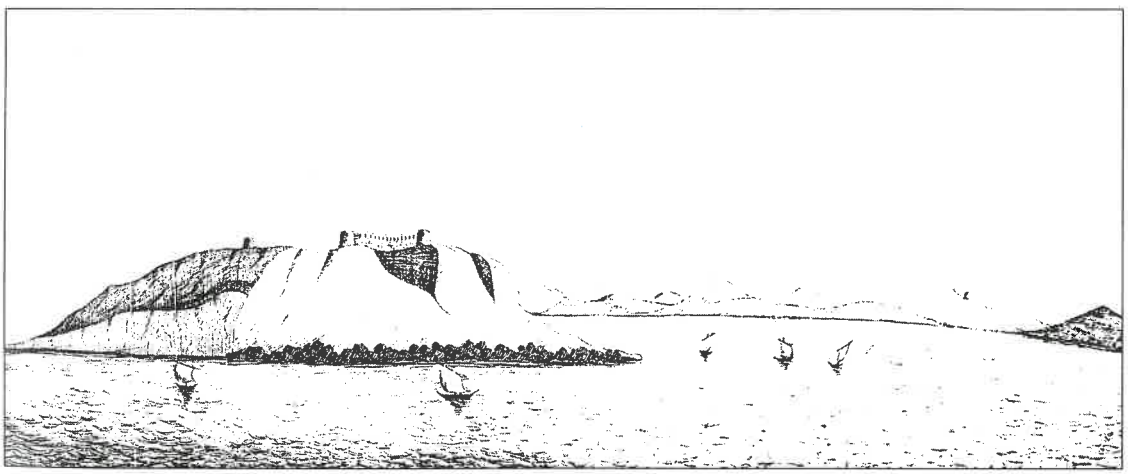
In 1830 Alexander Burnes asked for permission from the rulers of Sindh to sail up the Indus to the Punjab, ostensibly with a gift of horses for Ranjit Singh. The real purpose of this journey was to survey the Indus and to get a report on its potential as the 'frontier' for British India. At the same time the East India Company sought to make treaties with the Amirs to open the region to British traders. Dr James Burnes, Alexander's brother, had come to Sindh just a couple of years earlier to treat one of the Amirs and had given a glowing account of the commercial possibilities and the wealth of Sindh.

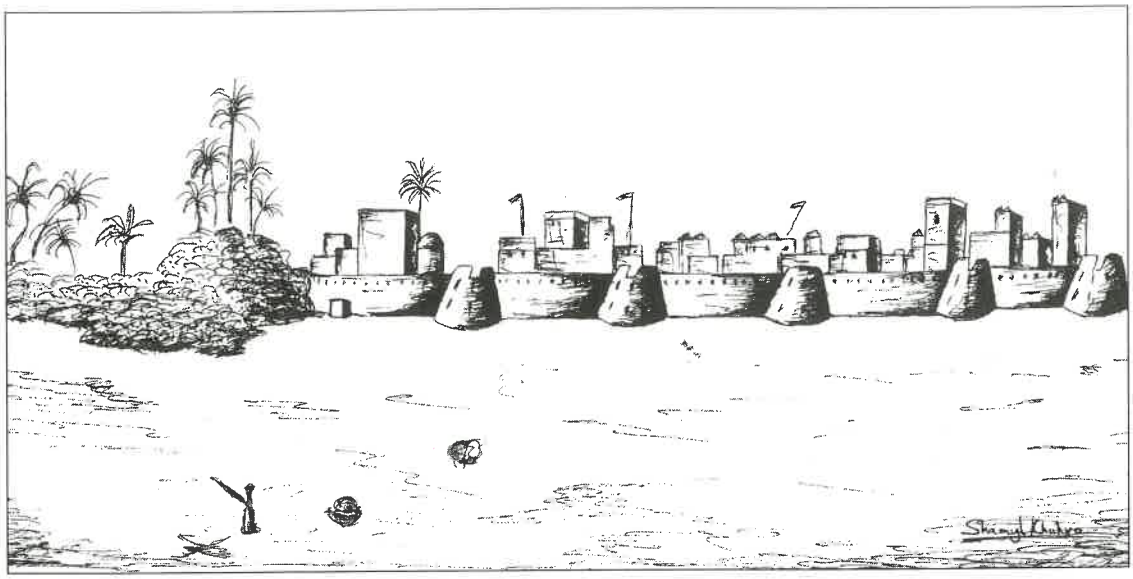
Between the years 1830 and 1839 several British officials and travellers visited Karachi and reported on its particulars, such as the town and the facilities it provided, its climate, and its trade potential. They commented on its defences and pronounced their opinion that it was a weakly defended' town and harbour, and the British would have very little trouble taking it. The climate of opinion in the Imperial corridors was definitely moving in the direction of the conquest of Sindh. Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, was dreaming of immense wealth: 'If I can open channels of commerce to Central Asia and if I can make the Indus the thoroughfare for navigation, that gold and silver road...which it ought to be, I shall not care much else.'[26]

The British negotiated a number of treaties with the Amirs 'opening the Indus' to their commercial activity, but very soon there were differences over the question of the charging of tolls at Karachi. The British insisted that merchants under their protection should not have to pay taxes even when they were natives of Sindh. The Amirs pointed out that quite apart from the amount of revenues they would lose, the treaties with the British had specified that there would be no interference with the internal affairs of the state. Lord Bentinck had given

> The Ameers every assurance that the internal trade of their country would not be interfered with. Nevertheless the amirs agreed to remove their most recent taxes but claimed that they

Manora Island and the Talpur Fort adapted from Masson by Shamyl Khuhro.





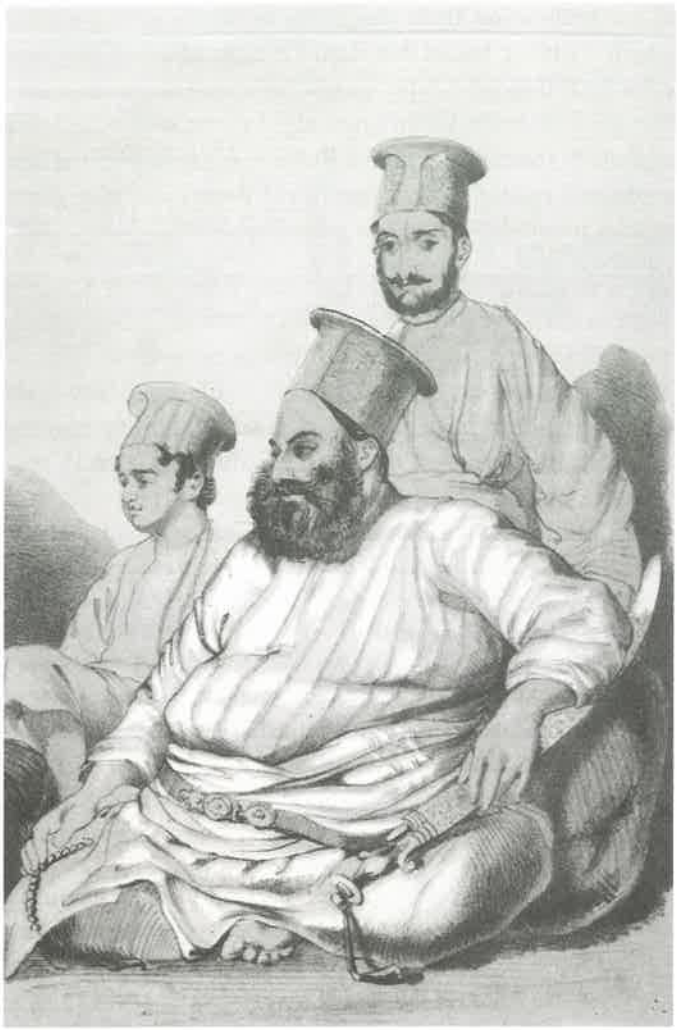
Town walls of Karachi, 19th century, adapted from Masson by Shamyl Khuhro.

Crowe thus pointed out the importance of Sindh in the interests of British imperial strategy in India and the countries to the north-west. At the time of Crowe's mission, the expanding power of the French under Napoleon was felt to be the greatest danger to the British interest in India and this threat grew even greater after the Franco-Russian alliance (Treaty of Tilsit) of 1807. Persia and Afghanistan were seen to be vulnerable to the expanding northern powers and Sindh was the key factor in the security of the Indian subcontinent. After the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 and in view of the subsequent predominance and expansion of Russia in Central Asia, British fears about the security of north western India increased. The disintegration of the Durrani Empire and its collapse in 1818 had left a power vacuum in the region and it was only after some time that Dost Mohammed was able to establish his control over Kabul. By this time there was little left of Ahmed Shah Durrani's kingdom and the Kingdom of Kabul extended barely a hundred miles around the capital. This weakness of the Afghan kingdom and the defeat of the Persians at the hands of the Russians in 1813 rang the alarm bells for the British in India and Lord Ellenborough, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company, expressed these fears: 'The Directors are much afraid of the Russians, so am I…I feel confident we shall have to fight the Russians on the Indus.'[25]

British policy makers including the Duke of Wellington, the victor of Waterloo, were convinced that Russia had its eye on India and that this drive south could only be pre-empted by controlling the Indus. This conviction would provide the motive force for British policy towards Sindh for the next few decades.

'A Common Sindian' drawing by Dr James Burnes, 1839.

'Sindian Soldiers' early 19th century.



H.H. Mir Muhammad Nasir Khan Talpur with his sons.

(especially Nasir Khan) thus would lose a considerable amount annually.[27]

The British were determined however that the Indus should be free of tolls and Auckland wrote optimistically, 'I look upon the Indus as the high road from London to Delhi and it requires but good arrangements to make the travelling easy.'[28]

This dream was never to be realized however, as the navigation of the Indus was to prove too difficult and camel caravans would continue to carry the trade to Karachi rather than sail down the Indus like Nearchus, through the delta to the sea.

The cat and mouse game with the rulers of Sindh would not continue long and soon an opportunity arose to give the British an excuse to annex Sindh to their dominion. The occasion was provided by the need for the Bombay army to be sent up to Afghanistan. The Amirs reluctantly gave permission for the army to proceed through Sindh and the Bolan Pass. The Army of the Indus made its way through Sindh to Afghanistan in 1838 in aid of Shah Shuja as the British candidate for the throne of Afghanistan. The incumbent ruler Dost Mohammed was removed and Shah Shuja, a far less competent man, was put in his place. Predictably, the volatile Afghans did not tolerate this situation for long and the British found themselves in a far more complicated situation than they had bargained for. Their strategic needs now required that the 'line of communications be fully secured'. This policy meant that the British were now ready to establish their direct control of Sindh.

A Talpur soldier and a bania (Hindu of the Vanya Caste), early 19th century.

Wagheries or Pirates on the Sinhdian coast, 19th century, artist unknown.

Hindu traders of Shikarpur, early 19th century.

Sindetic Hindoostan, or the countries occupied by Scinde or the Indus and its branches. Map by John Cary, 1813.

Sir Charles Napier on horseback.

The first practical step in this direction was taken by the occupation of Karachi in 1839, a clear example of *force majeure.*

In February 1839 Admiral Frederick Maitland, while transporting the Bombay reserve force under Brigadier Valiant, claimed he was fired upon from the Fort of Manora. He immediately bombarded the fort and captured the town. Pottinger, the British Resident, reported that the only shot fired was probably 'the salute customary when a square rigged vessel came in sight or approached the place.' The Amirs even insisted that there had been no shot in the cannon at the time. Pottinger later investigated the matter and found that

> There was not a single ball in the fort that would fit any of the guns and that the whole supply of gunpowder amounted to six pounds which was kept in an earthen pot. The entire garrison consisting of sixteen men, many of whom were armed only with swords, were standing outside the fort admiring the *Wellesley* when the firing began. The Governor of Karachi informed Pottinger that the landing was not to be resisted and that he had orders from the Amirs to co-operate with the British in every way.[29]

The Amirs continued to demand that Karachi be returned to their control but it was too late. Just three years later the rest of Sindh was to be annexed to the British Empire.

TWO

THE MAKING OF A COLONIAL PORT

HAMIDA KHUHRO

The conquest of Sindh in 1843 saw the establishment of Karachi as the administrative capital of the province. Hyderabad, so closely associated with the Kalhoras and the Talpurs, although a working capital at this time, was considered too insecure. Karachi was also the most convenient location for a maritime colonial power. The city was to be developed to serve as 'the port nearest to Europe'—a military necessity, the importance of which was particularly emphasized by the 1857 Indian War of Independence which put communication from the north of India with the ports of Calcutta and Bombay in jeopardy. Karachi was also seen as the port that would open up not only the hinterland of Sindh itself, but the entire north western areas of the subcontinent and also be the port of areas to the north-west, which could thus be safeguarded from the embrace of the Russian bear.

The colonial city of Karachi developed quite distinctly from the old native city with its twin quarters of Kharadar and Mithadar. The old city lived alongside the new one and was the heart of the native business life. It had housed the rich *banias* who had had their worldwide trade based on the *hundie* which could provide easy credit to the merchant or traveller anywhere in the world. The traditional trade had its own caravan routes and its links with Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia. These links reached out all the way to central Asian cities and went as far as Moscow. The caravans went to a chain of legendary cities which were strung together by centuries old trading ties—Karachi, Hyderabad, Shikarpur, Kandahar, Herat, and the cities of Persia. There was also the northern route of Kabul, Khiva, Yarkand, Samarkand, Bukhara and north to Russia, and east to Sinkiang and China. Fairs played a great part in the promotion of this trade and were held in these great cities where merchants from all over the area flocked.

The acquisition of Karachi by the British in 1839 and of the rest of Sindh in 1843 changed the direction of the trade from the traditional land routes to the north and south east, to sea borne trade south to Asian ports and west to Europe. Shikarpur had

Manora church and lighthouse..

But the British found through experience that the Indus was not a suitable river for navigation with its seasonal variations and uncertainties. Boats found the delta difficult to negotiate and the port of Karachi was inconveniently placed for the river traffic. Gradually they discovered that the romantic hopes of successive governors-general who had expected the Indus to be 'a highway of commerce' could not be realized and alternative arrangements had to be made to carry the trade up country. The alternative arrangements, a combination of rail and river transport, would make Karachi the true gateway of the north-west.

But before Karachi could take its place as the pearl of the east it had to go some way. The old town of Karachi, with its narrow streets and 'oriental squalor', was not to the taste of the incoming rulers who set about building their own Karachi as soon as it was possible. Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh, became the first governor of the province. He established himself in Karachi and began laying the plans which would bring Karachi into the front ranks of the British cities of the subcontinent. He set up a rudimentary administration dividing Sindh into three 'Collectorates', Karachi, Hyderabad, and Shikarpur and placed his army officers at the head of each collectorate. Colonel Keith Young, who was appointed Judge Advocate General to be in charge of dispensing justice in the province, was sanguine in his remarks on his arrival in the province: 'Here I am at last in the promised land of Scinde, and not a bad place does it appear to be.'[2] But though the weather in September seemed to him to be quite pleasant he was not so pleased with the town.

'Tin Lizzie' on Elphinstone Street, early 20th century.

Hindu temple, Manora, Karachi.

Karachi harbour, 19th century.

lost its importance by the collapse of the Durrani Empire and the rise of the Sikh kingdom. The commerce of Multan and Amritsar was already flourishing at its expense. Now the sea emporium Karachi took pride of place as the trading city of the region and the rapidly developing administrative capital of the new colonial regime.

Brought up on the classics, for quite a long time the British were under the impression that the Indus river would be the key to the commerce and the defence of the north west of India and beyond. To gain control of the Indus had been one of the main planks of their policy for some decades and this had now been achieved. But they soon found that they had been labouring under a misapprehension of the role of the Indus in the life of the region. It was true that Alexander had explored the delta of the Indus and had sent his fleet down the river to the sea, and the belief that the Indus would be the main means of commercial transport died hard. Even in the 1850s English entrepreneurs were writing of the past history and future potential of the great river

> When the rapid progress of Mohammedan arms had wrested Egypt from the Byzantine power, and thus closed the overland route of Suez to the Greek merchants, they forthwith turned to other means and sought out a new channel, by which the productions of the East might be transmitted to the great emporium of the West. The route thus discovered was that by the Indus.[1]

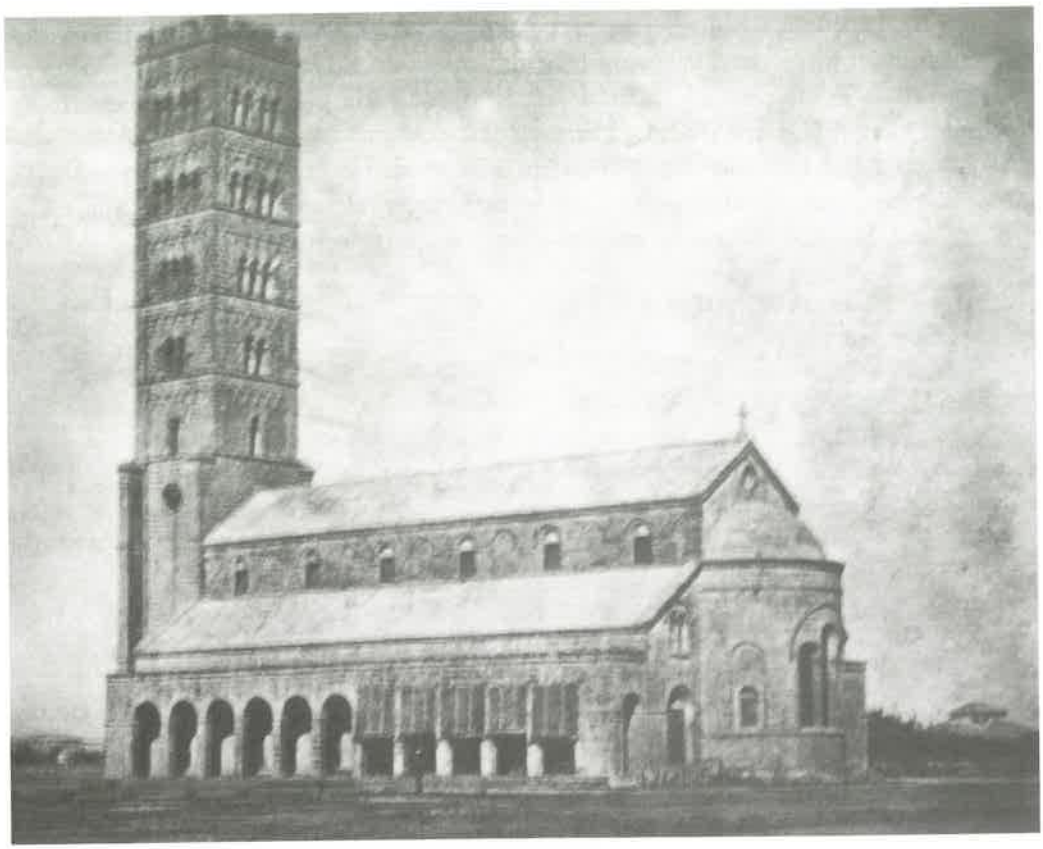
But apart from a scattering of colonial bungalows and offices, a club or two, and the barracks, there was little to attract the newcomer in the brown vistas of colonial Karachi. Colonel Young was reminded of a verse of Sir Walter Scott, written to describe the Scottish scene but which he found applicable to Karachi:

The Holy Trinity Church (modified), recent photograph.

Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen,
Earth clad in russet scorned the lively green
No birds except as birds of passage flew,
No bee was heard to hum, no dove to coo,
No streams as amber smooth, as amber clear,
Were seen to glide, or heard to warble here.

But in spite of this desolate scene Colonel Young managed to be entertained royally

> Had a grand dinner at the Persian prince's last night. Aga Khan is his name. He married a sister of the late King of Persia, and came to this part of the country via Kurrachee. He is a great knave, but he has an excellent cook. The dinner was to the General, and there were about a dozen of us. Such pillaus and stews and things of all kinds to drink as well as eat, champagne and beer included. I preferred the sherbets, but they were rather sweet. The feast was held in a summer-house in a garden near the town, and commenced with a profusion of sweets and fruits. There being no knives, one of our hosts peeled an apple with a pocket-knife, and cut bits off which they handed to us. This of course was little touched, the sweets being principally compositions of ghee and sugar. The pillaus, etc., followed and were heaped on the table till there was not a vacant inch of table-cloth to be seen, and indeed the dishes were piled one over the other. Dishes, however, and plates were rather scarce, and large chuppaties served their place. I ate of several things, and much approved of pillaus, a kind of minced collop, some stuff like pish-pash served in bowls, and the common little kabobs which were brought in on small spits, and pulled off in the most primitive style by one of our hosts, using a chapatee to hold them with. A nautch finished the entertainment...[5]

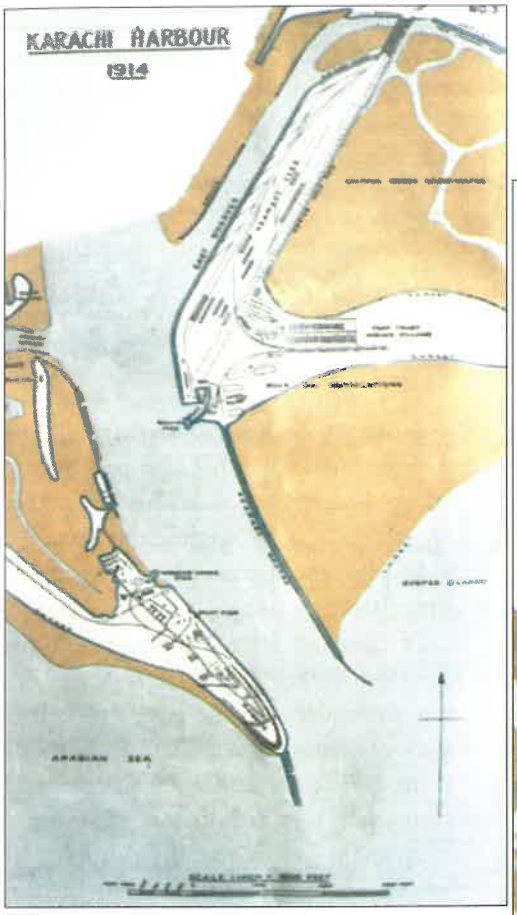


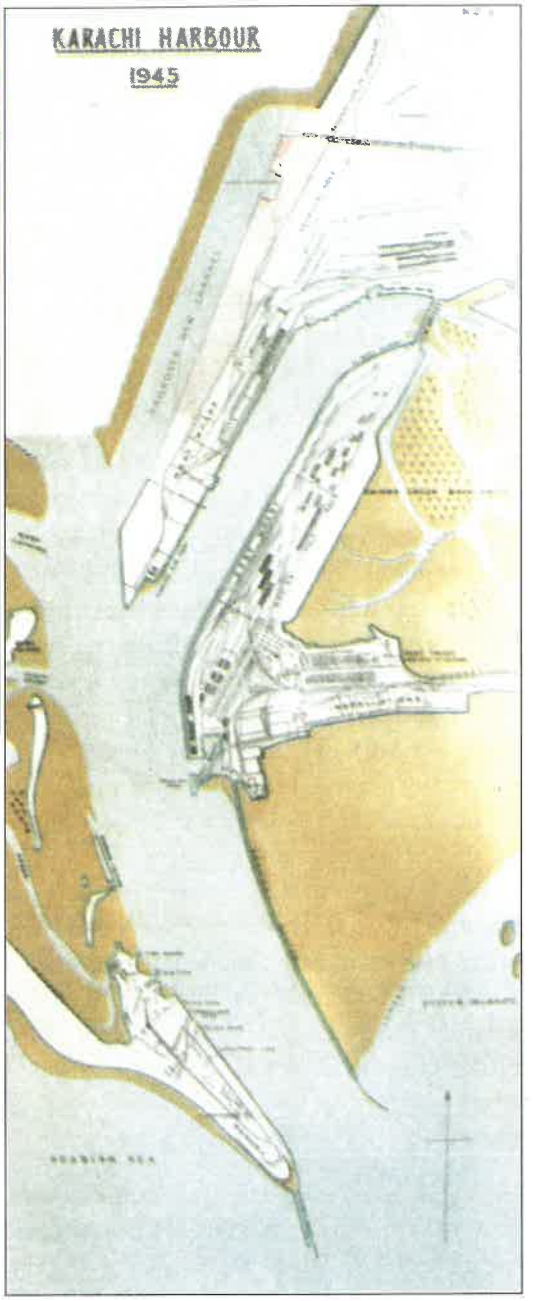
The Holy Trinity Church, Karachi, 1855.

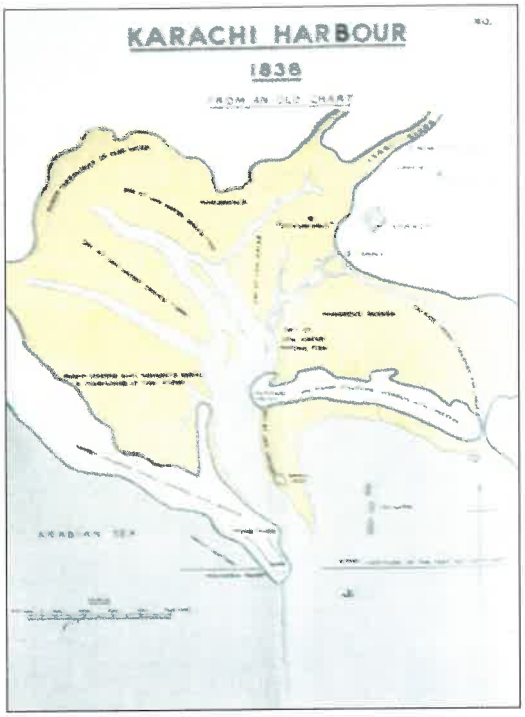
> A dirty-looking, mud built, walled town, with low, dirty. swampy ground about it. The cantonments, about two miles, like so many tents on a bare plain: not a tree to be seen; low hills are in the distance, and to the northward of the entrance to the harbour.[3]

Apart from the 'ragged, sandy, barren appearance of the place generally...' Keith Young noticed that the style of houses and the number of donkeys were very similar to those in Egypt.

The new Judge Advocate General went to call on Napier who had not been too well: 'I found him in bed, looking, I thought, very wild and haggard, and certainly most particularly uncomfortable, with a dirty blanket over, him.'[4] It was this highly eccentric Napier who had a vision of Karachi as the great commercial entrepot and important not only as the gateway to the north west of India, but the port nearest to Europe. He was now ensconced in his Governor's House, a basic structure with a few rooms and deep verandahs with extensive grounds. It was to be the spot to be marked out for future governors' houses.


KARACHI HARBOUR
1914


KARACHI HARBOUR
1945


KARACHI HARBOUR
1838
FROM AN OLD CHART

NO.2.
KARACHI HARBOUR
1873

from the monsoons and could be used at any time of the year, and served vast areas of the north west of India as well as the countries beyond. But much needed to be done. Obviously the most urgent task therefore was to take up the work of improving the harbour and of the system of communications linking it with the interior of the province, the Punjab, and of the regions of the north west. Only when this was done would the full potential of the Karachi port be realized. Although Napier laid out the plans for the harbour and some preliminary work was done, it was not as speedy or efficient; and although fair amounts of money were expended, it would not be until well after Napier's departure that the harbour would be adequately organized.

Sir Richard Burton.

At the time of the conquest the port had been functioning for about a hundred years. Its annual revenue was Rs 200,000 apart from the duty on opium which amounted to Rs 100,000 to Rs 150,000. About three quarters of the income was from imports.

When the port of Karachi was occupied by the British it consisted of just one anchorage. This was situated in a sheltered lagoon between the island of Manora and Keamari and here small sailing ships could ride safely at anchor, in almost any weather. The anchorage was naturally protected from the open sea by a sandbank or bar opposite Manora point, which the larger sailing ships could only cross at high tide. The anchorage was three miles from the mainland by the shortest route, which was along a narrow channel not navigable even for small boats at low tide. The other approach to the town was by the Chinna Creek, three miles to the east of Keamari, which was wider and deeper but involved a circuitous route of over seven miles. Whatever the approach used, the passengers and goods had to be transported to the mainland by shallow draft *bunder* boats. This was the experience of Keith Young on his arrival in Sindh

> We anchored soon after eight some two miles or so from the shore, but a considerable distance from the place of disembarkation.... A little steamer came off to us, the Auckland,

Military barracks, Manora Island.

Sir Bartle Frere.

The conqueror of Sindh, Napier, had the ear of the Governor-General Lord Ellenborough who' shared his dreams of a great future for the province

> ...in Sind we must do all for futurity, we have to create an Egypt, and we must not allow little views of present advantage to interfere with the realization of the greatest future objects. We must redeem the character we have lost: in India, on this new field for the exercise of the European mind in the administration of an Asiatic Province.[6]

The Government of India, sitting in the opposite corner of India in Calcutta, gave a free hand to Napier to make his plans for Sindh. Eccentric and with delusions of grandeur, Napier set about to exercise his mind in the administration of this Asiatic province. Many of the ideas developed by Napier and his administration were very progressive. He realised that this Young Egypt was, like the old one, dependent on the river for its life. So one of his earliest acts was to set up an Irrigation Department. The head of this department was Colonel Walter Scott, a nephew of the great nineteenth century novelist Sir Walter Scott, and as his assistant he appointed Lieutenant Richard Burton, who would later acquire fame as a traveller and orientalist. Burton spent more time observing life in Sindh and studying the language rather than working on the canals. Richard Burton made a scholarly study of the Sindhi language and his report on the language would eventually persuade the government to make Sindhi with its Arabic script, as against the advocates of the Devanagiri script, the official language of the province. Making a survey of the irrigation the engineers of the Canal Department produced a report which recommended a barrage on the river at Sukkur which would allow a perennial supply of water to the canals of Sindh, a proposal which was implemented in the next century. The other task that was assigned to Burton by Napier was to report on the brothels of Karachi. The report that he gave to the governor was quite unique in the annals of colonial literature and although some brief glimpses of it are available to the diligent reader of colonial record, this report from the translator of *A Thousand and One Nights*, appears to be lost and its discovery continues to be a challenge to the historian and to the collector of curious literary pieces.

Much of Napier's attention was given to the progress of Karachi, particularly to the improvement of the harbour which was central to any well laid plans for the growth of the city. The potential for the port was great. The harbour of Karachi was well sheltered

alternative to Calcutta for the internal security of the Indian Empire. Once the events of 1857 had emphasized the importance of British sea power in her ability to hold India, Sindh at once fell into place as a 'bastion of Imperial defence'.

As soon as it was decided that improvements of the harbour be undertaken seriously, the best advice possible at the time was taken. The Court of Directors asked James Walker, the President of the Institute of Civil Engineers in England and highly experienced in the matter of harbour works, to design the improvements at Karachi. His proposals to some extent modified by discussion and by engineers on the spot were accepted by the government.

By 1873 major preliminary work was completed which resulted in the adequate deepening of the entrance channel. The other improvements that were completed by 1873 included the cutting of an opening in the Napier Mole near the Karachi end and the construction of the bridge across the opening; closing of the former entrance to the Chinna Creek backwaters from the sea; construction of the Keamari Groyne and lastly, the construction of the Manora breakwater. The funding of the projects and their completion owed a great deal to Frere who, as Governor of Bombay in the 1860s, pursued the matter vigorously with the Government of India which was pleading poverty in the wake of the 1857 operations.

In 1886 Karachi Port Trust was constituted and in 1909 a full time chairman was appointed. Karachi was now given the status of one of the four major ports of India. In the second phase of development, from 1873 to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the projects that were undertaken were those of constructing wharves and jetties, which had not been done in the first phase. The Napier Mole was widened by reclamation to accommodate railway sidings and became known as the Keamari Yard. The new wharves were built not only to accommodate the existing trade but to anticipate its expansion. The bulk of this trade was the export of wheat. By the beginning of the First World War, Karachi was the largest wheat exporting port of the British empire with a record shipment of 1,380,000 tons in the financial year 1912–13.[10] The Manora Light House was constructed in 1909 and was one of the most powerful in the world at the time, the light being visible up to eighteen miles in clear weather 'and the loom anything up to seventy miles.'[11] At the same time, a number of wharves were constructed increasing the capacity of the port. The bulk oil pier was completed in 1909 and the Burmah Oil Company, as well as the Standard Oil Company set up their establishments there. In the same year, 177 acres of tidal swamp was taken by the port authorities from the municipal authorities for land reclamation. On this reclaimed land Thole Produce Yard was constructed.

By 1914 over 350 acres of valuable land had been added to the port area. Thus by the outbreak of the First World War, the Karachi port was well enough equipped to become the main base for Britain and its allies' operations in Iraq. By now it had climbed in the

> drawing too much water to go over the bar that crosses the harbour. After running about four miles, we got into smaller boats, which took us within a few yards of the pier, and canoes put us on shore. It was near high water, for when the tide is out, you cannot get within some hundred yards of the shore.[7]

The picture would change out of recognition in the next century. The first phase of necessary improvements took about thirty years to complete. The first important project initiated by Napier was the joining of the Keamari island with the mainland by a causeway or 'mole' which was completed in 1854.

This enabled wheeled traffic to approach within a few hundred yards of the anchorage and provided great convenience, not only for merchandise but also for people who no longer had to travel in a variety of boats to get to the ships. At the same time, the anchorage was deepened and extended and improvements made so that ocean-going ships could enter in almost any conditions of weather.

In 1847 Sir Charles Napier left Sindh which was joined with the Bombay Presidency for administrative purposes. The province was now in charge of a senior official who was designated Commissioner-in-Sindh. Sindh was a 'Non-Regulation' province and the Commissioner-in-Sindh was a very powerful officer who was practically a master of all he surveyed. In 1851 a remarkable man, Sir Bartle Frere, came to Sindh to occupy this post. Frere proved to be the most imaginative and energetic administrator of Sindh. The period of Frere's commissionership which lasted from 1851 to 1859 saw the plans for the development of the harbour, as well as other schemes for the improvement of communications and of the province in general. Frere initiated major engineering schemes and got the support of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, who fully supported Frere's schemes

> Without a good harbour at Karachi I think you would never have really good trade by the way of Sind. But with a good harbour there, I know not why it should be very far behind Bombay.[8]

Frere had already undertaken the removal of the sandbar at the mouth of the harbour which prevented the entry of bigger ships and also the completion of the Napier Mole Bridge. The 1857 War of Independence which enveloped the whole of northern India and even interrupted communication with the capital Calcutta, dramatically emphasized the importance of Karachi as an alternative port for northern India

> The best possible port at Karachi would be needed because of its importance for the defence of the north west border against some outside invader, but it is even more important for the import and deployment of troops in this part of India.[9]

When the crisis occurred in 1857, requiring highly increased activity at the Karachi port, the existing facilities could not cope and demonstrated to the administration the urgency of completing the work at Karachi harbour. Strategically, Karachi had become an

Cantonment Railway Station, Karachi.

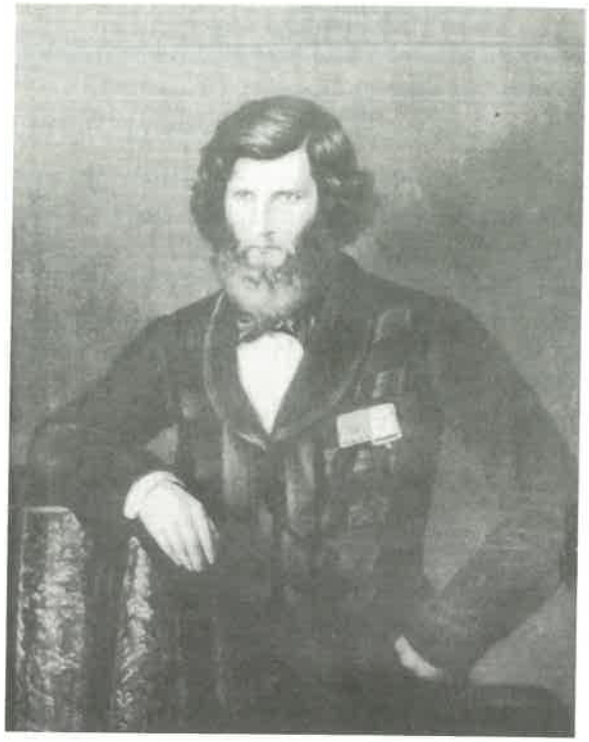
Acc. 9796

short of Karachi, and another canal would have to be projected. But attractive though this option was there was still the question of difficulties of navigating the river in some areas, particularly above Multan which was 'shallow and tortuous and almost impossible to navigate.' Also by the fifties when the canal was being discussed railways had been introduced into India and had enough capital available to make the railway alternative more feasible. So although Jacob's arguments for a canal make sense even today, and the best solution would have been to have both the canal and the railway, the contemporary case for railways was more powerful. As Frere put it

> ...of the two projects I prefer the railway as being more the means of attaining the desired object, as regards the position of the river terminus, speed and cheapness, as the more profitable; the less liable to mishaps from unforeseen accidents, and caprices of the river; the more comprehensive as regards the classes of traffic it will accommodate; but more especially because there is no rival or alternative means of ensuring the speedy rivalry of a railway.[14]

Elphinstone Street, 1917 (now Zebunissa Street).

Frere also pointed out the all important consideration of finance, More-



John Jacob of Jacobabad.

order of importance to becoming the third most important port in India.

It was not, however, sufficient just to improve the harbour and the port of Karachi in order to make it the port of this region of the subcontinent and beyond. By the time Frere became Commissioner-in-Sindh it had become clear that the Indus was not suitable for large scale and all weather commercial traffic. By 1862 it was still possible to say

> ...although steamers have been running between Karachi and Mithunkote for the last twenty years, by far the greater amount of goods still goes on camels.[12]

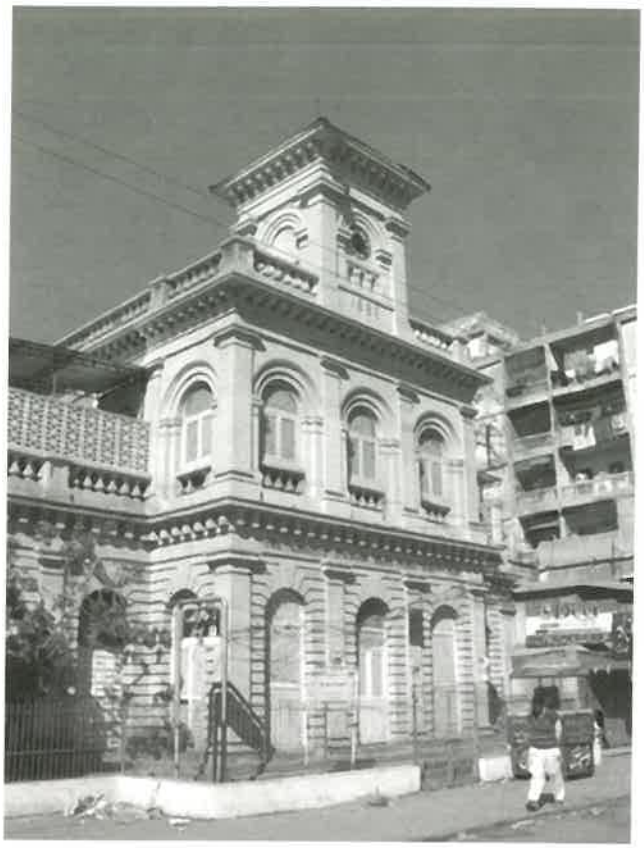
The alternative was either to fall back on the time honoured camel caravans, or find other efficient means of transport. Two options appeared to be available to Frere. One was to build a canal to connect the Karachi harbour with the river at Kotri or Gharo and the other was to build a railway connecting the harbour with the river. Some differences of opinion occurred between Frere, 'a man of transcendent ability' and John Jacob, the innovative and energetic tamer of Sindh's northern frontiers who had 'clear and decided opinions'. To begin with, Jacob strongly advocated the construction of a navigable canal to link Karachi with the Indus which would ensure safe and direct communication by water between the Indus and the sea port at all seasons. It would also afford an ample supply of fresh water to the city of Karachi for its needs well into the future. 'Cultivation along banks of the proposed canal would also provide it with fresh supplies which had to be brought in from some distance in the interior.'[13]

The relative merits of a canal and the railway were discussed to bypass the delta and link Karachi with the river. The report by a Lieutenant Chapman suggested that the canal would reduce the distance of the water route considerably. He suggested Jherruk as the point at which the head of a link canal should be constructed as it was the nearest permanent river bank and was also conveniently near a large town. An earlier suggestion that Kalri canal be used as the link canal was rejected by Chapman as it would reduce the usefulness of the canal as an irrigation channel, and also as it would stop fifty miles

State Bank of Pakistan, Karachi, formerly Imperial Bank of India.

The old District and Session Court, Karachi.

PHOTOGRAPH BY YASMEEN LARI



Eduljee Dinshaw Dispensary, Saddar, Karachi.

over a railway would meet the ready support from capitalists at a distance, who would be less likely to view a canal as a favourable investment.[15]

The problem with the canal was of course that it had been left too late and railways had displaced canals in England itself. The investors were now firmly behind the railways as the more profitable alternative.

> ...the traffic would probably be sixty or eighty per cent greater than at present before the line can possibly be opened, however speedily it may be commenced; and the making and still more the opening of the line, will give it a vast impetus.[16]

The solution that was eventually found was to build the railway from Karachi to Kotri on the Indus on the opposite bank from Hyderabad. Kotri was also the depot of the Indus Flotilla, the company which carried the commercial traffic on the Indus. From Kotri the Indus Flotilla boats would carry the goods and the traffic to Multan from where the Punjab Railway would take them on to Lahore. In addition to the Indus Flotilla, Kotri was also a convenient spot for the trade which converged on Hyderabad from Rajputana, Cutch, upper and lower Sindh.

Jacob, with his Balochistan and Jacobabad orientation, could see no merit in taking the train to Hyderabad at all. He preferred that the railway be built towards the northwest, rather than go on the Left Bank and the Punjab. He could not succeed in convincing the investors or the government, and in the first phase the railway was built up to Kotri thus combining the rail and river transport from Karachi up to the Punjab.

A Sinde Railway Company was formed in 1854 which undertook to build the Sindh railway and was also responsible for the construction of the Punjab Railway from Multan to Lahore and Amritsar. This company also owned 'the flotilla of steam boats which plied on the Indus between Kotri and Multan, thus completing the system of transport

railway would accelerate their decline. The alternate line which was proposed by Jacob, going up the right bank of the river to Jacobabad and Balochistan would be built by the end of the century and so would a line from Hyderabad cast to Jodhpur and Marwar in Rajputana, linking Karachi with Delhi to the north and Bombay to the south. The building of this network of railways by the last quarter of the nineteenth century gave Karachi a chance to realize its potential as the sea port for the whole of north-west India.

In spite of its shortcomings and the drawbacks of the river link which would take until 1878 before it was replaced with a through railway line all the way to Lahore, the railway gave a great boost to the trade of Karachi and, although the Euphrates valley link did not come to anything, Karachi did serve the strategic needs of the empire as the Indian port nearest to Europe.

Karachi was also the obvious port from which British goods could be sent up to the Central Asian markets. The conquest of these markets and even those of areas under British control was not automatic, and Frere spared no efforts to win these markets for British goods. In the 1850s Russian 'chintzes' were reported to be selling better than

Supreme Court, formerly Victoria Museum.

between Karachi and Lahore. The Sindh–Punjab Railway was seen by its promoters as part of an ambitious scheme. It was to be part of a new short cut from India to England through the Euphrates valley. Karachi, as the nearest port to the Persian Gulf, was to be an integral part of the scheme. The enthusiasm with which it was taken up by administrators as well as investors in England gives an indication of the spirit of enterprise and optimism which characterized the British imperial mind in the nineteenth century.

On 29 April 1858 work was begun on the Sindh section of the railway. The distance was to be just over 108 miles and one line was opened for traffic on 11 May 1861. The Multan–Lahore section was completed by 1865, thus establishing a rail and river link from Karachi to Lahore. The railway line came in for a good deal of criticism notably from that old Sindh hand, Richard Burton who, revisiting Sindh in 1876 called it the 'the very worst chosen line in the British dominions.' Burton made his criticism on the grounds that the railway avoided the established towns of Jherruk, Thatta and Gharra 'the only places deserving mention in the Trans Indine valley'. Burton condemned the compromise which had been made as having

> succeeded admirably in avoiding the merits, and in combining the defects of both projects.... This iron road runs through a howling wilderness, which for one 'spell' of twenty miles, cannot supply even a drop of water. There is no hope for this desert: the Cairo–Suez line has restored prosperity to ancient 'Goshen', but there the rail runs along a sweet water canal.[17]

The fact was that by taking the shortest route to Kotri the railway avoided the most important towns between Karachi and Kotri which were the ones mentioned by Burton—Jherruk, Thatta and Gharra. By diverting traffic from these ancient towns the

Photograph by Marjorie Marguilies depicts horseman and syce wearing headgear—from the Chaukhandi tombs.

The trade of Karachi which was calculated as being worth Rs 1,221,500 in 1847–8 rose steadily and stood at Rs 8,000,000 in 1858 and went up to the enormous total of Rs 21,000,592 in 1863–4. This last figure was largely due to the American Civil War which caused a boom in the cotton exports of India. This figure was to fall sharply with the return of peace in the United States. The trade would not reach such heady figures again until the railway line was completed upto Lahore in the late seventies.

The improvement of the harbour and the construction of the railway brought Karachi more than anything else into the industrial age. The pace of life changed. The railway served the harbour where it had railway sidings and lifted goods for up country. The town itself was served by two railway stations, one of which was McLeod Road Station (now City Station) at the financial hub of Karachi and the other, Frere Street Station (now Cantonment Station), to serve the new colonial town and the military cantonment.

The city of Karachi had already begun to take shape by this time. The old town situated on the banks of the seasonal Lyari River, and with its river gate and sea gate at either end, continued to be the heart of traditional and 'native' trade.

> The old Town of Karachi deprived of its wall and much changed by sanitation and other innovations, but still retaining many of the old alleys to which Sir Richard Burton alluded.[19]

The trading bazaars flourished here and it would continue to be the centre of the business community well into the twentieth century; these bazaars flourish even now particularly the areas surrounding Kharadar and Mithadar such as Jodia Bazaar.

The colonial administration laid out plans for a new Karachi, adjacent to the old one extending from its edges, fanning from the coast on the south all the way to the north. The Napier Mole Bridge linked the Keamari island harbour with the mainland and then bifurcated into two major arteries, Bunder Road on the left and McLeod Road on the right, with the Merewether tower marking the divide. McLeod Road was the new business quarter of the town

> Between the Bunder and McLeod Roads, about half a mile behind the Clock Tower, was the old Kafila Serai, now absorbed into the Sind Madressah, where the camel caravans from Khorassan used to put up out side the city walls. On and between Bunder Road and McLeod Road beats the commercial heart of Karachi. Here all the leading firms have their places of business.[20]

Here was located the handsome Bank of Bombay designed by Strachan, the Judicial Commissioner's Court, the National Bank, and the offices of the commercial firms that had started business in Karachi. The railway station was conveniently situated in this business centre of colonial Karachi.

The Sind Club.

British goods in the bazaars of 'Cabul, Kandahar and Karachi'. Although this could have been due to the fact that their pattern and colour were more suited to the local taste, the government felt that it had to meet the challenge. Frere came up with the idea of using traditional means of a fair to popularize British goods with the local merchants, as well as those from Central Asia and Russia. Karachi was the most suitable place for holding such a fair as merchants from Bombay could easily send their goods here. It was convenient too for merchants from the north to come on their traditional caravan routes to buy these goods.

> The fair is intended to be to traders between Central Asia and Bombay what a 'clearing house' is to bankers, or an exchange or bazaar to merchants in general, a place where people who have wants, which they can mutually supply for each other, may meet and save time, trouble and money which would be otherwise expended by each individual going round to the others individually.[18]

An annual fair was thus established in Karachi which did play its part, not only in sending British goods to Central Asia but also in adding to the prosperity of the city. In addition to the fair the government had to improve the roads in the British territories, ensure peaceful transition for caravans through Balochistan which Jacob suggested was best done by paying a subsidy to the Khan of Kalat. This ploy proved as successful as Jacob had predicted and by 1852 Frere was able to report success to Lord Falkland, the Governor of Bombay Presidency.

Effendi rose to distinction in government service and was appointed Public Prosecutor. After retirement he made great efforts to collect funds from all over the province and with additional government help, started the Sind Madressah.

The first government school established in Karachi was Narayan Jagannath High School in 1855. It was right in the heart of the town at the junction of Bunder Road and Mission Road, and was named after a Maratha teacher and education officer who had come from the Presidency to establish the 'new education' in Sindh. He was one of a long line of Maratha teachers who would serve the cause of education in Sindh with dedication, and would leave behind generations of well taught and grateful students. Karachi was adequately served in terms of the new education with a number of schools opening particularly under the Grants-in-Aid scheme. The Catholic and Protestant missionaries also opened a number of schools in Sindh. In Karachi, the premier Catholic school was St. Patrick's School for boys, with its sister school St. Joseph's Convent for girls. To begin with both St. Patrick's School and St. Joseph's School were coeducational, founded by a Reverend J. Willy in 1861, but were separated as boys and girls schools very shortly thereafter, the latter housed in a handsome building by Strachan. Although missionary schools would play an important role in educating the elite of India, without distinction of religion or even any overt missionary zeal, at this period these schools were attended on the whole by native Christians with a special section for European children. The children of European Protestant officials and civilians in Karachi attended Karachi Grammar School which had been started by Frere in 1854.

For a long time Sindh sent its students on the arduous journey, either by train or boat, to Bombay to sit in the matriculation examination. The first batch which journeyed to Bombay to matriculate consisted of three Amil boys from Hyderabad, Dayaram Jethmal, Navalrai and Chuhar Mall. Writing about them the Educational Inspector said

> They are all three natives of Sind, intelligent and willing to undergo any ordeal that may be required of them, before entering upon a course of instruction at the presidency.[21]

The education of the province suffered from not having the right to hold the matriculation examination and also from not having a degree college. In 1882 a Memorandum was addressed to the Education Commission by public men from Sindh headed by Dayaram Gidumal Shahani, offering a contribution of Rs 30,000 and asking for permission to establish a college in Sindh. The Commission turned down the

Dayaram Jethmal (D.J.) Sindh College, 1887.

Sind Madressah.

The Sind Madressah at the site of the old Kafila Serai opened its doors in 1885 and was to prove a key institution in providing the 'new education' not just to the Sindhi children of Karachi, but was to be the alma mater to students coming from the entire province. Although a number of other schools had been established in Karachi, and indeed in other towns of Sindh under the Grants-in-Aid scheme established by Frere in the 1850s, Muslims had been slow in taking advantage of these 'secular' schools. The Muslim community had suffered with the decline of the traditional schools which had been run by Sayed families and had been dependent on endowments and *jagirs* given for this purpose by the successive governments including the Sultans, the Mughals and their successors. These grants had peen withdrawn by the British rulers with the result that the traditional system declined rapidly after the British conquest. Although '*Mulla* schools' would continue to exist, teaching the holy scriptures and the 'three Rs' and would have their students mostly in rural neighbourhoods, slowly and rather reluctantly Muslims turned to the new education introduced by the British.

The Sind Madressah with its acceptable name and Islamic studies as part of the curriculum, played a major role in overcoming the prejudices of the Muslim elite in sending their children to English teaching schools. The Sind Madressah owed its existence to the efforts of Hassanally Bey Effendi, a member of an important family of religious preceptors under the Amirs. Effendi was thirteen years old at the time of the British conquest and was among the earliest Sindhis to learn the English language. He realized the importance of English in the advancement of the Muslim community.

St. Andrew's Church.

neighbourhood streets the Goan Christian community congregated in the apartment blocks that were so new to Karachi. Clerk Street leading from St. Patrick's Cathedral, cut across the centre of Saddar Bazaar, Frere Street, Somerset Street, Elphinstone Street, and Victoria Road and ended at the 'artillery maidan'. Here in due course the handsome building of Sindh High Court would be built making a grand avenue. At right angle to the Cathedral and parallel to Bunder Road was the Empress Market, another handsome structure which would continue to serve its original purpose through the next century. Elphinstone Street was the fashionable shopping centre with smart shops stocking the latest goods for the Imperial market from 'home'. Memsahibs in their Victoria carriages and protected from the sun by their umbrellas and sunshades shopped for gewgaws from the Army and Navy Store in London, that lifeline of Englishmen serving the Empire. The advertisements for the latest imports of goods from fashionable clothes for the tropics to mosquito nets, goods which could carry the 'civilian' or army family from the cradle to the grave, were advertised in the *Sind Kossid*, the newspaper which served the English reading public of Karachi. Englishwomen were very evident in Karachi, the men on duty in the interior usually leaving them behind in the milder climate of Karachi.

At the bottom end of Saddar and the streets cutting Clerk Street was the residential area where low one storied bungalows had been built for the military officers in the Staff Lines, the engineers in E.I. Lines, and so on. Official Karachi revolved around the Governor's House which had been built by Napier. The Government House, as it was known, stood in forty acres of ground and was a plain one storied building. After Napier left it was bought by the Government as residence for the Commissioner-in-Sindh. John Jacob, when he was Acting Commissioner in 1856, added an upper storey to the main block of the house, similar to his famous residence in Jacobabad. In anticipation of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales electric lights and fans were installed. The house had five entrances, three of them facing the official Anglican Trinity Church.

D.J. Sindh College, recent photograph.

proposal as it felt that the amount offered was too small. By 1884 subscriptions reached the figure of Rs 90,000 and the Local Bodies offered an annual grant of Rs 10,850. In 1886 the Sind College Association was formed and in January 1887 finally an 'aided' college was founded. This college was named after one of the first graduates, Dayaram Jethmal, by his disciple and friend Dayaram Gidumal, who was also the moving spirit behind the college. The building of the college was designed in the classical style by Strachan and was to be one of the most graceful buildings in Karachi. The Shahani family also donated the Metharam hostel which stood directly opposite the college.

The D.J. College was to be the first of a number of institutions of higher education which would be built in this area of Karachi, near Burns Garden and on Kutchery Road. Cutting across Kutchery Road, McLeod Road became Ingle Road and led to the heart of official Karachi with its 'Camp Bazaar' or Saddar, its official buildings, churches, clubs, and barracks, bounded by the railway line to the south ending at Frere Street or Cantonment Station.

The heart of colonial Karachi was the area described as Saddar. This well laid out area with its geometrically straight streets intersecting each other had as its north-west boundary the major artery of Karachi, Bunder Road. It had on its left right angle, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Catholic church with the largest following in the Christian community. Next to it was the St. Joseph's Convent School, and in the well arranged

had replaced the older cemeteries which were now in the middle of the expanding town.

The most handsome building nineteenth century Karachi produced was Frere Hall, built to commemorate the Commissionership of Sir Bartle Frere and his elevation to the Viceroy's Council in 1859. It was funded by the Karachi Municipal Corporation and by public subscription with a small contribution from the government. Frere Hall was completed in 1865 and served admirably as the Town Hall of Karachi with ample room for 'public meeting, lectures, balls, concerts and dramatic performances.' It also accommodated a fine public library. The hall was surrounded by a garden on both sides with a splendid marble statue of Queen Victoria on the Queen's Lawn and, on the opposite side, King Edward VII's statue on the King's Lawn. The opening was performed by the Prince of Wales who was later to be King George V

Merewether Tower.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

The Queen's Statue, which is by Sir Hamco Thorneycroft, R.A., was unveiled by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in March 1906. The monument consists of a classically treated architectural pedestal with statues of bronze around the base, and crowned with a colossal white marble Statue of the Queen Empress, wearing a widow's veil and the imperial crown and robes of state, and holding in her hand the sceptre and the orb. The principal group at the foot of the pedestal represents India approaching Justice and Peace. On one side is a lion, and on the other a tiger, with heads erect, guarding the monument. At the rear the river Indus is symbolized by a woman carrying an urn and pouring water on the thirsty soil.[22]

Water was indeed the most pressing problem for thirsty Karachi. The population of Karachi was growing fast and was estimated at 80,000 by the 1860s. It desperately needed potable water. So far Karachi

Frere Hall, recent photograph.

Kutchery Road, going along the railway line enclosed official Karachi on the southern side. Here were government offices, the houses of the officials, the churches, the clubs, the Cantonment with its well laid out barracks, some of them, such as the Napier Barracks, elegantly built from Karachi's native sandstone. In between, some areas were marked out for civilians and were appropriately called 'Civil Lines'. Here the wealthier citizens, such as Parsi and Hindu businessmen and very rarely a Muslim, bought the acre or two they were allotted for their houses. Inducements had to be offered to the Indians to build their houses here in unfamiliar open ground when they would rather have lived in their familiar intimate neighbourhoods. The barracks marked the outer limit of the colonial (town on the north with a road leading to Malir, Thatta and beyond. On this road to Malir flanked by low hills, a couple of miles from Napier Barracks, was the latest European graveyard, an oasis of greenery on the arid road, which

Frere Hall, 19th century photograph.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM MOORE

Empress Market.

gallons. This modification was accepted and by 1883 the Dumlotee water supply was completed, thus bringing the much needed water supply to Karachi.

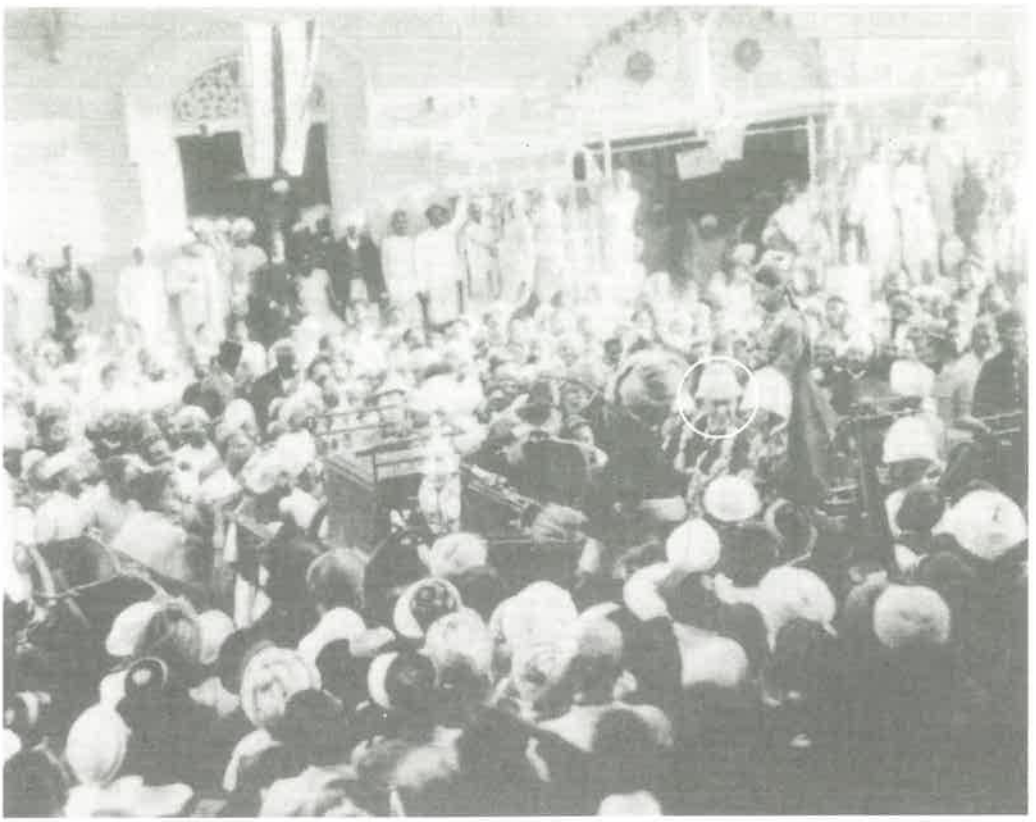
The credit for the successful completion of this scheme, under the restraint of limited money and difficult circumstances, goes entirely to the efforts of Strachan. He should also be given credit for this as well as the excellent planning of the new Karachi town being laid out, and for the admirable public buildings that were built by him to give Karachi its pleasant and interesting character. Strachan, a native of Aberdeen, the northernmost town of Scotland was the Divisional Engineer on the Great Indian Peninsular and Bombay and Baroda Railways and was appointed Engineer and Secretary to the Karachi Municipality in 1873.[23] Strachan was just what fledgling Karachi needed. He provided the infrastructure needed by the city and the elegant buildings to give it character. Not only did he work out the way to provide a plentiful water supply for the city but also planned its public transport. He promoted a tramway as the backbone of this public transport. The tramway system was opened in 1885 by the East India Tramway Company. The lines extended from Keamari to Cantonment (Frere Street) Railway Station, with one branch via the Napier and Lawrence Roads to the Zoological Gardens and one to Soldier Bazaar. The tramway was to serve Karachi till the middle of

had subsisted on well water drawn from the banks of the seasonal Lyari River and this, according to Frere, tasted like a weak solution of Epsom Salts. Even this was no longer adequate. In 1868 Colonel C.J. Merriman, who discovered reserves of water beneath the seasonal Malir River, proposed a scheme which would supply water at the rate of twenty-two gallons per person every day. In spite of its essential nature the proposal was turned down by the Government of Bombay on grounds of expense. The scheme was taken up again by James Strachan, engineer and secretary to the Karachi Municipality. Strachan modified the scheme to replace the expensive iron pipes with masonry ones but even then the scheme was not found acceptable. Finally, the scheme was cut down from the original Rs 1,859,000 to a mere, Rs 850,000 which would provide eight gallons per head of population instead of twenty-two

A building on Bunder Road, early 20th century.

Karachi flats, 19th century, Saddar.

Early 20th century commercial buildings on Bunder Road, now M.A. Jinnah Road.



Lord Curzon in Karachi, 1901.

'probably a part of the ground surrounding the old Factory', the Government Garden was given a good deal of care and planned anew by municipal officers including Strachan. It was 'laid out with trees, shrubs and even fountains'. Sir Evan James who was Commissioner-in-Sindh in 1890–9 and who took a great interest in the flora and fauna of the province, introduced California grapes which flourished and for which the garden became famous for well over half a century. These grapes which were also grown in Burns Gardens eventually disappeared after independence, presumably from neglect. A small zoo was also started in this garden which continues to exist to this day.

The Government Garden was bound by Lawrence Road, and just a little further ahead on this road was another garden. Recreation and refreshment was also provided for the citizens of Karachi by Dr Burns' Garden laid out in just over twenty-six acres near the D.J. College and the Victoria Museum. This garden included a vineyard which also grew the California grapes introduced by Sir Evan James well into the twentieth century. The other notable garden in the Cantonment area was the Frere Hall garden. It was expected that the water supply ensured by Dumlotee wells would allow the Karachi Municipality

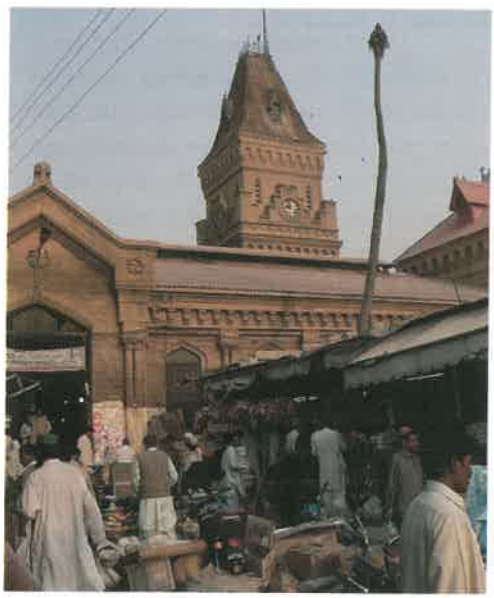
Empress Market, 19th century photograph.

the twentieth century. It was originally driven by steam but curiously 'subsequently horse traction was substituted, and at a later date motor traction.'[24]

Bunder Road was the link between the old city and the new. Along it were built all the amenities needed by a rapidly growing capital of the province: the Civil Hospital and the Lady Dufferin Hospital for women; markets such as Boulton Market, a classical building which like the Empress Market, was designed by Strachan although in a completely different style of architecture and replaced an old market on the same site; the Mission school and the Mission Church built by Karachi's first Collector, the evangelizing Major Preedy; the Small Causes Court and 'the travellers bungalow'; the tramway stables, the headquarters of the Municipal Corporation and the jail were all along this road. The road petered out into barracks and the parade ground of the Native Infantry regiments. The nineteenth century Bunder Road extended up to Garden Road.

Turning left on Garden Road, a few furlongs ahead was the oldest garden laid out by the British, initially for the purpose of supplying the troops with fresh vegetables. This garden even made a profit selling vegetables and fruits and fodder to the army.

Empress Market.



PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM MOORE

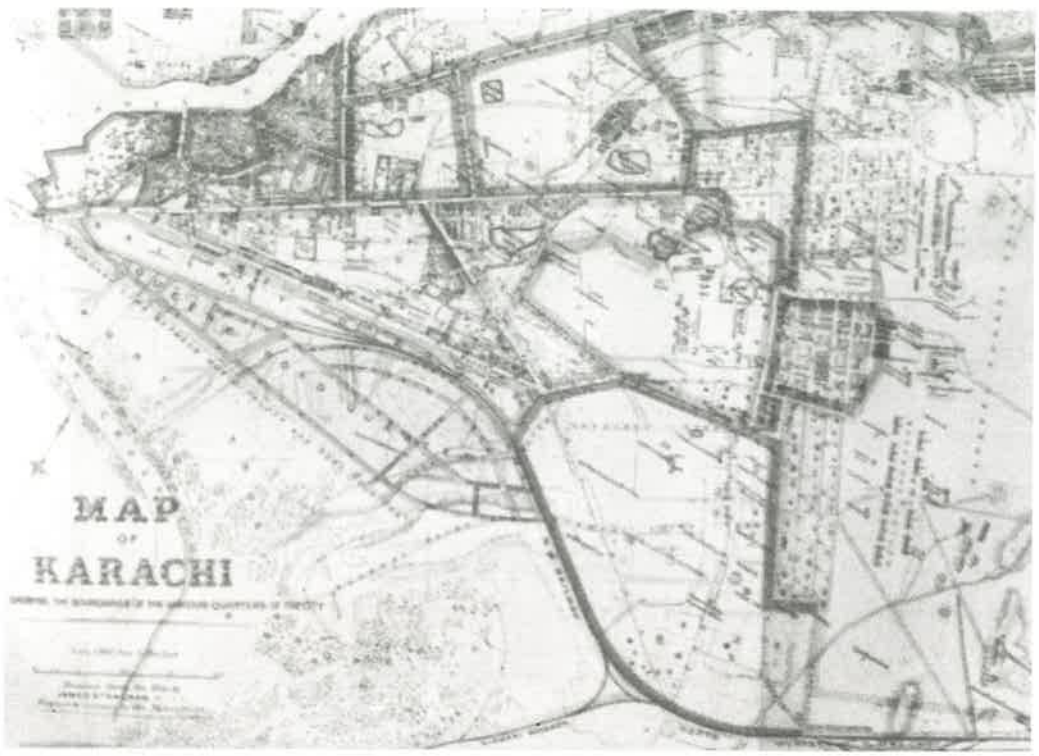
In 1847 Major W. Blenkins, Assistant Commissary-General and Superintendent of Gardens was able to report that he had discontinued drawing [the sum of Rs 100 for the support of the Garden] that for two years and during that period had made a profit for Government of Rs 17,032. This was by issue of vegetables to the troops and fodder to Government cattle, the sale of vegetables and forage to private persons and the supply of pigeons, rabbits and leeches to the hospital. He appended three medical certificates to the effect that the leeches bred by Major Blenkins were infinitely superior to those formerly obtained by contract.[25]

The Government Garden, which was popularly known as Rani Bagh after Queen Victoria, was eventually handed over to the Municipality. On over forty acres of ground

Gandhi in Karachi, 1916.

to extend its gardening activities, but the fact was that a century and a half has not added greatly to the gardens laid out in the initial years of British rule.

By the end of the nineteenth century Karachi had been provided with a modern infrastructure. Water supply was ensured, railways had put the city in touch with the rest of British India. Karachi port was the third most important port in India and the



Strachan's map of 19th century Karachi.

nearest to Europe. Entrepreneurs from Bombay and elsewhere were immigrating to Karachi to set up their commercial houses. Karachi was attracting Gujerati businessmen of all varieties, Parsi, Hindu and Memon. It had Marwaris and Marathas, many of the latter as dedicated teachers in its new schools. Sindhi business houses were moving up from Shikarpur and Hyderabad. Rural Sindhis were gradually becoming aware of this cool new capital and gradually taking up residence there; shopping at Elphinstone Street, at Haji Dossul's arms shops and department stores. Karachi's population was multi ethnic and its tastes eclectic. It was poised, unencumbered by historical baggage, on the point of take off as a twentieth century city.

THREE

THE HALCYON YEARS

HAMIDA KHUHRO

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 reinforced the strategic importance of Karachi for the defence of the subcontinent. It became the headquarters of Allied operations in the Middle East. The port came under pressure from heavy war traffic while Karachi itself saw huge army encampments of soldiers from the Punjab on their way to fight Turkish armies in campaigns in Iraq and German armies in France. T.E. Lawrence was seen striding down Bunder Road in his Arab robes in between his spectacular achievements in Arabia.

Within the first few months of the war 80,000 British troops and 200,000 Indian troops were despatched, many of them from Karachi, to France, East Africa, Egypt as well as the Persian Gulf. In France the Indian soldiers fought in circumstances which were in great contrast with the desert conditions of the Middle East. Here they spent agonizing years in the cold and the misery of trench warfare.

The Middle Eastern Arab countries were part of the Ottoman Empire at this time and the British Indian troops left from Karachi to arrive at Basra which they captured from the Turks. But it was a long and bloody war and disastrous for the Indian troops who suffered heavy casualties and the 'medical and commissariat arrangements collapsed in a manner reminiscent of the Afghan wars'.[1] The Indians under General Townsend, were pushed back from their drive on Baghdad by superior forces and besieged at Kut el Amara where on 29 April 1916 they were forced by starvation to surrender after a siege of 150 days. Fresh troops were sent out from Karachi and eventually succeeded at the second battle of Kut el Amara. They were able to push on to Baghdad which they finally took in March 1917. Although the Indian troops which fought in Iraq included many Muslims and they fought loyally for the British, the war against fellow Muslims was to bring a revulsion of feeling which would lead to the emotional and political upheaval of the Khilafat movement.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Karachi Municipal Corporation building.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Mohatta Palace Museum, built in 1927 by architect Agha Hussain Ahmed.

Armistice had been declared. It was then sent on the very first flight to the subcontinent. It started its flight on 13 December 1918 from Ipswich in England and was expected to arrive in Karachi only days later. But it ran into trouble on the way because of too much weight and not enough horse power. The story of its landing in Karachi on 15 January 1919, is narrated by Lady Lawrence.

> For the past three days the big Handley Page biplane, the very first attempt to fly to India, has been expected here. The landing place is prepared in the desert on the Magar Pir Road. It is all marked out with white stones. There is a hut and shamiana erected for addresses and welcomes and so forth from the Army and Municipality. But after three days of

Mohatta Palace, c. 1930. Note: The summer home of Seth Shivrattan Mohatta, on the Arabian sea.

WWW.MOHATTAPALACE.MUSEUM.COM

The Sindh High Court, built in 1929.

In January 1919 the prisoners of Kut came back to India to be greeted at Karachi port with due ceremony and amidst touching scenes

> The whole scene was blinded with light, fluttering with flags and pennants, blazing with red carpets and bunting...Words of command, troops, crowds, winking of brass instruments of the band, boat sirens, all making up a jig-saw puzzle of brilliant sight and sound. Out thundered the salute, and *H.M.S. Elephanta*, both fluttering with flags and pennants in the stiff breeze and incandescent sunshine.[2]

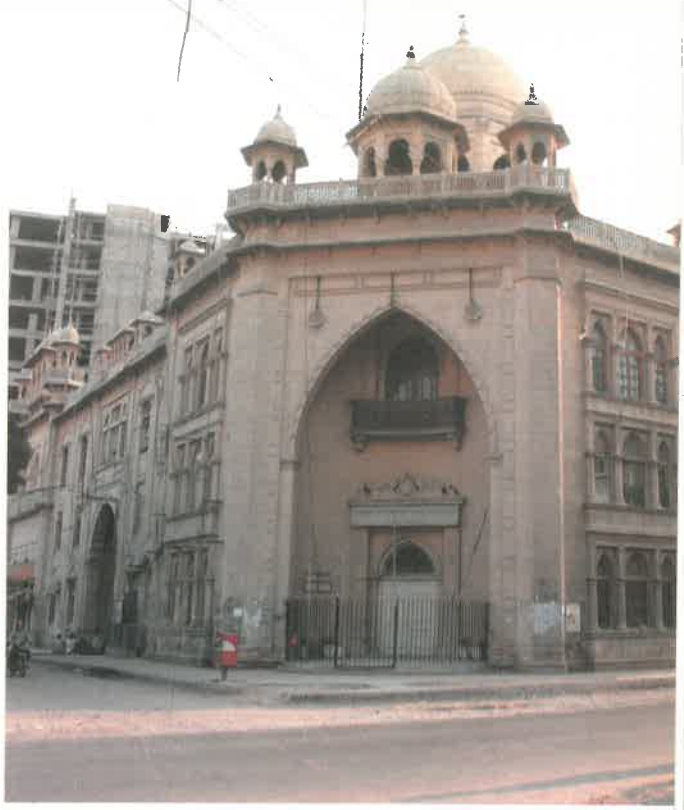
The message from the Commander-in-Chief was read out and the Commissioner-in-Sindh made a welcoming speech praising the courage of the returning men. Lady Lawrence garlanded the officers with roses and they were 'cinematographed'.

> After all kinds of food, gifts and entertaining of various kinds, they went off in a decorated train with garlands round the engine's necks, and the coal whitewashed, to the Rest Camp where they will spend some days. There each man receives a large card designed by me and printed. On a jet black background, surrounded by a wreath of bright red roses and bright green leaves, two white horses. On one an Indian woman in a sari, on the other Britannia. Both hold spears which are united over their heads by a banner on which is printed in English and in Urdu 'India proudly welcomes her returning heroes'.[3]

This war saw the first involvement of aeroplanes in combat. Handley Page had developed a plane intended for bombing Berlin but before it could be sent on its intended mission

junction of the subcontinent'. In 1920 a regular air mail service was started between Karachi and Bombay. In the same year the British Government presented one hundred aeroplanes to the Indian Government in order to encourage civil aviation and Handley Page wrote to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce 'on the subject of providing landing grounds and other facilities in the subcontinent and also on the necessity for reducing customs duties on aircraft and aircraft accessories.'[5]

The age of air travel definitely made an early mark in Karachi. The city was strategically and climatically well situated for air travel. To begin with, the Drigh Road area was developed as a landing ground for the use of the Royal Indian Air



'Indian Chamber of Commerce'. (Main entrance).

The Indian Chamber of Commerce (side view). Note the Indo-Saracenic architectural similarities it shares with the Hindu Gymkhana (opposite page) and Mohatta Palace (previous page).

alternate expectation and disappointment the news comes through that the arrival is indefinitely postponed. One of the four cylinders had blown off and the machine was forced to land at Ormara on the Persian Gulf.

General MacEwan decided she would have to be dismantled. Dreadfully disappointed...

At the Gymkhana an ADC hurried past me, and muttered between his closed teeth, not looking at me, 'Don't let it out. But she is coming. *Now*. You may just get there in time'.

What a temptation to leap into the car, and go straight away to the landing place!...but I overcome it and hurry off to look for Henry. Find him in his office, still in his tussore suit.

No time to change into anything warmer. We dash into the Fiat and tear away in clouds of dust down the Magar Pir Road.

Sunset when we arrive. She has not yet come! Just General Fowler and Henry and a few officers and myself waiting. We get out and stand there on the sand, shivering with cold and excitement. The sand was a curious dark purple. A full moon was rising at our backs swimming into a violet East, whilst in the West a daffodil band of sky shone behind the black craggy line of low hills over which the 'the old Carthusian', as she is called, must come. A tiny hum. One didn't know whether it was a loud sound a long way off, or a tiny sound inside one's own ears...but now it was getting louder, and louder...*it was she*! A tiny speck against that still faintly bright West...and here she came flying terribly, oh! so terribly low over those crud peaks, the engines thumping hard. Our hearts were in our mouths. The merest novice could tell she was in great distress. It was moonlight now. Rockets soared into the zenith. They dropped a Verey light, green as *creme de menthe*. Another. She was looming enormous up there, the noise tremendous. She dropped down a light before her as she alighted. The moon cast her gigantic shadow across the desert as she feebly taxied a very few yards, and then abruptly came to a standstill. Out of her tottered Major Maclaren, Captain Halley, Sergeant Smith, and a very small fox terrier, and stood there in the moonlight motionless. All were dead beat, and frozen stiff. They were in their shirt sleeves. To get over those jagged peaks they had been forced to throw out maps, instruments, glasses, even their clothing as ballast. They were almost speechless with cold and fatigue.[4]

The Hindu Gymkhana built by architect Agha Hussain Ahmed.

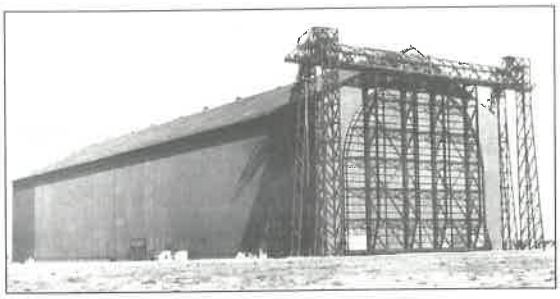
On board was the very first 'aerial' letter to India. It was a communication from Lord Willingdon at the India Office in London for Sir Henry Lawrence, the Commissioner-in-Sindh. From this hesitant beginning Karachi would go on to become 'the premier airport and international air

Karachi. This did not however come into effect till 1930 as it had to wait till local links with Bombay and Delhi could be established. Karachi was also an important stop for sea planes which landed at Korangi. The landing area for these sea planes is now part of the Pakistan Air Force Base at Korangi. Sea planes continued to land here till late in the forties. The age of the airmail and air travel had arrived in the subcontinent by the early thirties.

The end of the First World War saw the rise of political activity in India and Sindh, this once 'backwater' also felt the shock waves. The Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 had proved a disappointment, particularly as they fell short of expectations of Home Rule and also lagged behind the concessions given to the 'White colonies' of the Empire such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. To add insult to injury, repressive laws were passed affecting political and press activity which sent the message to the Indian people that all the support that they had given in the war effort had been in vain. The Non-Cooperation Movement launched by Gandhi and simultaneously the Khilafat Movement started by Muslims, and also supported by Gandhi, put tremendous pressure on the British in India. Karachi fully participated in this national struggle. The atmosphere in Government House echoed the earlier tension of the Revolt of 1857.

Khalikdina Hall, the scene of the famous trial of the Ali brothers in 1921.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK



Hangar for Zeppelin R101.

Force as well as civilian air traffic. As the need for airfields grew dramatically with the Second World War, Mauripur Airport was also developed to serve as a military air base and Drigh Road became an important base for the American air force. After the war the Drigh Road airport was given over to civilian use.

The twenties and thirties were the period when airships or 'Dirigible Balloons', self propelled 'lighter than air' craft were being promoted as the air transport of the future and the 'Zeppelin' was a household word in Europe and America. In 1925 Group Captain Fellowes, Director of Airship Construction in the United Kingdom, selected Karachi as a base in India for experimental airship flying. It was selected because of its favourable climate and because it was the obvious stepping stone to Calcutta. The aircraft scheme would bring Karachi within eight days of London for passengers and mails.[6]

The Masonic Lodge building, now used as the Sindh Wildlife office.

A huge hangar was built at Drigh Road to house the R101 airship which was expected to start the passenger service from Europe to the east. In October 1930 the R101 started its journey from Paris but, unfortunately, before the ship reached Karachi it crashed south of Beauvais in France. A few years later the famous airship, the Hindenburg, met with a disastrous accident in 1936 in the US, giving a death blow to this form of transport. The huge black R101 hangar at Drigh Road known as *kala chapra* remained till well after Partition as a famous landmark of Karachi and was eventually dismantled and sold to 'gain space' which had been occupied by the hangar. Thus although airships failed, heavier than air aeroplanes did prove to have a future and Karachi found its place as the major Indian airport for this form of transport. In 1927 a contract was signed with Imperial Airways to establish a weekly service between England and

support for the advancement of Sindh and Sindhi Muslims. It was ironic that this was the Commissioner who had to confront the nationalists who wanted to restore autonomy to Sindh. It was at the annual session of the All India Congress Party at Karachi in 1913 that a resolution was tabled by the Sindh delegation for the separation of the province.

Karachi had its share of excitement in the political ferment of the twenties and thirties. This included such spectacular events as the trial of the Ali brothers for sedition in Khaliqdina Hall in 1921

> On 14 November 1921, Mohammed Ali was arrested at Waltair railway station while he was travelling with Gandhi to Madras. All those who had supported the resolution at the Karachi session of All India Khilafat Conference (July 1921), against service in the army were picked up from their respective provinces and brought to Karachi. These included Maulana Shaukat Ali hauled out of his bed at his Bombay residence at midnight and taken by ship to Karachi; Saifuddin Kitchlew from Lahore, Maulana Madni and Maulana Nisar Ahmed of UP, and Bharati Krishna of Gujerat.
>
> The case was remitted by the trying magistrate at Karachi to the Sessions Judge. The trial had an element of high drama-and even melodrama. The crowds anxious to see the trial were so

A garden party by M.A. Khuhro at Karachi Club in honour of Sir Frederick Sykes, the Governor of Bombay, 1933.

> These are horrible days. For the past week Henry has ordered that Owen is not to leave the compound. Indeed he has to play immediately in front of the sentry under the palms and the amaltas. It is difficult to explain to Nanny, as the civil population knows nothing and is to be kept unsuspecting. We are on the edge of a volcano. There is dissatisfaction amongst the British troops also, as leave is cancelled.[7]

Nationalist politicians, including, Rais Ghulam Mohammed Bhurgri and Harchandrai Vishindas, were to be arrested but managed to escape to Bombay and then to England putting Sir Henry Lawrence in a very awkward position, and eventually forcing his departure from the province. This was in itself an unfortunate development as Lawrence was highly sympathetic to the Muslims of the province who he felt were suffering from unnecessary disadvantages in a province of their majority, and who had tried his best to improve their position. Lady Lawrence had summed up his policy in her own inimitable style 'Henry championed the Muhammadan, who by reason of being generally less educated, got pushed and shouldered aside from any appointment carrying responsibility.'[8]

Lawrence was quite unique among the officers who ruled Sindh. He worked hard to get the plans for the Sukkur Barrage approved and he strongly supported the idea of separating Sindh from the Bombay Presidency. Later when he was Finance Member of the Governor's Council at Bombay and Acting-Governor himself, he would continue his

The Sukkur Barrage dinner, held at Karachi Club, 1932.

An advertisement for Cumper's Café Grand which was the most fashionable café in Karachi.

with the stately camel sailing down them, and the occasional tram ringing its bell, or the Victoria carriage carrying a prosperous Parsi family down to Clifton, or even the happy Makrani driving his donkey cart furiously to Keamari, oblivious of the political dramas being played out in the overcrowded cities of the subcontinent. They may have heard of Jallianwalla Bagh and of Chauri Chaura but these were problems for *babus* to worry about, and not for the doughty fishermen of Lyari.

Karachi matured intellectually and physically in the two decades between the world wars in spite of the great depression and political unrest. It had grown into a prosperous town with a population of about 400,000. It boasted two major English language newspapers, *The Daily Gazette* which was started by Sir Montagu de P. Webb, an English businessman who had adopted Karachi and became one of its most active citizens, and the Indian owned *Sind Observer*. There were also the two important Sindhi language newspapers, *Al Wahid* the famous Khilafat newspaper, and *Sansar Samachar*, as well as a host of smaller Sindhi and Urdu publications. This was a period of intellectual ferment with journals expressing all points of view despite the notorious Vernacular Press Act and the repressive laws which had been enacted during and after the War. Its educational establishments increased with the establishment of the Nadirshaw Edulji Dinshaw Engineering College, and later the addition of the S.C. Shahani Law College bringing the number of major colleges to three. These educational institutions were clustered around the area near the end of Kutchery Road (now known as Ziauddin Road) and Pakistan Chowk. In the

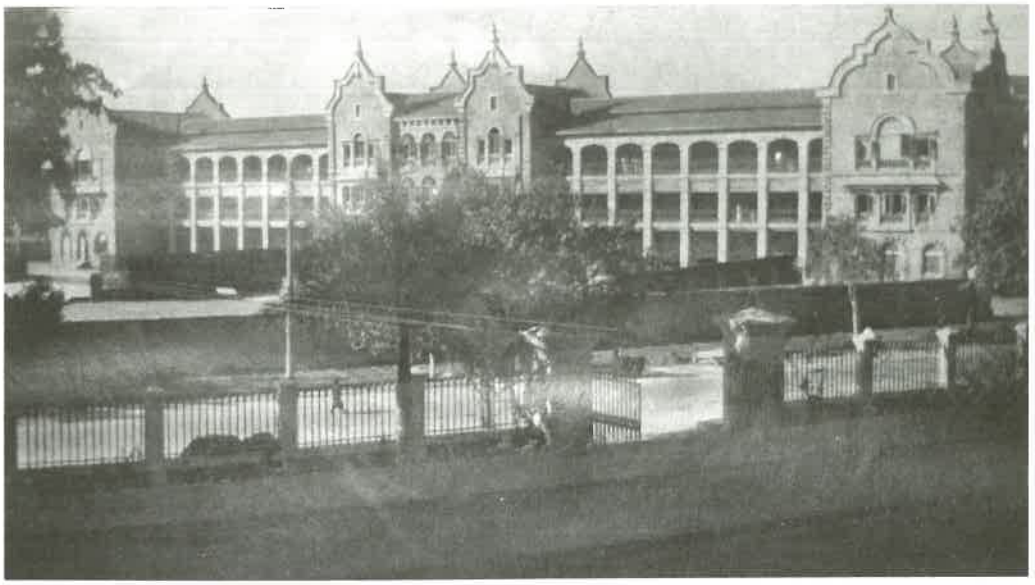
A recent photograph of the Café Grand.

large that it had to be held, not in a court room but in a public auditorium, which gave the Ali brothers an excellent opportunity to display their polemical skill. They waved gaily to the crowds waiting outside the building. And inside the hall they refused to rise when the magistrate arrived. Why, they asked, should non-co-operators honour a judge of the British Government? When their chairs were removed to oblige them to stand, they took off their long cloaks, spread them on the floor and sat down. Though Mohammed Ali asserted that he did not recognize the jurisdiction of the court, his address to the jury ran to more than 20,000 words.[9]

Karachi Club façade, foreground, Khuhro receiving Sir Frederick Sykes, Governor of Bombay, 1933.

But these spectacles notwithstanding, on the whole Karachi did not lose its cool. On one occasion Gandhi had to denounce an act of indiscipline of a Karachi crowd which had reportedly 'run amuck in July 1921 on the conviction of Swami Krishnanand, a popular preacher and a local leader'.[10] Karachi played host to conferences and courteously welcomed the national leaders but tended to stay out of the heat of the battle. The city was too much of an ethnic mix, too busy with business in Kharadar and Mithadar, too prosperous, too modern, spread out with straight avenues and the wide brown vistas, straight roads

Lady Nusrat Haroon gives a lunch in honour of Lady Graham, the Governor's wife, in her home, c. late 1930s.



Metahram Hostel, opposite D.J. Sindh College.

intent on a weekend pleasure trip, could also go down to Keamari and take a sail boat, or a launch for a couple of hours sailing, or go to Manora for a walk and a picnic. Nearer in, at the corner of Queens Road and the Napier Mole Bridge, was the Native Jetty and the temple where the annual Hindu religious festivals terminated, as did the Moharram processions.

Karachi was well served with clubs, that British institution for the upper classes, to spend their leisure hours. The Sind Club was the favoured haunt of the British officials, both civilian and military, as well as the businessman. Sunday was invariably spent with a game of golf in the sand—'with a heavy luncheon at the Sind Club afterwards.' Lady Lawrence comments 'The bar at the Sind Club plays an important part in Karachi society. There business, war, scandal is discussed over whiskies and milk punch...'[11]

There was the Ladies Club which then became the Gymkhana when that term was invented. This stood on Scandal Point Road, its wall adjoining the Government House. Indians were of course excluded from these clubs where the rulers took their ease but just round the corner on Kutchery Road was the Karachi Club where the rich Indian businessmen and the occasional politician spent their evenings. The leading Sindh politicians entertained the visiting Governor of Bombay to garden parties here at the Karachi Club or at public receptions in Frere Hall Gardens. The *Daily Gazette* of 16 January 1933 reported the activities of the Governor of Bombay, Sir Frederick and Lady Sykes in Karachi for a winter tour of Sindh. The Sindh Muhammadan Association gave a reception for him at Frere Hall where he was informed of the conditions of agriculture and the plight of the agriculturists of Sindh. He met the British community at the Sind

early thirties this was still a fish market which did not fit in with the development plans the city fathers had for Karachi. The area was bought by Kewalram Shahani, the son of Dayaram Gidumal, and donated to the city to be kept as an open space. This was the educational heart of Karachi with the N.E.D Engineering College, D.J. College, S.M. Law College, the Metharam Hostel which had also been donated by the Shahani family.

Physically the city grew apace. The extension of the city was made into well appointed squares and streets with public parks and recreational facilities. The city was well integrated with its charming residential areas spreading now nearly as far as the central jail marking its northern boundary. The tramway did not come up quite all the way to the jail but stopped at Soldier Bazaar which served the new residential areas or 'colonies'. From Soldier Bazaar the tram took its passengers for two annas to Saddar with its fashionable shopping in Elphinstone Street or to the Empress Market. Or one could take the tram all the way to the crowded and busy Boulton Market on Bunder Road from where one could walk or take a tonga to Kharadar. This was not entirely devoted to wholesale trading and women still came shopping here for silks and cottons, and for embroidery and *zari* work. This end of Bunder Road and across to McLeod Road was the business and trading centre of the city, its 'city' area. From here down to Keamari, the area was full of ware houses and grain and cotton sheds. But the ordinary citizen,

An early 20th century commercial building on I.I. Chundrigar Road.

> All rose as His Excellency the Governor and Lady Sykes arrived and were greeted by the host Khan Bahadur Khuhro who escorted them to seats at one of the tables.
>
> A pleasant hour was spent in this fashion, the Governor and Lady Sykes proceeding from table to table chatting with all the guests, who were presented to them, before they departed to the accompaniment of three cheers.[12]

The club scene would be enhanced later by the Boat Club on Chinna Creek with its European clientele and the Karachi Club Annexe for the 'natives'. But the family man could take his children to the newly built Kothari Parade at New Clifton and walk down the pier to the sea or walk at the promontory at Old Clifton with the waves dashing against the rocks below. A real treat for the citizens was the delightful Cumper's Cafe Grand run by a German couple which was

'Taking the air' at Jehangir Kothari Parade, c. 1930s.

Clifton beach.

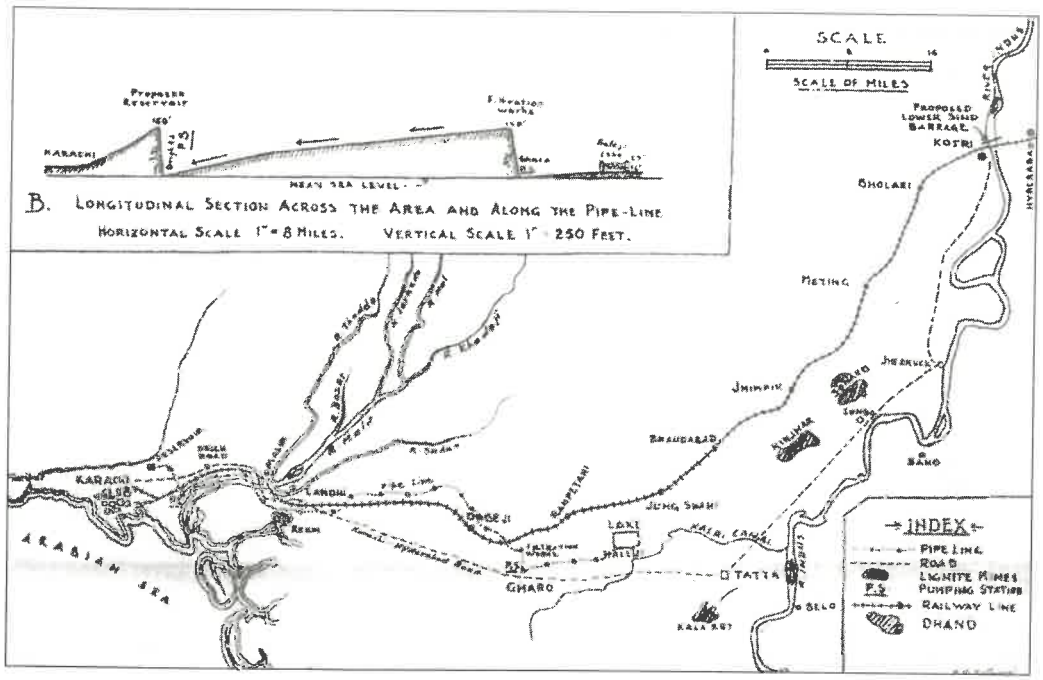
The Bandstand, Jehangir Kothari Parade, Clifton.

Club where he made a speech telling his audience of the future plans of the British Government with regard to constitutional reforms for India, as well as the development schemes the government had in mind for the province of Sindh as a whole and for the city of Karachi. Then he and Lady Sykes met the politicians and the cream of Karachi society at a Garden Party hosted by M.A. Khuhro at the Karachi Club. The description of the event in the newspaper gives a unique flavour of the British Raj acting out its role in India.

An outing at the Clifton pier, photographed in the 1930s.

Whilst in Karachi His Excellency the Governor of Bombay and Lady Sykes were entertained at a Garden Party given by Khan Bahadur M.A. Khuhro, M.L.C. of Larkana on the beautiful and shady lawns of Karachi Club on Sunday.

Hundreds of leading citizens of all communities had been invited to do honour to the Governor by Khan Bahadur Khuhro and the lawn presented an animated appearance, ladies' bright saries and gay afternoon frocks being set off by the more sober colours of lounge suits and male costumes.



Plan of the Indus Water Supply Scheme (1940s) from Kalri canal and Keenjhar lake and Haleji lake.

shopkeepers from as far away as Iran and Afghanistan, trading in their traditional goods of dry fruits. Karachi was taking shape as a multi ethnic, multi cultural, urbane and tolerant city. Working for the city for over thirty years, as councillor and for many years as mayor, theosophist and public servant, Jamshed Nusserwanji created an ideal urban environment for this growing population. Nusserwanji 'seized the city in his hands as a potter does his clay' to try and remould it nearer to his ideal. He identified all the problems in the city such as the water supply, drainage, roads, electricity supply, public amenities, public spaces such as parks, education and health, fixed his priorities and tried to bring these services up to the standard that should be expected in a modern city. Nusserwanji acquired from the Cantonment important areas in the middle of the growing city such as the Artillery Maidan where the Sindh High Court building and the Sindh Assembly Building now stand. He improved and extended the drainage system to areas of the city where the waste was still removed every morning by a bullock driven sewage cart. Karachi became one of the few cities in the subcontinent with a complete underground drainage system.

Many of Nusserwanji's plans could not be implemented because of the miserliness of the Bombay Government which would not release adequate amounts for the needs of the city and the province. It was obvious that water could only be supplied adequately for the needs of the city if the supply connection from the Indus was established but the cost of such a project would not be countenanced by Bombay. As it happened, with the

A residence in Civil Lines, early 20th century.

situated on Victoria Road just across from Sind Club, where real home-made ice cream was served in heavy silver plated dishes and wonderful pastries in bone china plates. This was a real European style cafe with its wicker chairs and marble topped tables reminiscent of old Vienna. Life was unrushed in Karachi of the inter-war period. There was time to take a Victoria carriage to Clifton and to sit in Cafe Grand or in the many 'Irani' restaurants in Saddar with their bentwood chairs and marble topped tables and have *chai*. It was a clean, well kept city where the citizens were secure in the knowledge that the city fathers were doing their very best.

This was mainly because of the practical sense and the vision of one man above all—Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta. In 1920 Jamshed Nusserwanji became a councillor of Karachi Municipality. He became President of Karachi Municipal Corporation in 1921 and remained so for over a decade. In 1934 he was elected the first mayor of the city of Karachi. It was an immense stroke of luck for Karachi that such a selfless and dedicated man, was also imaginative and realized that the city needed the infrastructure and planning for the inevitable growth that would and was taking place. Nusserwanji explained how he saw the function of a municipality

> In fact anything and everything that inspires, that brings joy, removes sorrow and makes each one draw towards the other and towards Nature, is the work of a Municipality entrusted with this department of building, engineering, garden, recreation and other subdepartments.[13]

The population of the city was growing at an immense rate largely by immigration from the interior as well as from other provinces. The growing commercial importance of the city was attracting businessmen from Bombay and the Punjab. Empress Market had

This was also the period in which Sindh fought in an organized and single minded way for restoring its separate and autonomous status which it had enjoyed even in the first few years after the British conquest. The anomaly of Sindh being ruled from distant Bombay, which could only be reached by a two day journey by train or a sea voyage, was obvious. Although a modicum of autonomy and representative government had been introduced in 1919 which allowed Council members to be elected and represent their constituencies in the Bombay Legislative Council, Sindh was very much the fief of officialdom under the extraordinary powers of the Commissioner-in-Sindh. The demand grew in the province for autonomy and an accessible and non bureaucratic government.

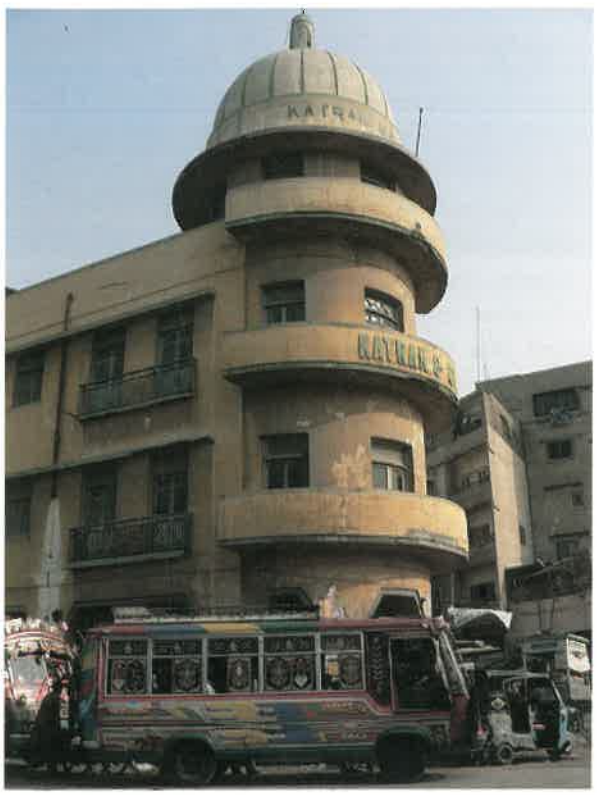
The demand for autonomy for Sindh had been put on the platform of the All India Congress by the Sindh leadership in 1913. It had been again put to the visiting Secretary of State for India, Sir Edwin Montagu in 1917, and although Montagu had seen justice in the Sindh demand, no concession had been made in the subsequent constitutional reforms. In the twenties the demand gathered strength. It was put by Sindhi leaders on the Congress and Muslim League platforms. It was one of the points in Jinnah's Fourteen Points which he put at the Delhi Muslim Conference in 1929. But the demand was taken seriously by the British Government only when Sindhis organized themselves and lobbied strongly, both in India and England. A remarkable unity of purpose was seen in the Sindh leadership at this time. The leadership which would dominate the next few decades

Flats in downtown Karachi, c. 1940s.

advent of the Second World War and the stationing of large numbers of air force personnel and other troops the need for adequate water supplies became imperative. Consequently, money was found and the Haleji Lake water supply was established. This source of water would carry Karachi just adequately through the sudden huge demand created by the refugee influx of 1947 and the needs of the capital of Pakistan until a regular supply was assured from the Indus when the lower Sindh Barrage at Jamshoro was completed in the mid fifties. Nusserwanji increased the road mileage of Karachi from fourteen miles to seventy-two miles of well engineered asphalted roads. Most notably he extended Bunder Road into Bunder Road Extension and kept it wide enough for the needs of a city far bigger than Karachi was in the thirties and forties. It was characteristic of Nusserwanji's attention to the detail of cleanliness in the city that the roads of Karachi were washed regularly every night.

Nusserwanji initiated co-operative housing societies to help develop Karachi and saw to it that well planned areas with open spaces and squares with gardens were built giving Karachi wonderfully planned housing with all possible amenities, including gardens, in every quarter. The Parsi Colony with its charming villas, the Amil Colony, the Catholic Colony and the Muslim Colony looking on to Patel Park (now known as Nishtar Park), Jamshed Quarters and the entire Bunder Road Extension area with its well made roads, well lit streets, well looked after gardens and the Exhibition grounds on a rising (the Quaid-i-Azam monument area) bore testimony to the way in which Jamshed Nusserwanji saw the development of Karachi. The splendid Karachi Municipal Corporation building was also the realization of his vision.

Katrak building on Bunder Road.



PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM MOORE

Nusserwanji's Karachi was the health resort of the subcontinent. Here people came to rest and recuperate. The health of the city was jealously guarded and it was kept scrupulously clean. It was in a position to take its place as the capital of its own province. It would then become the capital of a new state.

the question of preparing Karachi to function as the capital of the new administration. The construction of an Assembly Hall and the secretariat to house the Government of Sindh was authorized. A questionnaire was circulated to elicit opinion on organizing separate service cadres for Sindh and for setting up a separate university, as well as other administrative problems. It was decided that although it would be desirable to have separate service cadres, for the time being Sindh would remain joined with Bombay for this purpose and that Sindh's educational institutions would remain affiliated to Bombay until such time as Sindh could have its own university. A committee was set up to work out the details of the university. The site for it was selected but the Second World War intervened and it was not until 1946 that the new Sindh University came into being.

Governor's House, Karachi, built in the late 1930s. Governor-General's House from August 1947–62.

By the time Sindh became autonomous on 1 April 1936, the infrastructure for Karachi as a modern city was already in place, thanks to the efforts of the Karachi Municipality under Nusserwanji. The Sindh Government with the advice of the Sindh Administrative Committee, worked out plans and developed the framework for the orderly development of Karachi as the capital of Sindh. An impressive, if not very elegant, building was constructed to house the Secretariat and the Sindh Provincial Assembly, and plans were made to house the staff and ministers in Karachi. Unfortunately, during the war years of 1938 to 1945 practically all development work was at a standstill and the only notable

of Sindh politics and lead the province into Pakistan emerged into prominence at this time. Sir Abdullah Haroon, Shaikh Abdul Majid, Mohammed Ayub Khuhro, G.M. Syed, Allahbaksh Soomro, Syed Miran Mohammed Shah, Pir Ali Mohammed Rashdi, were among the most active of the leadership associated with the struggle of the separation of Sindh.

The Sindh Mohammedan Association revived by Khuhro took up the cause. In 1928 Sir John Simon brought the British Parliamentary Commission to India to examine the working of the 1919 reforms and suggest a further tranche of reforms. The Simon Commission came to Karachi to hear the Sindh case. It sat in the newly built Sindh Chief Court building where the pro separationists led by Khuhro and anti separationists led by Professor Chablani presented their cases. Arguing for separation Khuhro pointed out that geographically, historically and economically, Sindh was quite distinct from the presidency and was suffering also because of the distance from the presidency headquarters. The bureaucracy ruling the province was unresponsive or too dilatory and consequently public work suffered. The Presidency officials were strongly against the separation as they were reluctant to give up what they felt was a wonderful perquisite. They argued that a separate Sindh would not be financially viable. The Simon Commission decided against the separation on financial grounds. But the Sindh leadership did not give up. They renewed their efforts and made out a strong case based on facts and figures that Sindh would be financially self supporting, particularly with the construction of the Sukkur Barrage which was due to be completed in 1932. Even though Sindh was to pay back the loan which had been given to it to build the Barrage it was expected that the prosperity of the province would increase enough to support an autonomous government. Eventually in the Government of India Act of 1935 Sindh was constituted into a separate autonomous province and Karachi became the capital of the new province.

A welcome procession in Karachi for Mohammad Ali Jinnah (Muslim League session, October 1938). Note airplane overhead.

A year earlier the government constituted an administrative committee to set up the administration and the infrastructure for the new province and its capital. This committee was headed by Hugh Dow, an officer who had served long in Sindh and was familiar with its administration and had also been involved with the finances of the Sukkur Barrage. The committee, which had Muslim and Hindu legislators and officials went into

Sarnagati building, Pakistan Chowk, recent photograph.

Art School at Sarnagati building.

improvement that was made was the increase in the supply of water, made necessary by the presence of a large number of military personnel in the town.

During the war years, Karachi felt as if it was the hub of the war effort. It had the American air force base at Drigh Road and the RAF base at Mauripur. Its harbour was busy with troop ships and war supplies. The city was full of soldiers walking down its streets, bargaining with shop keepers and filling its restaurants and cinemas. Far away from the scene of war, unlike Calcutta, Karachi experienced the excitement of war without its hazards and gained prosperity from the price rises of these years. The war came to an end in August 1945 and the reality of the freedom struggle and the withdrawal of the colonial power had to be faced again.

In 1946, however, the Government of India recommended to the provincial governments that plans should go ahead for post war development. The Government of Sindh created the portfolio of Post War Development which was given to Khuhro who was also the Minister for Public Works. Khuhro was aware that Karachi would have to play its role

Jehangir Kothari Hall on Victoria Road (Abdullah Haroon Road), now demolished.

> This conference considers it absolutely essential in the interests of an abiding peace of the vast Indian subcontinent and in the interests of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment, the political self determination of the two nations known as Hindus and Muslims to recommend to the All India Muslim League to review and revise the entire question of what should be the suitable constitution for India.[16]

The first Sindh Secretariat building, constructed mid-1840s, destroyed by fire in March 2008.

In 1942 the first Muslim League Ministry was formed in Sindh. In March 1943 the Sind Legislative Assembly passed a Resolution in favour of the formation of Pakistan which had been introduced by G.M. Syed, thus scoring a historic first.

The constitutional situation was immensely complicated with the minority rights and the demand for Pakistan still unsettled. The Muslim League Party under Jinnah was willing to compromise all through 1946 if it could get adequate guarantees for the Muslim community. In January 1946 a British parliamentary delegation, arrived in India to assess the situation. The first stop for this delegation, as for others that would come to India or depart from there, was Karachi. A few months later the Cabinet Mission came with its historic proposals suggesting groupings of provinces which would have conceded the substance of Pakistan and which was sabotaged by Nehru's ambiguous remarks. This turned out to be the last chance for a compromise solution and after its rejection partition became inevitable.

Photograph of the burnt Secretariat building.

An event occurred in February 1946 which would serve to expedite the British departure from India. On 19 February a naval mutiny broke out in Bombay. For three days there was

in the post colonial world and would have to put in industries which were practically non existent so far. It was also necessary that the further expansion of Karachi be planned so that the city should continue to have a proper modern infrastructure and not grow in a haphazard manner. Khuhro acquired the services of town planners from England to make plans for an industrial site for Karachi, as well as for housing areas. Colonel Swayne Thomas was employed by the government as Town Planner. The demarcation and development of the industrial area was a priority and during this time Sindh Industrial Trading Estate was set up with the requisite infrastructure to encourage industries. The Government of Sindh offered concessions to entrepreneurs to set up industries and a beginning was made. The SITE would take off with the advent of freedom and make Karachi the biggest industrial area in the country.

For the next ten years Karachi made its mark as one of the most important cities in the struggle for the freedom of the subcontinent and for the creation of the new state of Pakistan. Autonomous Sindh was the cornerstone of the demand put by the Muslims for a separate state

> The separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency and its constitution as a fully fledged autonomous province...was the most significant event in the process that led to the creation of Pakistan. If there had been no autonomous Sind with its 75% Muslim population, if Sind had continued as part of the huge Bombay Presidency with its multi racial, multi linguistic and multi religious population, the case for Partition would have been considerably weaker. Punjab and Bengal had bare Muslim majorities, Baluchistan was sparsely populated and subject to Frontier Regulations. The North West Frontier Province('s)...politics were ambiguous from the Muslim League point of view. From 1937 to 1946 therefore the mainstay of the Pakistan demand was the existence of autonomous Sind.[14]

The key role Sindh played in the struggle for Pakistan was marked first by the gaining of autonomy and then underlined by the historic session of Sindh Muslim League held in Karachi in October 1938. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, President of All India Muslim League presided. All the major Muslim political leaders in India had been invited to the conference

> On 7 October Jinnah arrived by special train at Karachi and received a right royal welcome. From the railway station he was taken on a specially bedecked camel cart at the head of a three mile long procession along the major roads of Karachi accompanied by bands playing suitably rousing music. An aeroplane was hired to shower flower petals on the procession. Vast crowds turned out to welcome the visitors. The conference started the next day at 8 in the evening and continued till 2 o'clock in the morning. ...for its grandeur, majesty and attendance (this conference) was never equalled in the history of the movement.[15]

A resolution was passed at this session which was to prove the precursor of the Lahore Resolution of 1940 which was to become the charter for Pakistan

Resolution, had abandoned the cause. It was up to Khuhro now as the only major Muslim League leader to win the second election of 1946 for Muslim League and for Pakistan. This he was able to do with some help from his friends. It was this second Sindh Assembly of 1946 that voted in Pakistan in 1947.

The Quaid-i-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, had already made the decision that the city of his birth Karachi, which was also the capital of Sindh, that secure bastion of Pakistan, would be the first capital of the new state of Pakistan.

Max Denso Hall, Bunder Road.

serious rioting in the city and the Indian naval ratings took over the ships in the harbour. Their example was followed by the naval ratings in Karachi. This naval mutiny in Bombay and Karachi, although it did not get support from the Congress Party, whose leaders advised the mutineers to cool down, strengthened the resolve of the British to leave as early as possible because they could no longer rely on the loyalty of the armed forces.

A recent picture of Sommerset street.

In 1946, the decisive year for the history of the subcontinent, the fate of the country hung in the balance as the elections took place in the early months of the year. Of the Muslim majority provinces on whose votes Pakistan was expected to come into being; Punjab was still in the hands of the Unionists, North West Frontier Province had a Khudai Khidmatgar government which was pro-Congress and in the Bengal Legislature Muslims had a bare majority which could go either way. If Sindh were to give a decisive vote for Pakistan it would tilt the balance and without Sindh and without Karachi, Pakistan would never be feasible. The first elections of 1946 gave a majority to Muslim League but not decisive enough and G.M. Syed, the mover of the 1943 Pakistan

Art Deco House on Bunder Road extension.

FOUR

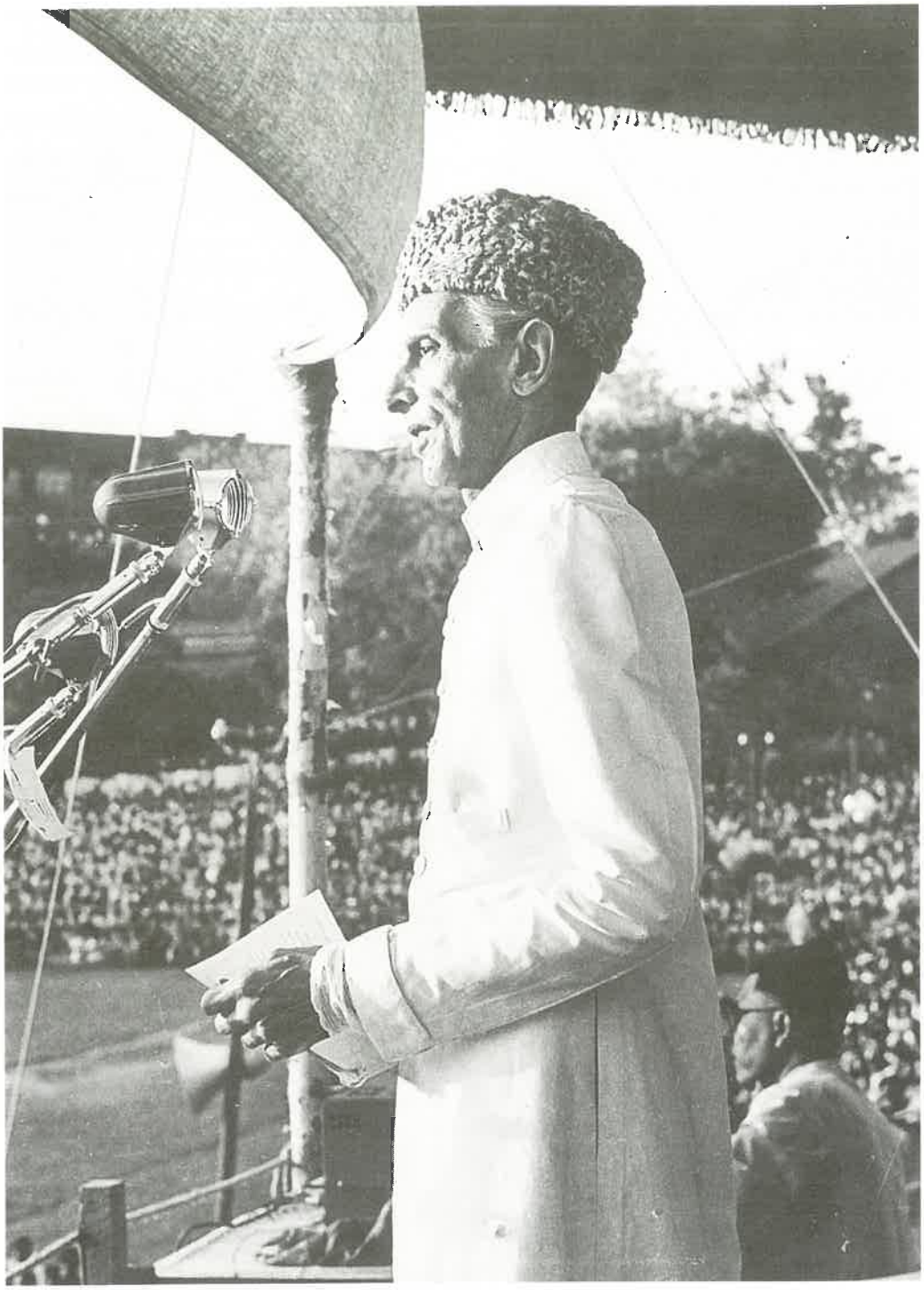
THE CAPITAL OF PAKISTAN

HAMIDA KHUHRO

On 3 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten announced his plan for the withdrawal of the British and the creation of the two states in the Indian subcontinent, Bharat and Pakistan. The date he gave for this momentous event was 15 August 1947, a mere nine weeks from the date of the announcement and nine months earlier than the previously announced date of withdrawal, June 1948. In these two months two new states were to emerge, one of which had to set up its entire structure from scratch. This would complete the entire transfer of power and the establishment of the two new states, including the division of assets and the division of the armed forces. The officials of the government were to exercise their options and then to set about organizing the administration. The two major provinces of Bengal and Punjab were to be divided and, at the same time, would face unprecedented communal violence and the biggest cross migration history had as yet witnessed. The states would start functioning even before it was known what their boundaries were to be. There was no clear idea of what the parameters of territory or powers the new states were to have. The new state of Pakistan had also to find a capital.

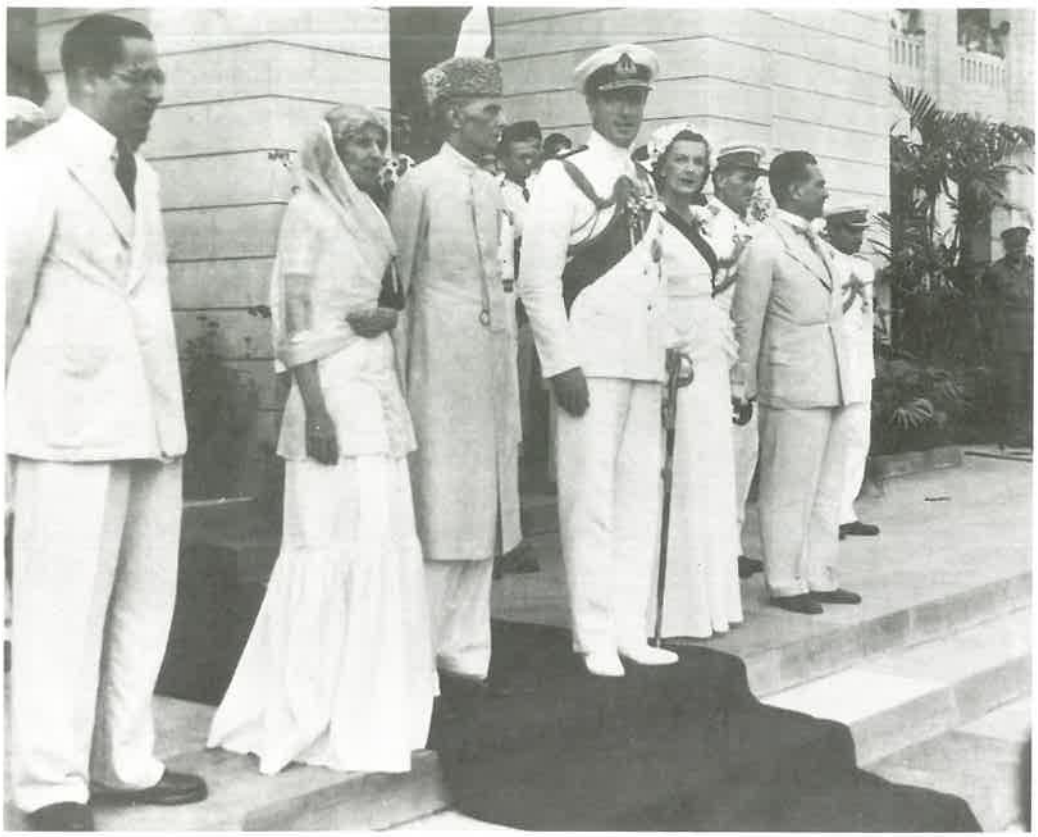
The Quaid-i-Azam faced with these problems turned to Sindh. He told the Premier, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah that Karachi had to be the temporary capital of the new state. The reasons for the selection of Karachi, were as a senior civil servant of Pakistan, wrote

> In West Pakistan the only province which had a Muslim League ministry was Sind....Karachi is a clean modern town with a mild climate; it has a fine harbour and an airport which provided ready means of communications with East Pakistan and the outside world. It was also the birthplace of the Quaid-i-Azam though this was not the reason for the selection of Karachi.[1]



The Quaid-i-Azam.

Quaid-i-Azam and Miss Fatima Jinnah coming out of Dr Vali Mooraj's Clinic, Bonus Road (now Fatima Jinnah Road), early 1948.



Miss Fatima Jinnah, Quaid-i-Azam and Lord and Lady Mountbatten on the steps of the Sindh Assembly building, 14 August 1947.

Karachi had thus to be ready to receive the Government of Pakistan, its officers including 'four thousand clerks' and its paraphernalia most of which would have to be provided by the Government of Sindh. The task of preparing Karachi as capital was formidable. It was a small town of four or five lakhs of people which had grown at a leisurely pace, and was now a charming well kept city with a flourishing port. It had never imagined itself as another Calcutta or Delhi, especially when called upon to function as such a capital at eight weeks notice. Fortunately, Karachi had the open spaces which would have to be sacrificed for the 'temporary' housing of the Central Secretariat. Mohammed Ayub Khuhro was the Minister for Public Works and Post War Development and was now entrusted with the job of getting Karachi ready for the influx. For him, the next two months were to be the most demanding he had faced in his career of hard work. He decided that the open spaces of Artillery Maidan around the Sindh Chief Court building and the Sindh Assembly building would be filled with 'barracks' to house the offices of the central government. Work was started and went on round the clock. Madras tiles were imported to build the roofs and building materials requisitioned in the province to complete the job. The expenditure on all this building was borne by the Government of

M.A. Jinnah replying to the address by Lord Mountbatten, Constituent Assembly, 14 August 1947.

The Quaid-i-Azam, now Governor-General of Pakistan, was deeply worried about the situation. He had not anticipated the serious communal problems and the massive transfer of population which was taking place and which had been unprecedented in history till that date. He was in close consultation with the Government of Sindh about the way in which it was coping with that situation, and also keeping the minorities re-assured about their safety. Karachi was to be kept free of the communal troubles which were sweeping the northern Indian plains.

For several months the Government of Sindh kept Karachi and Hyderabad peaceful. But unfortunately, on 6 January 1948 riots broke out in Karachi as a mob attacked a Sikh *gurduwara*. The riots were controlled very quickly. The Premier of Sindh, M.A. Khuhro, took immediate firm action and himself supervised the restoration of law and order and called in the army to help the civilian administration. Within two days peace was restored and the Quaid-i-Azam who had been extremely worried about the situation, was taken round Karachi by the Premier of Sindh and shown that complete peace had been restored. The Quaid-i-Azam publicly expressed his satisfaction with the situation and his

Sindh. The Government of Sindh vacated its own secretariat and gave it for the use of the central government, itself moving to Napier Barracks and the newly completed building for N.J.V. High School on Bunder Road. The barracks on Bunder Road Extension and in the Lines area were given to the incoming officers of the government and to the office staff as were any empty houses in the city. Even Khuhro as minister shared his house with the officers because of the shortage of space, and when Begum Liaquat Ali Khan could not find another suitable house for the use of the Prime Minister, Khuhro vacated his house and moved into a smaller house on Khuhro Road. The Government House was vacated for use by the Governor-General of Pakistan and the Sindh Legislative Assembly Chamber was to be given over to the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, with the Sindh Legislature sitting when it was not required by the Pakistan Assembly.

Miraculously the city was ready for the arrival of the Pakistan government officials in the middle of August. Khuhro was thankful that ministers had been accommodated and offices completed

> By August 15, somehow or other, shelter had been found for the thousands of families that poured into Karachi, and office accommodation for every ministry and department had been found or hastily constructecl.[2]

Quaid-i-Azam had arrived in Karachi on 7 August to an enthusiastic welcome. On 11 August the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan met for the first time in the semicircular chamber of the Sindh Assembly. The chamber was filled to capacity with the sixty-nine members occupying their seats, guests and the press filling the galleries to overflowing. Miss Jinnah and other notables sat in the Distinguished Visitors Gallery along with such diplomats as had already arrived in Karachi. The Quaid-i-Azam was in the Speaker's chair and the first task of the Assembly was to elect him its President.

On the afternoon of 13 August, Lord and Lady Mountbatten flew in from New Delhi to perform the formal ceremony of handing over power. They were received by the Sindh cabinet at the airport and driven to the Governor-General's House where the Quaid-i-Azam and Miss Jinnah greeted them. The next morning, 14 August, the simple but impressive ceremony of handing over power took place in the Sindh Assembly Chamber. The ceremony was over in an hour and Pakistan emerged as an independent state. The Mountbattens did not stay for any of the celebrations and flew back immediately for the Delhi transfer of power ceremony which was to be held the next day.

Karachi went ahead with the Independence Day celebrations, which were of necessity somewhat subdued because of the bloodshed, particularly in the Punjab and Bengal. The Government of Sindh was also faced with the serious problem of sheltering and feeding the thousands of refugees who were pouring into Karachi and Hyderabad. Refugee camps were built on all available space to house them till more permanent housing and occupation could be found for them. It was a huge challenge for the quiet and orderly city of 400,000 that Karachi was in 1947.

The Sindh Assembly Building (1941) used as the National Assembly building of Pakistan (1947–1962).

control of the city from the Government of Sindh and to cut off the 'federal capital area' administratively from Sindh. There was a strong protest from the government, the legislature and the people of Sindh at this proposal. The Government of Sindh took the stand that Karachi had been well administered by it and that provincial governments administering the capital of a country was not unprecedented. For over a hundred years Calcutta, the capital of British India, was administered by the Government of Bengal which shared the capital. Similarly Simla, the summer capital of India, was administered by the Government of the Punjab. It was therefore right and proper that the administration of Karachi remain with the Government of Sindh which had made every effort to make the central government welcome, giving up its own buildings, secretariat and houses to the centre, not counting the cost to itself and also helping the centre out financially when it was not in a position to pay the salaries to its staff. The central government was adamant. Karachi would not only be the capital of Pakistan, it would have to be administered by the centre and the Government of Sindh could make its own arrangements.

As the news spread of this decision of the centre, feelings in Sindh ran high. The Sindh Assembly as well as the Sindh Muslim League Council passed strong resolutions against the proposal. The Council in a meeting on 2 February passed a strongly worded statement.

> This Council of the Sindh Provincial Muslim League while placing on record its amazement and alarm at persistent reports that Karachi city and its surrounding areas are to be taken away from Sind Province to form a separate area to be centrally administered by the Pakistan Government, deems its sacred duty as the accredited mouthpiece of Sind Muslims and also a well wisher of Pakistan, to place on record its emphatic protest against such a move, and in

Prime Minister Feroze Khan Noon, addressing the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, 1958.

confidence in the Government of Sindh at the session of the Pakistan Muslim League at the Khaliqdina Hall in February 1948. It was particularly to the credit of the Sindh administration that Sindh remained peaceful when the rest of the subcontinent was going through massive disruption and bloodshed.

Although the administration of Karachi by the Government of Sindh could not be faulted even by the Quaid-i-Azam, the central government decided to take over the

Mausoleum of Quaid-i-Azam.

Fourthly, such a move is likely to prove a grave menace to the growing spirit of unity among Pakistan Muslims, as the natural and legitimate urge of the people of the Province to safeguard their vital interests will be exploited by those anti Pakistan forces which have lain low on account of the sincere and solid support that Sind Muslims have hitherto unreservedly given to the cause of the Muslim unity above everything else. This Council further calls upon all its accredited representatives and constituents especially the Sind members of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, the Sind Ministers and Members of the Sind Legislative Assembly, the district and primary branches of the Muslim League and indeed every well wisher of Sind and of Pakistan to do everything in their power, to resist this unjust, impolitic and unwise move.[3]

A few days later on 10 February, the Sindh Assembly passed a Resolution on the issue

This Assembly records its apprehension and alarm at the contemplated move of the Pakistan Government to remove the city of Karachi from the control of Sind administration and to place it under its own immediate jurisdiction as a centrally administered area. This House, therefore, resolves that Karachi must not be handed over to the Central Administration at any cost and further to call upon the Leader of the House and his Cabinet colleagues to bring home to the Government of Pakistan that such a step would not only cripple Sind economically and politically, but would also constitute a flagrant contravention of the Pakistan Resolution at Lahore in 1940 which emphasizes the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the autonomous units constituting Pakistan, not to speak of the violence which it would inflict upon the loyal and patriotic sentiments of the people of the Province towards their own independent State of Pakistan.[4]

Flagstaff House, Fatima Jinnah Road, Miss Jinnah's residence after 1948.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

view of the following reasons and facts, earnestly urges upon Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, both as the constitutional Head of the State and as the chosen head of the Muslim League organization to be pleased in the best interests of all concerned to disapprove such a move, for the following reasons:

Firstly, Karachi has been a natural and a corporate part of Sind since centuries and is now nerve centre entity of economic, commercial, industrial, educational and cultural entity of the Province and any attempt to deprive the Province of its nerve centre will completely strangle the life and growth of the Province.

Secondly, such a move will not only be a flagrant violation of the express provisions of the Pakistan Resolution passed by the All India Muslim League at its Lahore Session in 1940, according to which the territorial integrity of every unit constituting Pakistan is guaranteed but it will constitute a serious breach of faith with the people of the Province but for whose unequivocal and clear lead, the ideal of Pakistan would have remained an empty dream.

Thirdly, such a move is fraught with grave consequences inasmuch as, on the one hand, it will be an ill recompense for the spirit of Islamic brotherhood and generous hospitality shown by Sindhi people in welcoming Pakistan Government and doing everything possible in the cause of those lakhs of their Muslim brethren who have migrated to Sind not only from various areas of the Indian Dominion but also from several areas of Pakistan itself.

The residence of Premier of Sindh after 1947.

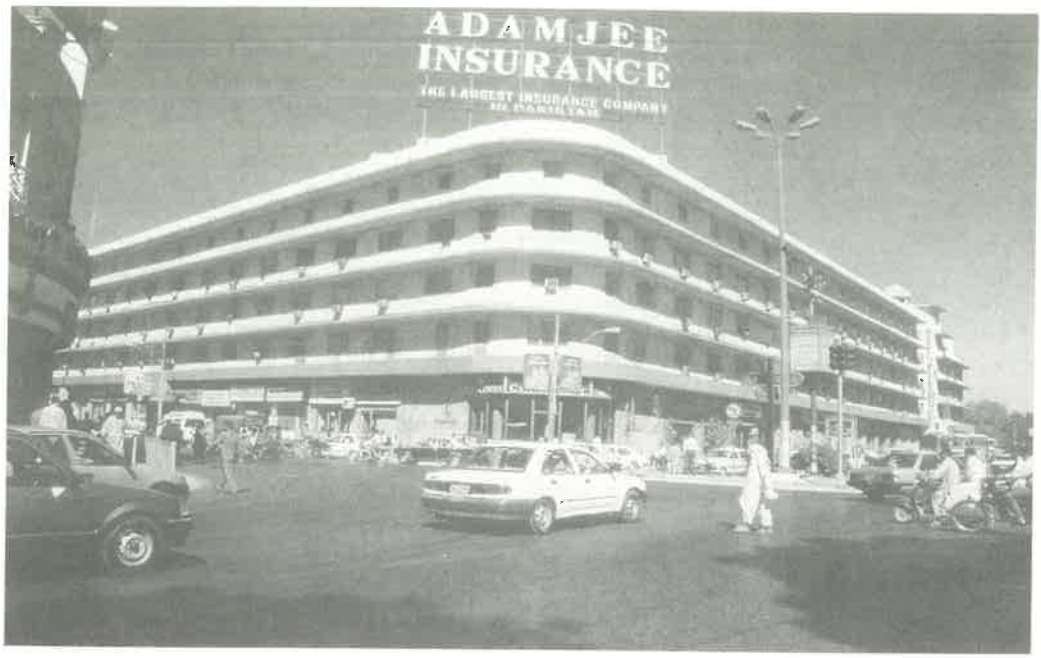
The Beach Luxury Hotel.

The Assembly included the 'Pakistan Resolution' with its Resolution to remind the public and the central authorities of the basic commitments that had been made to the provinces to win their support for Pakistan

> It is the considered view of this Session of All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable for this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial re-adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are in majority, as in the North Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped together to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall he autonomous and sovereign.

Star Cinema, Karachi 1917.

But in spite of these strong protests and the display of public opposition to the idea, the centre went ahead with its plans to take over the city. The struggle of the elected representatives, the Muslim League Parry and the people of Sindh proved of little avail against the determination of the centre to carry through its will with regard to Karachi. This was to be the first demonstration of the problem that would bedevil Pakistan's subsequent history, the centre's determination to impose its will in the face of the provinces' desire to observe the democratic norms and ensure autonomy.



The Metropole Hotel, post-1947 this was one of the two major hotels in Karachi, the other being the Beach Luxury Hotel.

An elegant dinner party at the Metropole Hotel, 1950s.

Gazdar said prophetically, 'Sir, if you do not want to make democracy a farce, if you do not want tracking towards absolute dictatorship, you should have respect for the people of Sind...we do not want to give up Karachi.'[6] But in spite of these speeches and resolutions in the elected Assemblies and public protests the centre went ahead and annexed Karachi.

On 23 July 1948 the Governor-General exercising his powers under sub section (1) of Section 290 A amended the Constitution (Indian Independence Act of 1947) and made a law to be known as Pakistan (Establishment of the Federal Capital) Order 1948. It was now proved that the Resolution of the Constituent Assembly was gilding the lily since the take over of Karachi was to be effected through the Governor General, exercising his viceregal powers. The question that now remained was how much Sindh area was to be taken over for the Federal capital of Karachi?

The town planners had given their opinion that the total requirement of the federal capital was about 800 acres which would include the assembly, secretariat and other government buildings; residential buildings for ministers and other officials and employees, foreign embassies etc., all of which would amount to about a sixth of a square mile. The area which was actually taken over by the federal government was 566.81 square miles. It included fifty-four registered villages stretching from Bund Murad and Hub on the west to as far as Dabeji in the East.

Lakshmi Building, M.A. Jinnah Road, one of the earliest multi-storied commercial buildings in Karachi.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Karachi which had so far been regarded as the 'provisional capital' of Pakistan was now termed the 'permanent' capital of Pakistan. This was a clear usurpation of the prerogative of the future elected Assembly of Pakistan to make a decision about the permanent capital of the country. As it happened Karachi remained the capital of Pakistan for

In April 1948, M.A. Khuhro, the Premier of Sindh was dismissed and a few weeks later on 22 May, a Resolution was introduced in the Constituent Assembly on the afternoon of the last day of its sitting, about the take over of Karachi. Due to the very short notice only two Sindh members out of four could be present. Khwaja Shahabuddin, the Minister of Interior moved the Resolution

> (a) that the capital of Pakistan shall be located at Karachi;
>
> (b) that all executive and administrative authority in respect of Karachi and such neighbouring areas which in the opinion of the Central Government may be required for purposes of the capital of Pakistan shall vest in and or shall be exercised by or on behalf of the Government of Pakistan and the legislative power shall vest in the Federal Legislature; and
>
> (c) that notwithstanding anything in law for the time being in force, the Government of Pakistan shall proceed forthwith to take such steps and adopt such measures as may be necessary to give effect to the purposes of this motion.[5]

The debate lasted for four hours. Hashim Gazdar, the Sindhi member from Karachi made a speech against the Resolution and read out the Resolution passed in the Sindh Assembly on the issue

> This Assembly records its apprehension and alarm...that such a step would constitute a flagrant contravention of the Pakistan Resolution passed in 1940 which emphasizes the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the autonomous units constituting Pakistan.

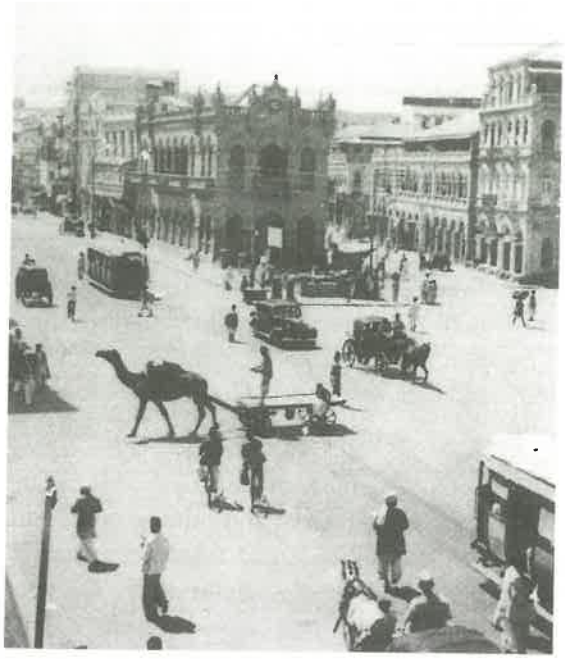
Karachi Municipal Corporation.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Qamar House, the first post-partition multi-storied commercial building in Karachi.

look after the health of the city. The wonderful advantage of space that Karachi enjoys has offset the problems to some extent but if the city is not to turn into a vast slum integrated planning will have to be done and, at the same time, the much abused environment of the city will have to be cleaned and refreshed.

Hindu Gymkhana.



Bunder Road in the 1940s with Max Denso Hall in the background and a tram in the middle distance.

about fourteen years and was federal territory for a few years more. During this period the population of the city increased dramatically through migration from other provinces as well as from other countries. But the growth of the city was haphazard and the immigrant population settled largely in *katchi abadis* or shanty towns which grew uncontrolled around the city, and even in the middle of it on any vacant land. It would take many years and a lot of effort to clear the city of the most blatant encroachments. The centre of the city and its offices were not much better cared for. The Government of Pakistan continued to work from the emergency barracks built by the Government of Sindh in 1947 and its secretariat continued to be the vacated Sindh buildings. In the two decades that the federal government was in Karachi the only building it built was the nondescript utilitarian Tughlaq House, taking up an open space near the Sindh High Court building. The federal government was eventually to build the new city of Islamabad and the many impressive structures in its new capital. Karachi was finally returned to Sindh in 1968 on the break up of the One Unit in West Pakistan.

In the four decades plus after 1948, Karachi expanded enormously. As there was no shortage of space, its expansion was outwards to the north and north-west, swallowing up ancient villages and grazing grounds. The sacred crocodiles of Manghopir and the hot springs there became a suburb of Karachi, as did the villages of Landhi at the other end, and the numerous old settlements in between. The population of Karachi stood at 5,437,984 at the census of 1981 and went on increasing at a rapid rate, mainly through migration from up country and through illegal immigration from abroad. The infrastructure of the city could not keep pace with its increase of population and encroachment of space. The construction of the lower Sindh Barrage by the Government of Sindh in the 1950s solved the problem of the water supply almost permanently. Now it was the efficiency of distribution, and not the lack of supply, which became the problem for the citizens. Other civic amenities did not keep pace with the expansion of Karachi and problems of sewerage disposal, adequate transport, electricity, and above all of unauthorized settlements. Most of Karachi's problems arose from the lack of foresight in planning. There was no Nusserwanji to build roads for the twenty-first century and

FIVE

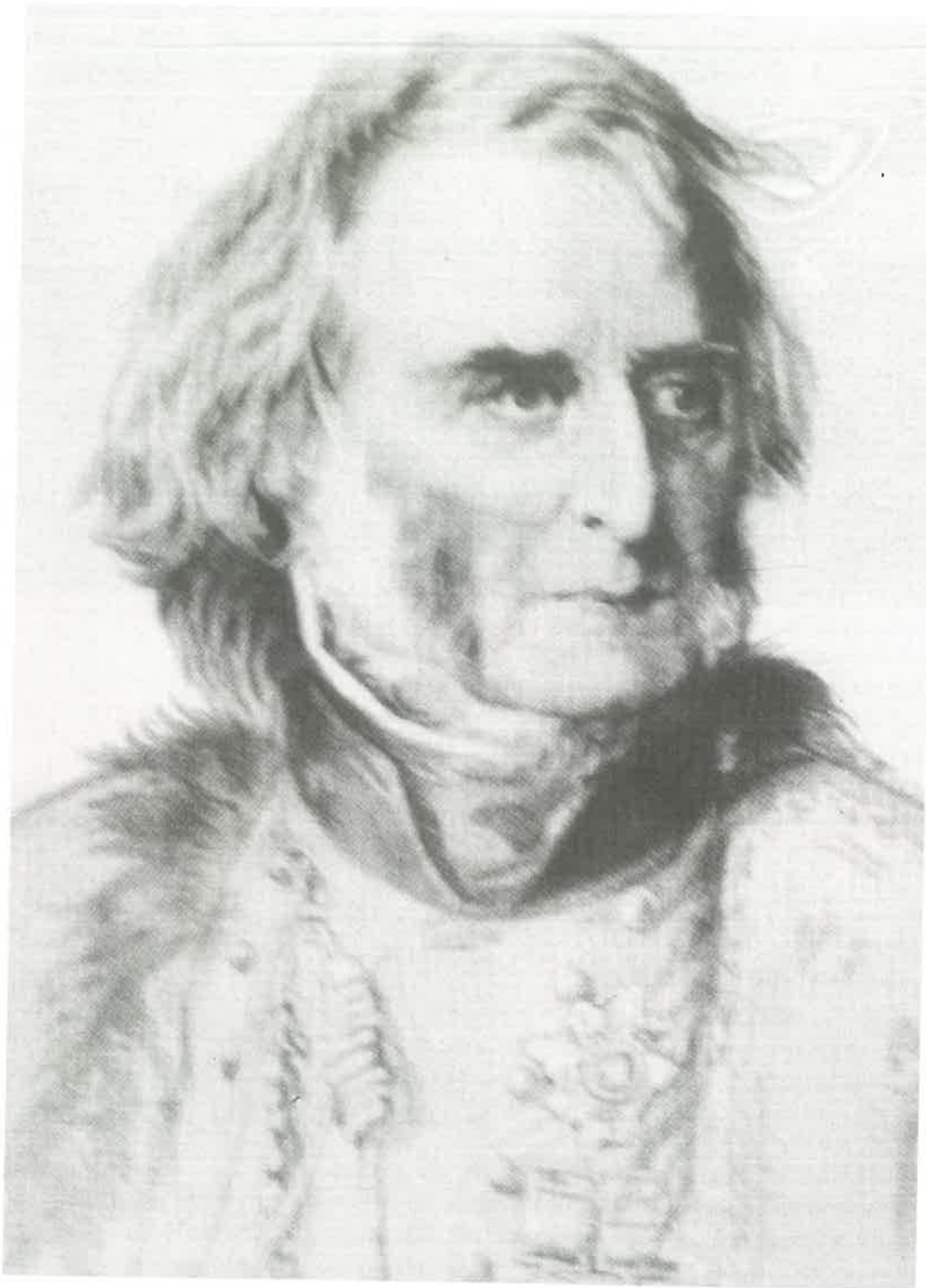
THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF MODERN KARACHI

MUNEEZA SHAMSIE

SIR CHARLES JAMES NAPIER, 1782–1853

The first governor of Sindh from 1843–7, Sir Charles Napier belonged to an eminent British family, descended from the medieval Earls of Lanais.[1] He was born in London, but grew up in Ireland where his military father, the sixth son of the sixth Lord Napier, was garrisoned. He became a gazetted ensign at eleven, took part in the Peninsular War against Napoleon, where he was badly wounded twice, captured once and freed. He greatly impressed the Duke of Wellington with his intelligence, as did his brothers, one of whom, William, became a military historian and wrote *The War in the Peninsula* and *The Conquest of Scinde*. In 1812, Lt. Col. Charles Napier took part in the war against the United States in Bermuda. He later carried out assignments in Greece and Cephalonia. In 1838, he was promoted to general and given command of northern England which seethed with political unrest, bordering on open rebellion. He controlled this so successfully within two years that he was sent to India at Wellington's suggestion.

The Russian expansion in Central Asia and turmoil in Afghanistan had made the British anxious to secure their frontier defences in India, to which Sindh, its river and coastline were very important. By 1839, the British virtually controlled the province by imposing harsh treaties on its Talpur rulers which included the garrisoning of British troops. Napier came to India in 1841 and was appointed commander-in-chief with wide military and civilian powers in Sindh. He came with a view 'to finding or provoking hostility'. He made territorial demands on the Talpurs, involved himself in a dispute between two members of the Talpur family and having precipitated a crisis, he defeated the Talpurs at the decisive battles of Meani and Dubba in 1843 and is reputed to have sent his famous message '*Peccavi*' I have sinned'.



Sir Charles Napier who had a great vision for Karachi as a major city or port.

> Mr Rustomjee has taken the utmost pains to set off his huge building to the greatest advantage...the building itself is certainly one of the handsomest and imposing structures of its kind, not in Karachi or in the province only, but in India. The architecture is purely Italian and the facade closely resembles that of the New Dresden Bank at Berlin.... The site is admirable, occupying a large space of over 8,000 square yards near the point where the two principal streets of the town, the Bunder and the McLeod roads converge, being thus in the very heart of the business parts of the city. Mr H.J. Rustomjee's mansion has a frontage of 100 feet and is constructed wholly of stone, having three stones, the total height being over 60 feet.
>
> A handsome staircase leads from the basement to the roof, from which a superb view of the harbour, the sea, the fortifications of Manora, and the town of Karachi is obtained, with the hills of Balochistan which define the British boundary being plainly visible....
>
> Attached to the office building are three huge warehouses from 300 to 350 feet in length by 50 feet wide...a 2-feet gauge tramway has been constructed to every part of the warehouses. Some eighty trucks for the storing and moving of goods are in constant readiness. Tramlines are also laid in the compound or yard....

The 'honour' done to H.J. Rustomjee by the Governor, Lord Harris, was to spend the afternoon of 4 November that year inaugurating H.J.'s new office premises, the 'palatial building in which our enterprising townsman conducts his colossal mercantile business.'

H.J. was born in Bombay on 11 February 1846. Orphaned at an early age, he was brought up by an uncle, a watchmaker. They were amongst the first influx of Parsis, together with Cowasjee Rustomjee Variawa, to sail into Karachi in the wake of the British forces, following the annexation of Sindh in 1843. H.J. was married before he was twenty and at once began doing business on his own account. Whenever a ship came into port he walked to Keamari from Sadder where he lived, waited patiently till the vessel unloaded, bought cases or bottles of brandy, whisky and wine at a low price, and with a coolie to carry them he trudged back to town to sell his wares at a very substantial profit. His success came swiftly from this and from his wholesale dealings in other goods. His agents were spread all over Sindh, the Punjab, Quetta and the United Provinces up to Cawnpore. According to contemporary accounts he was 'a strict disciplinarian, a man of enlightened views and extensive charity. He lived in comfort but there was no display of wealth.'

In 1897, two years before his death, he was described as one of the 'most interesting personalities amongst the merchant princes of India, the biggest businessman in Sindh, able to compete with any man in the land'.

Many of the flourishing Parsi families of today owe their prosperity to the initial aid given by H.J. which helped put their forefathers on their feet. Unhappily, after H.J. died at the early age of fifty-three from a heart ailment, at Karachi on 13 February 1899, none

Sindh was duly annexed by the British amid considerable controversy. Napier was appointed governor of Sindh, and knighted. He repulsed warring tribes on the northern Sindh border. He made Karachi the provincial capital and had great visions for it as a major city and port in the subcontinent; the town as we know it today, began during his tenure. He developed the cantonment town, the roads and the harbour.[2] He built the vital Napier Mole, connecting the island of Keamari to the mainland.[3] He set up the canal department to improve the irrigation in Sindh, and was keen to encourage trade and commerce. He adopted a policy of subduing the Baloch sirdars. Unfortunately, as an administrator, he was too quixotic an individual to implement his projects.[4] His one undoubted success was the efficient police force he created for Karachi. This was later replicated as a model throughout British India. Napier sailed from Karachi in October 1847. Two years later he was recalled to India as Commander-in-Chief, during the Second Sikh War, to replace Sir Hugh Gough who had suffered some reverses; but the war ended, with a final victory for Gough before Napier arrived. As Commander-in-Chief, Napier's plans for the army did not meet with the approbation of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General; the two men quarrelled and Napier resigned in 1851, having lost the support of his patron, the Duke of Wellington too. He died in 1853. A statue of him now stands in Trafalgar Square while there are many landmarks in Karachi which continue to bear his name.

HORMUSJEE JAMSETJEE RUSTOMJEE, 1846–99

H.J. Rustomjee.

From the Sindh Gazette of 10 November 1891, over 105 years ago:

> The honour done to Mr Hormusjee Jamsetjee Rustomjee as one of the leading merchants of Karachi by His Excellency the Governor of Bombay is highly appreciated by the mercantile community of Karachi.
>
> Mr Rustomjee's kindly feeling and liberality have made him as much liked as his shrewdness, ability and capacity for business have made him respected. He has identified his interests with those of the town, and the scale on which he carries out his operations and the superb pile in which they are conducted, stand as a record and an indication of mercantile property of the town. He has always evinced the keenest interest in all matters affecting the prosperity of the port and has been for years an untiring advocate of railway extensions of province...

Torquay, one named 'Keamari' and the other 'Minora'. He lived through the First World War in England and died there in 1919. He is buried at Brookwood.

A generous and philanthropic man, he put much of his money in trusts for charity with a concentration on education and health.

SETH NAOMUL HOTCHAND, 1804–78

Seth Naomul Hotchand.

Chiefly remembered today for his invaluable autobiography *The Memoirs of Seth Naomul Hotchand*, he provided a rare, fascinating eye witness account of Sindh before and after the British conquest, leading up to the First Afghan War. The book is 'probably the only extant account of a British 'spy' and agent in India in the nineteenth century.'[5]

There is considerable historical evidence, however, to dispute some imperial myths fostered by Seth Naomul's memoirs, including tales of Talpur bigotry and Seth Naomul's claim that Karachi was a small fishing village in the pre-British era, which was first fortified by his great-great grandfather. In fact, Karachi was already a small, prosperous town before the Talpur rulers wrested it from the Khan of Kalat in 1795 and built their fort at Manora. Seth Naomul Hotchand was the second son of Seth Hotchand, an eminent Karachi merchant. He joined the family business when he was eleven and had a long, fruitful association with the British, culminating with a grand durbar in his honour at Karachi's Frere Hall. There, Sir Bartle Frere, the governor, presented Naomul Hotchand with the Insignia and Grant of the Dignity of Companion of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India with the words: 'You had great influence amongst your countrymen: you possessed information drawn from every part of northern and Eastern India: and you placed all unreservedly at the disposal of the Government. When many of your countrymen were appalled by the greatness of the danger, and believed that some catastrophe threatened the existence of the British Empire in India, you never faltered in your sagacious trust in the power of the British Government'.[6] Long before, in 1837, Captain Carless of the Indian navy had explored the potential of a harbour at Karachi, to facilitate the movement of British troops to counter Russian activity in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Seth Naomul provided Carless with vital supplies and information.

of the three of his six sons who worked in his business with him were able to carry on from where he had left off. In ten years time his firm went into liquidation.

H.J. and his contemporaries, one being Jehangir Kothari, all gave far more than they took. They gave liberally, both of their time and of their money, for the development and betterment of the port town of Karachi. In turn, they were given the trust, respect and affection of the citizens. H.J.'s and Kothari's names are engraved on the roll of honour of Trustees at the Karachi Port Trust.

COWASJEE RUSTOMJEE VARIAWA

Cowasjee Rustomjee Variawa, came to Karachi about the same time as H.J. From the start, he ran a business in the harbour as a *Dubash*, supplying stores to vessels, first in partnership with Dubash Brothers and then with his own firm of Cowasjee & Sons.

C.R. Variawa.

With the advent of steam, the firm imported coal from South Africa and Wales and became coal bunkerers. Later, his firm developed a stevedoring business and was involved in dredging work. Cowasjee Variawa had much to do with the development of the port at Karachi.

During the Afghan War of 1878–9 he and other Parsi commissariat contractors followed Lord Roberts and his army to Kabul, where many of them were captured and imprisoned by the Afghans. The British and the Indian prisoners were kept separately, so were the Parsis. The Afghans could not quite place them as they seemed paler than the Indians and not quite as white as the British.

The Afghan set about annoying the Indians. They horrified the Hindus by feeding them beef, they insulted the Muslims by feeding them pork, but were not quite sure what to feed the Parsis. One quick thinking Parsi told the Afghans: 'You may do whatever you like with us, feed us, starve us, but please do not make us eat chicken.' Thus were they fed a chicken a day.

Early this century, when Cowasjee & Sons was handed over to be run by his two sons, Fakirjee and Minocher, Cowasjee Variawa retired to England, bought two houses in

India, the Horse Oak. He paid considerable attention to education. He set up a network of vernacular schools, English schools and some engineering schools; he also pioneered the grants-in-aid system for schools, which was later adopted throughout India. He amended some of Napier's policies governing the *jagirdars* and *zemindars*, rooting out of injustice and ensuring the loyalty of important chieftains to the British crown to ensure peace.

As a result of his policies Sindh remained quiet during the Mutiny. In fact, Frere's land settlement in Sindh 'may be said to have preceded and anticipated the post-Mutiny policies of Canning towards the *taluqdars* of Oudh'.[9]

To further protect the province and guard the Bolan Pass he garrisoned Quetta, long before it was established as an important military outpost in 1877. Frere's nine years in Sindh earned him a knighthood. Many Karachi landmarks continue to bear his name. He went on to have a very distinguished career in India. He joined the Viceroy's Council in Calcutta from 1859–62, was Governor of Bombay for five years and in 1867 returned to England as a member of The India Council. For the next ten years, he concerned himself with the development of Indian agriculture and communications. In 1876, he was made a baronet and in 1877, appointed high commissioner and governor of Cape Colony, to carry out the planned confederation of British South Africa and the Boer Republic. He did not understand South Africa as he had India. He regarded the Zulus as a menace and provoked a war. This led to the disastrous British defeat at Isandhlwane in 1878. Frere was officially censured and recalled to Britain in 1880.

THE HON. KHAN BAHADUR HASSANALLY BEY EFFENDI, 1830–95

K.B. Hassanally Bey Effendi.

The founder of the Sindh Madrassah-tul-Islam, the Hon. Khan Bahadur Hassanally Effendi, played a pivotal role in improving Muslim education in Sindh. He had to struggle very hard to educate himself as there were neither English schools nor law schools in Sindh, when he was young and education among Muslims was abysmal. The son of a religious and spiritual guide, he was born in Hyderabad, Sindh, orphaned young and educated in Persian at a local seminary. He learnt English and Sindhi while holding a humble post in the service of the British Government at Naushahro. In 1860, he was promoted to *serishtedar* of the district court in Karachi and learnt law. He so distinguished himself that he was appointed pleader, and later public prosecutor, a post held by

This marked the beginning of his work for the British. He then used his influence to obtain the necessary 1,000 camels for Colonel James Outram to transport the British army, through Sindh and the Bolan Pass into Afghanistan. He supplied boats and provisions to Reserve Brigadier Valiant, who captured the Talpur Fort at Manora, landed his troops in Karachi and planted the Union Jack within the city walls. Seth Naomul also reported the activities of the Talpur rulers of Sindh, to whom his family had access. He played a particularly important role in The First Afghan War. The Talpurs were well aware of his activities, but were too afraid of British ire to protest. He was probably regarded as no more than an opportunist by his contemporaries, although today he is remembered as 'the definitive traitor in folk history'.[7] He was greatly valued by Bartle Frere who became chief commissioner of Sindh in 1850. When Frere established the Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC), Seth Naomul was the liaison between the commissioner and the townspeople; he was also on the first managing committee of the KMC together with Captain Preedy, the revenue collector and John McLeod, the collector of customs. As a reward for his services, Seth Naomul was sanctioned a pension of one hundred rupees per month, for three generations by the Government of India. He was also given a *jagir* in perpetuity, as well as other honours.

SIR HENRY BARTLE EDWARD FRERE, 1815–84

Educated at Haileybury, the traditional public school for colonial administrators, Bartle Frere joined the Indian Civil Service in 1834 and was chief commissioner of Sindh between 1850–9. The post carried enormous powers, because Sindh had been merged with the Bombay Presidency after Napier, but was too distant to be administered from there; the commissioner was therefore given virtual gubernatorial control. In Sindh, the dynamic and imaginative Frere initiated 'one of the most remarkable pioneering periods of administration seen anywhere in the world'.[8]

Sir Bartle Frere.

Although he was greatly handicapped by financial constraints, Frere was able to translate Napier's dreams into reality. He laid down the framework for modern Sindh and the administrative infrastructure for the city of Karachi. To create an economic base in the province he constructed railways, canals, and metalled roads. He established the Karachi Municipal Corporation, made considerable improvements to Karachi harbour and introduced the first postal system in

hydraulic presses, among others; he traded in Burma teak and other goods and exported Sindhi camels to Australia for transport between Fremantle and the gold mines at Coolgarlie. He owned property in Sydenham, Kent, and in Karachi was also involved with the Karachi Landing and Shipping Company, the *Sindh Gazette*, the Sindh Light Railways and numerous other concerns.

Eduljee Dinshaw erected a statue and fountain (now extinct) in Frere Gardens. He was a great philanthropist and did a great deal of public and charitable work. He was a delegate to the Parsi matrimonial court and served in the Karachi Municipal Corporation and the Karachi Port Trust. In 1903, he became the only Indian to be appointed honorary member of the Sindh Volunteer Corps. He founded and contributed to the maintenance of the Lady Dufferin Hospital in Karachi; he also set up well-known dispensaries for the poor in Saddar and Keamari and was also involved in other large scale charities in Karachi, Quetta, Poona and Bombay. In his will he left seven and a half lakh rupees to the University of Bombay for providing technical education for Parsi students.

RAJ RISHI DEWAN DAYARAM GIDUMAL SHAHANI, 1857–1927

Born in Hyderabad, Sindh, Dayaram Gidumal, was among Sindh's first graduates. He did his B.A. and his law degree at Bombay University and in 1877 joined government service. He rose to the position of judicial commissioner of Sindh, but refused the offer to become a high court judge and retired in 1911. During his years of service, he initiated many social reforms and set up educational, political and literary institutions. According to Nagendranath Gupta:

> Whatever little public activity existed in Sindh at that time was due to the initiative of Dayaram. His was the brain that planned, his was the hand that worked. He had all the gifts of leadership, the power of organization, the great capacity of bringing men of different ways of thinking together and making them work for a common purpose.[11]

Diyaram Gidumal.

In those days political activity was comparatively mild and offered no conflict of interest for Government servants. Dayaram Gidumal founded a political association, the Sindh

few Indians. He was soon involved in public affairs and was appointed a member of the Karachi Municipal Corporation. He also became vice-president of the newly created political association, the Sindh Sabha, but resigned to start the Sindh Mohammedan Association of which he became the president, and which acted as a vocal and effective lobby for the Muslims of Sindh. Hassanally Effendi spoke English, Persian, Turkish, French and Sindhi and is particularly remembered for his pioneering work in spreading English education among the Muslims of Sindh. In 1885, he set up the Sindh Madrassah Board and worked tirelessly to set up a modern school, the Sindh Madrassah-tul-Islam. He toured the province to collect funds; the KMC provided the land for the building which still stands today. The school originally took one bright boy from each of the fifty two *talukas* of Sindh, but soon broadened its base and became a centre of excellence, which provided many of Sindh's most eminent public and political figures.

EDULJEE DINSHAW, CIE

Eduljee Dinshaw C.I.E.

Eduljee Dinshaw was an exceptional, clever and successful businessman, who amassed a great fortune and made an enormous contribution to charities, public service and the betterment of Karachi. He was born in Poona into the Parsi community, grew up in Karachi and was educated at the Narain Jaganath High School. At twenty-one or twenty-two, he became an army contractor. He did extremely well, particularly during the Second Afghan War (1880–1), where he showed great courage and daring in supplying food, using the camel as means of transport. This earned him a fortune and the trust and respect of the British Government. His influential army friends advised him to buy land and invest in Karachi, which had a promising future. He used most of his profits buying up warehouses, shops and other buildings on land due for development. He even acquired 'swamps and tide-swept sands that nobody in those days imagined would be of any great value' around areas such as Victoria Road, City Station and Bath Island.[10] Eduljee Dinshaw always worked alone, never had any partners and would often supervise the construction of his buildings himself and make the payment due to the masons. But being a man of amazing commercial enterprise, he turned his attention to many other ventures. He became the largest coal importer in Karachi, and set up cotton and wool ginning factories, on

D.J. Sind College and the Sindh Madrassah. After his retirement in 1920, he was associated with a number of commercial enterprises, including the India Flour Mills and the Indian Assurance Company, of which he was the head. He was the leading figure in the Goan community to which he belonged and founded the Goa Portuguese Association. He also served for six years in the Karachi Municipal Corporation and was vice-president at one point. Cincinnatus d'Abreo was elected by popular ballot instituted by the *Daily Gazette* as one of the 'Twelve Leaders of Sindh' and lobbied for the government sanctioning and construction of the Lloyd Barrage and Canals at Sukkur. These plans to irrigate Sindh had been drawn up in 1912 but had not been implemented due to the indifference of the Bombay Government. The scheme was finally pushed through, due to vocal Sindhi demands and completed in 1935: it transformed the entire agriculture, trade and economy of Sindh. Cincinnatus D'Abreo did a great deal of public work, served on many committees such as the Sindh Flood Relief Committee, the Sindh League of Progress and was known as a philanthropist too. Cincinnatus Town, where he lived and which was then a new suburb of Karachi by the Lyari River, is named after him.

SAHIBSING CHANDASING SHAHANI, 1869–1931

Sahibsing Chandasing Shahani was born in Hyderabad, into an old Amil family of Sikhs.[14] He was the first Sindhi to do his MA from Bombay University and he took Persian and English as optional subjects. He was subsequently appointed Professor of Persian at Wilson College but returned to Karachi in 1896 as Professor of English at D.J. College, where he had studied earlier. Later he became the principal from 1917–27. As a teacher he made a profound impact on an entire younger generation of Sindhis. He did much to develop the D.J. College and encouraged a large number of girls to join, including his daughters, one of whom became the first Sindhi lady to be called to the Sindh Bar. It was also due to his efforts that a law college was set up in Karachi and he played an important role in establishing the Nadirshaw Edulji Dinshaw College for Engineering. S.C. Shahani, who owned lands near Jamesabad, was a keen agriculturalist too. He was among the first to grow Egyptian and American cotton, which the government was keen to introduce in Sindh. He made

Sahibsing C. Shahani.

Sabha, which voiced the opinion of all communities in Sindh. He helped establish its newspaper *The Sindh Times* and wrote its leading articles, although as an official he could not hold any other office. He set up the Seva Saran (Women's Home of Service in Bombay) and the N.H. Academy in Hyderabad. Most important of all, he initiated the idea for Sindh's first college to make higher education more accessible to students in Sindh, who hitherto had to travel to Bombay for a university education, as he had done himself, and which entailed finding guardians in Bombay and other difficulties.

In 1885, he wrote a paper pointing out the benefits of a college education and pointed out that Sindh had barely ten graduates, while in the remainder of the Bombay presidency there were very many and were represented in the judiciary, army, commerce and other walks of life. He not only lobbied with the Government for the Sindh Arts College and gave much thought to its curriculum, but travelled throughout the province to raise funds: he collected Rs 80,000 which was then matched by the Government. The college became the D.J. College and still stands today. It was named after a public figure Dayaram Jethmal, at the insistence of his family, who gave a large sum to the college, after his death.[12]

Meanwhile Dayaram Gidumal Shahani's contribution to the institution was largely forgotten. He moved to Bombay, spent his last years in spiritual and literary pursuits and was long remembered as one of the most generous, self effacing and remarkable men of his generation. Dayaram Gidumal was also a linguist and scholar. He did much to promote Sindhi literature and his translations and commentaries on religious books such as *Essence of the Bhagavad Gita* (1893) are said to be classics of Sindhi prose; he was well versed in Sufism too and wrote about Sufi saints, including Shah Abdul Latif in a book *Something about Sindh* (1882). He was one of the first writers of free verse in Sindhi which was published in the book *Mana-Ja-Chahbook*.

Cincinnatus F. D'abreo.

CINCINNATUS F. D'ABREO, 1865–1929

Cincinnatus F. D'Abreo was a very imposing, dignified man;[13] who was born in Karachi in 1865, educated at St. Patrick's High School and joined government service in 1888. He went on to become assistant collector and was the honorary treasurer of the Lady Dufferin Hospital and Louise Lawrence Institute, the

> a war is outside the realms of the possible, nobody who studies European armaments, for a moment imagines.[16]

He built up a sufficient lobby in India and the British press for the matter to be brought up before a Royal Commission headed by Austen Chamberlain, which led to recommendations supporting the steps urged by Montagu de P. Webb and the Karachi Chamber. Later Montagu de P. Webb addressed inflation caused by the First World War. He attended the All-India War Conference of 1918 and, during the aftermath of war, some of the recommendations made by the Chamber pre-empted policies that were later adopted by the Commonwealth.

In fact Montagu de P. Webb played a very significant role in British India's monetary matters and built up the Karachi Chamber as one of the premier financial institutions in British India. He represented the Karachi Chamber at conferences in Calcutta, Montreal, London, and Sydney. He was a member of the Legislative Assembly in Delhi and Simla and of the Indian Fiscal Commission, 1921–2. He wrote extensively on economic matters and his books include *India and the Empire, Britain's Dilemma, The World Crisis and the Only Way Out.* During his tenure, the Karachi Chamber addressed many other issues pivotal to the development of Sindh, including education and the need to improve Sindh's irrigation. In 1912, the Chamber forwarded the Sukkur Barrage scheme to the secretary of state for sanction. This was part of a triple project which included barrages at Mithankot and Kotri, though the work on Sukkur Barrage did not begin until 1931, and the other two were only built after Partition. The many projects that Montagu de P. Webb helped to establish or initiate include the Sindh Light Railways, the Larkana Jacobabad Railway, Jacobabad-Kashmore Feeder Railways, the Karachi Electric Corporation, the Karachi Building and Development Company, the Saving and Helping Bank. He also took a keen interest in political affairs. In 1915 he attended the session of the Indian National Congress, not as a representative of the Karachi Chamber, but as a Sindh delegate. Among his many other activities he founded the Air League of India in 1922, which subsequently became the Karachi Aero Club.

HAJI SIR ABDOOLA HAROON, 1872–1942

One of the most important political figures in Sindh, and a businessman of extraordinary prescience and acumen, Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon was born in Karachi *c.* 1872.[17] He was orphaned very young and brought up in straitened circumstances by his widowed mother. As a child, he worked as a hawker to augment the family income and although he had little interest in school, he learnt to read and write Gujerati. During his early teens he was employed as an apprentice by relatives, who were prosperous merchants, but encouraged by his mother he branched out on his own, selling bags of sugar. From a small shop in Jodia Bazaar, his business developed into a huge empire with dealings in the United States, Britain, Java, and South Africa and which earned him the title of The

a substantial contribution to the Chatfield Committee in connection with land settlement in Sindh and presided over the 1916 Social Conference in Larkana. In 1921 and 1931, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly from the Sindh Zamindars' constituency and took a keen interest in its legislation. He was also on the board of the viva voce examiners of ICS candidates in India and later became its chairman.

SIR MONTAGU DE POMEROY WEBB CIE, CBE, 1869–1919

A towering figure in the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry of which he was elected chairman seventeen times, between 1901–22, Sir Montagu de Pomeroy Webb was the editor and owner of *The Daily Gazette* and general manager of Forbes, Forbes and Campbell. He was born at Clifton, Bristol in 1869 and arrived at Karachi in 1890. By this time, the Karachi Port Trust had been formed and Karachi's exports and imports equalled that of Bombay and Calcutta; it was also the largest exporter of wheat in the east, but movement of goods to and from the hinterland were hampered by Karachi's poor railway links. The Karachi Chamber fought a hard battle with the indifferent Bombay authorities over this. In 1907 Montagu de P. Webb informed the Indian Railways Committee that railway links in Sindh must be improved and the railway budget separated from the national budget.[15]

Sir Montagu de Pomeroy Webb, CIE, CBE.

He was extremely vocal over the Indian Government's financial policies. He considered it utterly indefensible that the bulk of India's new Gold Standard Reserve was kept in London which 'provided the London bankers with valuable and utilizable resources while merchants in India, whether British or Indian, were coming to recognize the risk that was thereby created for them.'

He considered this as nothing short of misappropriation of India's cash and in 1910, with remarkable foresight said

> Were England unfortunately involved in a great European war, our artificial rupee, under present management would probably drop to 3d or 9d before the war was finished. That such

Committee although the movement had started to dissipate by then. Meanwhile in 1923, he was elected a member of the Bombay Legislative Council and gave voice to Sindhi issues; in 1926, he was elected a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, where he continued to be re-elected until his death.

He constantly criticized the autocratic powers vested in the Commissioner-in-Sindh and lobbied for provincial autonomy. This was originally demanded by the Hindus of Sindh who were more politically aware than the Muslims and wanted to end the domination of Bombay Hindus. The issue was later taken up by the Muslims and supported by the Muslim League. This was virulently opposed by the Hindu Mahasahba which projected fearful images of a 'Muslim Raj', because Sindh had a Muslim majority. Sindh was finally granted provincial autonomy by the Government of India Act, 1935. Haji Abdoola Haroon was on several committees mandated to work out the details. By then, he was among the foremost political figures in the province who had fought hard for due Muslim representation at an all-India level, was general secretary of the 1930 All India Muslim Conference and attended The Round Table Conference in London to discuss constitutional issues. The politics of Sindh took many complex twists and turns over the next few years, during which Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon founded the Sindh United Party with Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto, but lost the election for the provincial assembly.

He was among the leaders who invited the Quaid-i-Azam to come to Sindh. In 1938 he arranged the historic Muslim League Conference in Sindh, presided by the Quaid-i-Azam. During this session, the subversion of Muslim culture by a Hindu dominated majority and the polarization between the two nations, Hindu and Muslim, were highlighted in a resolution which demanded that India should be divided on religious lines.[20] This proved to be a precursor of the 1940 Lahore Resolution. Haji Abdoola Haroon was the President of the Sindh Provincial Muslim League and also became Chairman of the All India Muslim League's Foreign Sub-Committee. He organized Muslim League branches in the province at different levels; in 1941 he was appointed Member of the Muslim League's Working Committee. During his travels he presented the Muslim League's point of view in foreign countries and through newspapers in India and abroad. He also addressed a wide range of problems pertaining to both Sindh and the Muslims of India. He died shortly after presiding over the 1942 All India Seerat Conference in Allahabad.

THE QUAID-I-AZAM, MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH, 1876–1948

The Founder of Pakistan and its first Governor-General, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, fought for the political rights of India's Muslims against stupendous odds, made Karachi the capital of the new country, was born there circa 1876 and died in Quetta. The son of Jinnahbhai Poonja, a prosperous merchant, he was educated at the Sindh Madrassah-Tul-Islam, joined Lincoln's Inn, London, and was called to the bar in 1896.

Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon.

Sugar King. He was a delegate to the Imperial Economic Conference in Ottawa in 1932, was often consulted by the Government of India on commercial and financial matters, including the economic viability of separating Sindh as a province from Bombay.[18] He was among the foremost Sindhi leaders who strongly advocated provincial autonomy. He was knighted in 1931. He was later a director of a shipping company, Mughal Lines and the Indian Transcontinental Airways.

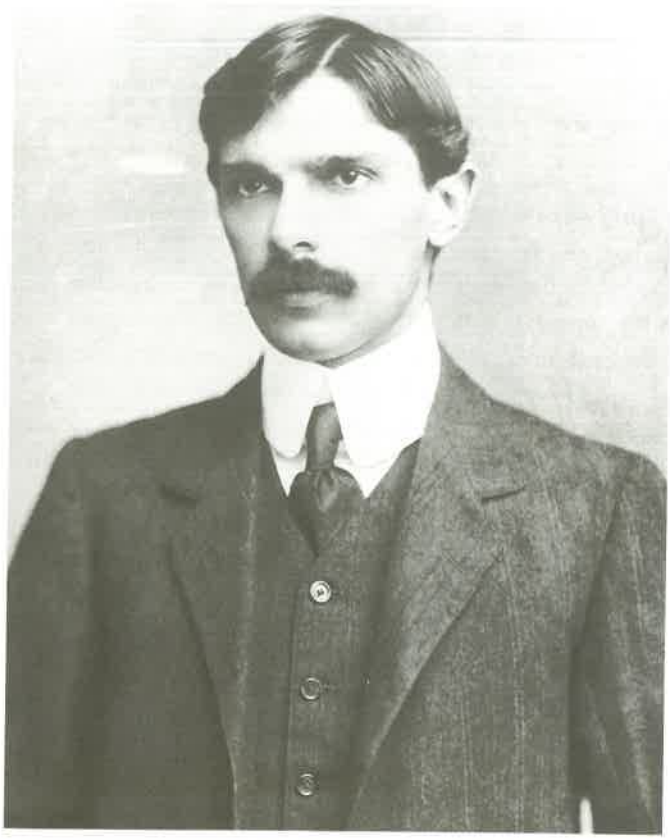
Long before that he was already involved in municipal affairs. He was elected to the Municipal Committee of Karachi from 1913–17 and 1921–34, during which he took a particular interest in health and education schemes for the urban poor, particularly in the Lyari quarter. He pioneered the education of Sindhi Muslim women and set up the Hajiani Hanifabai Girls School in 1926. He also took the unusual step of sending his own daughters to English medium schools and encouraged one of them to pursue medicine as a career. His enlightened outlook was shared by his dynamic wife, Nusrat Haroon, who became an eminent social worker in her own right. The many educational institutions that he established include the Jamia Islamia Yatim Khana to help poor students acquire a good education as well as a professional training.

Haji Abdoola Haroon played a pivotal role in the political awakening of Muslim Sindh and in crystallizing Muslim opinion. In 1920 he set up a newspaper *Alwahid*, but soon after the Masjid Manzilgah incident and the 1940 communal riots in Sukkur when 'the Hindu press adopted a truculent attitude towards the Mussulmans'[19] he turned *Alwahid* into a limited company and the first community daily paper for the Muslims of Sindh, to safeguard their interests. His political career began with the Indian National Congress and its ally, the nationalist, anti-British pan Islamic Khilafat Movement which he joined in 1917 and 1918, respectively. He became president of the Sindh Provincial Khilafat Committee, took part in the non-cooperation movement called by Gandhi in 1920, helped finance the Khilafat Movement and worked very closely with its founder, Maulana Mohammed Ali, who was subsequently jailed in Karachi. Haji Abdoola Haroon and his family also took to wearing home-spun cotton (*khaddar*). He turned his home into a centre of Khilafat activities and in 1927, he was appointed President of the Khilafat

politics, creating many conflicts and contradictions. The Quaid-i-Azam had to make many compromises to win over provincial leaders. He participated in the Round Table Conferences in London to discuss intricate constitutional issues. He became so disillusioned that in 1931, he abandoned politics and became a lawyer in Britain. Meanwhile, Congress policies and British tactics, increased insecurities and fears among many Muslims.

In 1934, the Quaid-i-Azam emerged from his London exile. He revitalized the Muslim League, broadened its base and participated in the 1937 elections to the provincial assemblies as laid down by the 1935 India Act. Since the country consisted of Hindu-majority and Muslim-majority provinces, he hoped the Congress and Muslim League would develop a *modus vivendi* to protect the minorities in each, and also come to a power-sharing formula in the central government. The Congress swept the polls and, heady with victory, chose to side-step the Muslim League. This increased Muslim apprehensions, made provincial Muslim leaders conscious of the importance of due Muslim representation at the centre; and led to more difficulties and a loss of faith. The Quaid-i-Azam described Muslims and Hindus as two distinct nations with a different culture and history. This was expressed in the momentous 1940 Lahore Resolution demanding the recognition of a distinct Muslim nationhood which came to be known as The Pakistan Resolution. According to Dr Ayesha Jalal,[24] the Quaid-i-Azam perceived the two nation theory as the means by which India's Muslims who were outnumbered by the Hindus by one to four could overcome the problem of numbers: it was only as a separate nation that they were entitled to equal bargaining power at an all-India level. She also draws a distinction between the assertion of Muslim nationhood which was 'non-negotiable' and the attainment of Pakistan as a sovereign state which remained open to negotiation until 1946.[25] There is a growing number of scholars who share her views, but many do not. The traditional, more well-known view is that the Lahore Resolution, was a clear and definite demand for Pakistan, as an independent state. This is borne out by his biographer, Stanley Wolpert.[26] At all events, the Quaid-i-Azam was a great constitutionalist, a very cerebral politician, who manoeuvred his way through many political minefields, often using silence and ambiguity as a shield to unite and tread carefully between the disparate views of the minority and majority provinces, which had very different dynamics. He mobilized Muslim opinion; the 1945–6 election revealed considerable gains. The Muslim League and Congress vote was clearly divided between the Muslim and Hindu dominated electorates respectively.

He wanted much more for Pakistan than he was forced to settle for, as negotiation after negotiation collapsed. He twice rejected the 'moth eaten' and 'truncated' sovereign state that he was compelled to agree to in 1947. A year earlier, the Cabinet Mission plan *had* offered a three tiered federal power sharing constitutional structure, with distinct groupings of Hindu and Muslim majority states (virtually Hindustan and Pakistan) within a united India. The Quaid-i-Azam accepted this, but Congress rejected it: the subsequent amendments were not acceptable to the Muslim League. The British, having



Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

He was intelligent, incisive, upright and hardworking and soon made his mark as a rising young lawyer in Bombay. He joined the Indian National Congress (established 1885) because he wanted to present 'a common nationalist front against the British.'[21] In 1910, he was elected to the Central Executive Council and in 1913, he joined the Muslim League (established 1906). He was the architect of the 1916 Lucknow Pact in which the Muslim League and the Congress agreed to work for a common goal: self-government. He was hailed as 'The Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity'. In 1919, he spoke forcefully against the notorious Rowlatt Acts curtailing fundamental rights and was bitter at the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, but believed that the battle for Indian independence should be fought from within the legislature, not outside it.[22] He criticized Gandhi for mixing religion with politics by using Hindu symbolism to gather mass support for his *satyagraha* (non-cooperation) campaign and for creating a wedge among Muslims by wooing the pan-Islamic Khilafat *ulema*.

In 1920 the Quaid-i-Azam resigned from the Congress. For the next decade, he was virtually eclipsed politically, but came to be known as one of the finest lawyers in undivided India. He also remained active in Muslim League politics, trying at every opportunity to safeguard the interest of India's Muslims. The Hindu revivalist movements of the nineteenth century had already given rise to Muslim fears of Hindu domination. In 1909, the Morley-Minto reforms had conceded in principle to the Muslim demand for separate electorates. According to Dr Ayesha Jalal,[23] the Quaid-i-Azam never showed much enthusiasm for this: he believed that the real security for India's Muslims was to share power at the centre once the British left. The British, determined to hold on to power at the centre and diffuse nationalist sentiment at an all-India level, provincialized Indian

ultimately, by abolishing the feudal *zamindari* system. An exceptionally able administrator, Jamshed Nusserwanji remained alienated from mainstream populist politics and is chiefly remembered for his work with the Karachi Municipal Corporation. He joined in 1918, became its president and was later Karachi's first mayor. He retired from the KMC in 1934 by which time he had transformed the city. He was responsible for restoring the large tract of land, the Artillery Maidan in central Karachi which was under the army's control, back to the city after travelling to Bombay to persuade the governor. He developed Karachi's underground drainage system, increased the city's existing fourteen miles of roads to seventy-two and asphalted them all. He constantly urged an improvement in arid Karachi's water supply, although it was only after his tenure that the government built the new Haleji Water Works. In fact, without the infrastructure that Jamshed Nusserwanji laid down, Karachi would have faced insuperable problems when it was made the federal capital of Pakistan in 1947. Jamshed Nusserwanji also built parks, encouraged the beautification and remodelling of the city and raised funds to erect a new KMC building, which still stands today. He opened Urdu primary schools throughout Karachi, and made primary education compulsory in the exceedingly poor, predominantly Muslim Lyari Quarter. He cleansed and broadened the Old Town Quarter and eradicated plague from it.

Nusserwanji was associated with countless charities, including the Hiranand Leper Hospital. He set up the Sobraj Maternity Home and the Gulbai Maternity Home. He spearheaded the relief work during the influenza epidemic of 1919, the floods of 1927 and 1929 and the Quetta earthquake of 1935. He streamlined administrative and bureaucratic procedures, and was elected into the Sindh Assembly from Dadu. Hatim A. Alavi, who worked with him in the KMC says, 'His intangible and unrecorded work was greater by far than his tangible and recorded activities.'[29] He realized that a highly developed civic consciousness was essential for any meaningful development and progress. He proceeded to educate citizens of Karachi, young and old, in their civic rights and responsibilities, through lectures and tours, aided by a group of young men and women, many of whom later became municipal councillors themselves. He continues to be remembered as one of Karachi's most respected and remarkable citizens.

HATIM A. ALAVI, 1898–1976

Hatim Alavi was born in Karachi, into a prominent business family and was a partner in Yusafali Alibhoy Karimji & Co. He was also a well-known philanthropist and played an active political role in Karachi. He represented Sindh at the Indian National Congress's 1920 Nagpur Session when Gandhi called for a non-violent, non-cooperation movement to establish Swaraj or Self Rule for India. Hatim Alavi played an active part in this, as well as the pan-Islamic Khilafat Movement, which was then allied to the Congress. In 1921, he was appointed the secretary of the Swaraj Sabha, the new name for the All-India Home Rule League, founded by B.G. Tilak and Annie Besant. Hatim Alavi held office

impeded Indian independence for decades, had voted in a new government after the Second World War and were in a sudden hurry to leave. The Quaid-i-Azam was given the choice of accepting a much depleted and divided, sovereign Pakistan, or nothing. He presided over Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly at its new capital, Karachi, on 11 August 1947. One of his first speeches, upon assuming power as Pakistan's first Governor-General, was to urge communal harmony. As violence and carnage swept across India and Pakistan, he was only too conscious of how fragile Pakistan's newly won freedom and independence was and he tackled enormous economic, political, and other difficulties with great will, determination and courage. He died on 11 September 1948 and remains a colossus among the great men of that era.

JAMSHED NUSSERWANJI MEHTA, 1886–1952

Jamshed Nusserwanji is often called the maker of modern Karachi. He was born into an eminent Parsi family. Though he joined the family firm, Nusserwanji and Company he was a man of austere and simple habits, greatly drawn to religious philosophies from an early age. He become a theosophist, influenced by Annie Besant, and took part in the Home Rule League. In the 1920s he encouraged the cooperative movement in Karachi. He set up co-operative housing societies to help the middle and lower middle class and established co-operative banks to finance them, although initially this meant going into debt[27] and met with much opposition. The scheme was so successful however that the municipality named an area, Jamshed Quarter, after him. In 1924, Jamshed Nusserwanji joined the Buyers and Shippers Chamber, became its chairman and turned it into a platform to focus on broader public issues, ranging from the need to improve the railways, to 'Indianization of the higher services' the stabilization of the rupee and taxation. He espoused the cause of the *haris* of Sindh and discovered that the plans for Sukkur Barrage and Canals 'were lying pigeon holed in some department of the Secretariat of Bombay'.[28] He brought this to the governor's notice and pressed for the implementation of the scheme. This took eight years, but transformed Sindh's agriculture, trade and economy. He also had many plans for rural reconstruction, through co-operatives, credit schemes, education and,

Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta.

mismanagement of public funds. He had no hesitation in bringing to public notice some irregularities in the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation, although he was one of its directors. He was frequently critical of the Government of Pakistan's various trade and business policies and the slow rate of development due to political instability. He believed in Pakistani nationhood always, joined the Pakistan Democratic Party in 1972, as its chief organizer and opposed the separatist movements in Sindh, after the creation of Bangladesh. He is particularly remembered for his welfare work. As president of the Karachi Medical Relief Society, he ran dispensaries in the remotest refugee settlements, after the carnage at Partition. He later set up a Red Cross dispensary in Lalukhet in 1953; he not only provided medicines but food and building materials to help refugees. He had a long and meaningful association with the Ida Rieu Centre for the Blind; he was on many other committees too, including the Sindh University Commission and the Karachi University Syndicate.

MOHAMMED AYUB KHUHRO, 1901–80

The first Premier of Sindh after independence, the man who played a pivotal role in the separation of Sindh from the Bombay presidency and in bringing it into Pakistan, Mohammed Ayub Khuhro was born on 14 August 1901 in his ancestral village of Aqil in Larkana District in Upper Sindh. He was the eldest son of Shah Mohammed Khuhro, a leading *zamindar* of Larkana district. The Khuhros were an old *zamindar* family who had suffered reverses after the British conquest of Sindh, but were slowly recovering. Mohammed Ayub Khuhro was educated at the Larkana Madressah, and then at Karachi at the Sind Madressah and D.J. Sind College. He had to abandon his education early as his father died in 1920 and he had to return home to look after the family's lands.

M.A. Khuhro.

Soon after his return to Larkana, Khuhro started taking part in politics and became a member of the district local board at the age of twenty one. Under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, India had been given partial self government and the provinces had their own legislatures as a preliminary to eventual attainment of full autonomy. Sindh at this time was part of the huge Bombay Presidency, and the elections

Hatim Alavi.

in various local Congress and Khilafat committees, helped to organize a public meeting for Gandhi in Karachi, and also the 1921 Khilafat Conference in Karachi, presided by Maulana Mohammed Ali. He stayed with Gandhi at the Satyagraha Ashram, and with Tagore at Shantiniketan and later, came to know the Quaid-i-Azam personally too.[30] He left the Congress Party in 1928 because of its increasing anti-Muslim communalism. By this time, the call for the separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency had become a burning issue.

Hatim Alavi joined prominent Sindhi leaders in their campaign for provincial autonomy which was finally granted in 1935. Shortly before this, Hatim Alavi had inaugurated the Sindh Muslim League, held municipal elections under its banner and joined the Karachi Municipality. In 1936, he was among those selected on the Muslim League's Sindh section parliamentary boards and joined the Council of the All India Muslim League. At this time, the Muslims of Sindh were riven by factions and the League's representation there was nebulous, particularly after the 1936 provincial elections. Throughout, Hatim Alavi's support for the Muslim League never wavered. He corresponded with the Quaid-i-Azam keeping him abreast of developments in Sindh. By 1938, the situation had changed radically in the Muslim League's favour. Hatim Alavi was elected the mayor of Karachi that same year, helped organize the 1938 Sindh Provincial Muslim League Conference in Karachi presided by the Quaid-i-Azam and organized a large meeting for him at the Karachi Municipal office. Hatim Alavi continued to work for the Muslim League, which formed a government in Sindh in 1942. When the Sindh Assembly voted in favour of the Pakistan Resolution in 1943, Hatim Alavi was appointed to the planning committee established to chalk out a social and economic programme for Pakistan. After Partition, he became chairman of the Pakistan Finance Corporation and made a significant contribution towards the inception and working of the State Bank of Pakistan. He remained on its board of directors till the end of his days and was a trustee of the Karachi Port Trust for twenty years.

He led Pakistan's trade delegations to many countries, was a member of the Sterling Balances Delegation to Britain and the United Nations and was appointed by the World Bank on the International Panel 'for the conciliation of commercial and industrial disputes between States and peoples'.[31] He was also vocal about corruption and the

in December 1946 brought in a majority of the Muslim League which voted for Pakistan.

After independence in August 1947, Khuhro became the first premier of the province of Sindh. When the Quaid-i-Azam decided that Karachi was to be the capital of the new country of Pakistan, it was Khuhro as the Minister of Post War Development and Public Works who prepared the city to receive the Government of Pakistan, to provide office and residential space for the thousands of incoming officers and staff and to improve the infrastructure to meet the heavy demands to be made on it. He did this most effectively by building barracks in the open spaces across the Sindh Secretariat for offices and housing officers in the houses, whether whole or in part requisitioned from the civilians of Karachi; as well as using the housing which had been used by army personnel during the Second World War.

At this critical time in the history of the subcontinent when the whole of the Punjab and the northern plains as far as Bengal and Bihar were enveloped in bloodshed, Khuhro kept Sindh peaceful except for some incidents which were quickly brought under control. Riots broke out in Karachi in January 1948 which quickly spread through the city, overcrowded with refugees and facing huge logistical problems. Khuhro took personal charge of the city in the crisis and called in the army when the police proved inadequate. He was able to control the city within two days, thus earning encomiums from the Quaid-i-Azam, who had been very anxious that the riots would mar the reputation of Pakistan's capital and also frighten the Hindus away. After the restoration of peace, Khuhro took the Quaid-i-Azam on a tour of Karachi to see for himself that the situation had been restored to normal.

During the early months of 1948 the central government decided that they were not satisfied with the arrangement that the Government of Sindh should continue to administer Karachi, which was the permanent capital of the province of Sindh. The central government wanted that Karachi be cut off from Sindh administratively and be taken over as a centrally administered area. There was a very negative reaction to this move in Sindh and it was regarded as an encroachment on the rights and territory of the province, as well as an unworthy return for the hospitality and self sacrifice of the Sindhi people. The Sindh Legislative Assembly passed a resolution that the Government of Sindh resist this move, and this was echoed by the Sindh Provincial Muslim League. Khuhro followed the decision of the Sindh legislature and refused to allow Karachi to be taken over. The end result of this resistance was that he was removed from the premiership of the province in April 1948.

In spite of being removed from office Khuhro continued to enjoy the support of the people of the province and became chief minister of Sindh three times altogether. He joined the Government of Pakistan as defence minister in 1958 but was removed and thrown into jail by the succeeding Martial Law government of General Ayub Khan.

for the Bombay Legislative Council were due in 1923. Khuhro was elected to the Council and went to attend his first session in the spring of 1924.

From the very first, Khuhro had set himself an agenda as legislator and representative of Sindh. He had identified the issues which needed to be addressed for the welfare of the Sindhi people. These issues were first and foremost the need for the Sindhi cultivators to be relieved of the debt burden by the passing of the Land Alienation and Debt Reconciliation Bill. They also needed some relief from the heavy tax burden which had been imposed on them by the colonial government. The ratio of Sindhi Muslims in services was quite inadequate and needed to be improved. Urgent measures needed to be taken to provide opportunities for the education and employment of Sindhi youth. Khuhro set about to work on all these issues and did make headway on all the fronts, particularly on the problem of getting representation of Sindhis in government services. He made it possible for a sizeable number of Muslim engineers, *mukhtiarkars*, magistrates, down to clerks and other lower staff to be employed by the government, and lobbied hard to get schools approved for areas where lower income Muslim population groups could take advantage of education.

Realizing that the problems of Sindh were not getting adequate attention, Khuhro put his weight behind the demand for a separate and autonomous Sindh province to be separated from the giant Bombay Presidency. This demand was turned down by the Simon Commission which visited India in 1929 to assess the need for further constitutional reform. Khuhro realized that the most important factor in the consideration of the government was the financial viability of the proposed Sindh province, and set out to master the financial details of the province. He succeeded in convincing the expert committees, which worked on the subject, that Sindh was in a position to support itself and even pay back the Indian government for the huge Sukkur Barrage scheme. Khuhro went to London to give evidence before the third Round Table Conference for Indian Reforms. Largely as a result of his efforts and persistence, Sindh was given autonomy in the Government of India Act of 1935. Karachi became the capital of Sindh, now for the second time since the departure of Sir Charles Napier in 1847.

Khuhro was one of the few Sindh leaders who invited M.A. Jinnah to preside over the Sindh Muslim League session in 1938 which established the Muslim League as the leading Muslim party in the province. Khuhro was also responsible for the public meeting which Jinnah held in the historic Tajar Bagh in Larkana.

Khuhro was also responsible, along with Abdoola Haroon and G.M. Syed, for the organization of the Muslim League in Sindh for the next ten years. Haroon died in 1942 and G.M. Syed left the Muslim League in 1946, thus leaving Khuhro as the most consistent and effective leader of the organization. It was Khuhro under whose leadership the two elections of 1946 were fought by the Muslim League. The second house elected

helped organize the historic Muslim League session of 1938 in Karachi. He was present at Lahore, when the momentous 1940 Lahore Resolution was passed demanding a separate Muslim nation, Pakistan. That same year, he led the Muslim League's non-violent *satyagraha* protest over the Manzil Manzilgah, a mosque and historic buildings, which Muslims wanted to be restored to them and which the Hindus opposed. The vacillating government and administration lost control. There were riots. The Sindh Muslim League leaders, Abdoola Haroon and Ayub Khuhro, had already been ordered out of Sukkur and placed under house arrest; G.M. Syed was jailed. In 1943, he proposed the Pakistan Resolution in the Sindh Assembly and had it passed: this was the first time that such a demand had been approved by an elected, parliamentary body and was to have far-reaching consequences. Shortly afterwards he was elected president of the Sindh Muslim League. Throughout these years, he threw himself into working for the Muslim League, but 'idealistic and impatient, he expected miracles from the governments which he supported'.[33] He developed differences with the Muslim League government which was in power at the time. This led to much unpleasantness, particularly over the nomination of candidates for the 1945 elections. The Muslim League's central parliamentary body censured Syed. He resigned, and with Congress support, became a bitter critic of the Muslim League. After Partition he was marginalized from politics for many years and devoted himself to literary pursuits, writing, giving lectures and attending conferences on philosophy, Sindhi literature and poetry, particularly on Shah Abdul Latif. He also wrote two volumes of life sketches of his contemporaries. During this period he remained very active politically, though he spent much of his time in jail due to his anti-establishment stand. During the 1970s, in the post-Bangladesh era, he became the rallying point for Sindhi nationalists and formed the Sindh National Alliance.

BEGUM RA'ANA LIAQUAT ALI KHAN, 1905–90

The first Muslim woman ambassador and doyenne of the diplomatic corps, the first Muslim woman governor and chancellor of a university, Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan was also the first Muslim woman to receive the Jane Adams Medal, the Woman of Achievement Medal and the UN Human Rights Award. In her citation for the medal by the 1978 UN General Assembly, she was described as 'the leading Pakistan women's rights activist, economist, educationist and diplomat, known not only to her countrymen but throughout the world for her outstanding contribution in the field of human rights...' She was born in Almora in 1905, educated at Wellesley Girls High School, and the Isabella Thoburn College, and was the only girl in her M.A. Economics and Sociology class at Lucknow University. She did her thesis on 'Women Labour Force in Agriculture in the United Provinces', made a study of the co-operative movement among the farmers of Bengal and became a professor of economics. In 1932, she married Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. Soon afterwards, she accompanied him to England and the couple persuaded a disillusioned Mr Jinnah that the Muslims needed him, and he should return to India.

The imposition of Martial Law in 1958 saw the end of the democratic dispensation in Pakistan for a long time and, although Khuhro remained active in politics and public affairs till the end of his life, the ground rules had changed. From now on there was no real role for the politicians trained in the old school of democracy. Khuhro died at the age of seventy-nine on 20 October 1980 and was buried in his ancestral village of Aqil.

GHULAM MURTAZA SYED, 1904–96

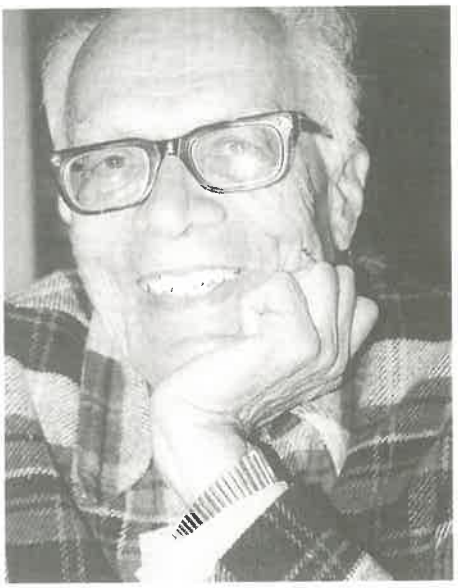
'The stormy petrel of Sindh's politics', Ghulam Murtaza Syed was a unique phenomenon in the political life of Sindh'.[32] He was born into a family of religious leaders in the ancestral village of Sann near Dadu (in those days a part of Karachi district). Orphaned at sixteen months, he was brought up by an aunt and educated at the village school, but he had the instincts of a scholar. He read extensively, particularly religious and Sufi texts, and went on to become the author of several books. He was also idealistic and possessed by a reformer's zeal. In 1919, he began to set up organizations to address and rectify a host of issues, ranging from oppressive social traditions among the Syed, and women's rights, to education and promoting Sindhi literature and poetry. He entered politics very young and soon made a name for himself in Karachi's political, intellectual and social circles, where he had many friends of all creeds. He also became very interested in theosophy. In his early twenties, Syed was elected to the Karachi District Local Board, having already participated in the Khilafat Movement. His main political thrust was towards self government and constitutional reform in India, but he also concerned himself with the Communist movement and the Hari Party in the 1930s. Prior to that, he joined Sindhi leaders in pressing for provincial autonomy for Sindh, which finally came about in 1935. For the next few years, several factions sprang up in Sindh, while politicians tried to resolve how the province should be divided politically. There was constant wrangling for power in the provincial assembly.

G.M. Syed.

In 1938 G.M. Syed, exasperated by the constant Congress manipulation of Sindhi Muslim leaders, joined the group which invited the Quaid-i-Azam to come to Sindh. He

areas. The many institutions that she set up in Karachi, include the Home Economics College for girls and the Professional and Business Women's Club and hostel. In the 1960s she defied the orthodox once more and persuaded President Ayub Khan to pass the Family Laws to protect women. In the 1980s she supported the Women's Action Forum and other women rights activists by speaking out vehemently against martial law ordinances discriminating against women. To support her family, after the assassination of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951, in 1954 she accepted a diplomatic assignment in Holland and later, Italy, but she kept in close touch with APWA throughout. She spoke on many international forums, highlighted the social and economic needs of Pakistan, and spoke constantly of breaking down barriers and prejudices. She was showered with honours, including the Nishan-e-Imtiaz. She was appointed Governor of Sindh in the 1970s.

DR AKHTAR HAMEED KHAN, 1914–1999



Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan.

At eighty-three, Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan still had the fiery spirit of a rebel, a creative inquiring mind and the will to continue transforming society in a meaningful way. The basic concept behind his success was the principle of research and extension, learning then teaching. He had a methodical, scientific approach, was a natural teacher and an excellent administrator. His pioneering work in Orangi, Karachi's largest *katchi abadi* (slum) with a population of one million is being replicated in Pakistan and has been recognized by UNESCO and other international agencies as a role model for Third World countries. He was born in 1914 in Agra, into a family strongly influenced by the reformist ideas of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. His father was an upright police inspector who 'combined Muslim puritanism with the Victorian gentleman's strict self-discipline',[35] but it was from his mother that he learnt to love books. He did his masters from Agra University, joined the Indian Civil Service and went to Cambridge. Over the years, he evolved from an admirer of Nietzsche's ideal 'superman', Iqbal's *Shaheen* and Allama Mashriqi's belief in 'the survival of the fittest' to find 'personal salvation' in the more reflective, caring philosophy of the Sufis. As a civil servant, he came to dislike the role of master/superman, the entire system which divided the rulers from the ruled and led to

Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan.

She played a very supportive role while Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, the general secretary of the All India Muslim League, worked tirelessly for the Muslim cause. At the behest of the Quaid-i-Azam, when fears of Japanese invasion were rife during the First World War, she formed a small volunteer corps for nursing and first aid in Delhi. This was her first experience of organizing Muslim women.

In 1947, she was in Lahore, when refugees poured across the border and saw pitiable sights and untold suffering. In those days, it was rare for Muslim women to emerge from their homes to work, but Begum Liaquat Ali Khan mobilized them to defy the orthodox and help in the refugee camps, collect and distribute funds, clothes, food and medicines, drive trucks, train as nurses and para-military staff. In Karachi, the then capital of Pakistan, she formed the Women's National Guard in which she held the rank of brigadier. With the help of her lifelong friend, the educationist Kay Miles, she established a home for abducted women, an employment bureau, a lost and found bureau, widow's home and other volunteer services. 'I was not a prime minister's wife,' she always maintained. 'I was really a social worker'.[34] She opened a cottage industries shop to encourage women and migrant craftsmen generate an income, and to provide support to existing indigenous crafts in Pakistan. The craftsmen colony she established in Karachi, now has a hospital, day care centre, schools and workshops. She also set up the flourishing Gul-e-Ra'ana Nusrat Industrial Home for women. Meanwhile from emergency relief, she extended her activities to every aspect of social welfare, particularly the uplift and empowerment of women. The key to her success was that she was an economist and a teacher by training, and an excellent administrator. She established the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) with centres and multifaceted projects throughout Pakistan; she also affiliated APWA with the UN and other international agencies to give it a higher profile.

To encourage female literacy and inculcate awareness among a largely indifferent population, she popularized the phrase 'You educate a woman, you educate a family.' She set up schools, dispensaries, maternity homes, family planning clinics in urban and rural areas. Her basic creed was 'health, education and training'. She encouraged her workers to acquire new, professional skills and to participate in official decision making bodies, such as the planning commissions where APWA's message could be heard. In fact, she firmly believed in integrated development and urged agro-technical training in rural

Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi and Begum Bilquis Edhi.

determined to prove his worth. In 1951, he bought a small shop in Mithadar, put a tin collection box outside for charity and started a dispensary which never shut and where at night, he slept on the bench outside. He bought medicines at market rates and sold them to the poor for much less; he paid a regular wage to a physician, so that patients need not pay high fees; to save money he himself worked at the doctor's clinic in the mornings and trained in pharmacy and accountancy. He set up a maternity home and later trained midwives. To raise money, he sold animal hides that he bought wholesale from meat sellers or collected as donations over Eid. As word spread, he began to regain the goodwill of his community and of Karachi's inhabitants at large. During the 1957 flu epidemic he borrowed heavily to set up free camps stocked with medicines and injections throughout the city.

He made his 'first financial breakthrough'[38] when an impressed Memon businessman gave the organization Rs 20,000. He used some of this to buy a second hand vehicle that he named 'The Poor Man's Van'. He could then travel to other cities and also convey the ailing and sick to hospitals and clinics. This marked the beginning of Karachi's first, much-needed ambulance service which made him a household word by the 1980s, and which is now available in Pakistan's major cities. He also developed and trained a loyal band of volunteers that he called *razakars*. Whether there were floods, earthquakes, epidemics, wars, ethnic riots in Karachi, or other parts of Pakistan, Edhi and his team were always there, regardless of personal danger. He also provided shelter for the destitute, orphaned, needy, disabled, and dying. He helped rehabilitate drug addicts, visited hospitals and met the wedding expenses of needy girls. He was so enraged at public apathy and squalor towards certain menial tasks which were regarded as degrading, that he defied taboos and worked hours clearing and unblocking drains himself, rescuing dead and sometimes putrefying bodies from seas and rivers, bathing them himself, and ensuring a proper funeral. His travels abroad took him to Europe and also to war stricken Lebanon and Somalia. He translated that newly acquired knowledge and experience to his work in Pakistan. Encouraged by Bilquis, his wife and colleague, he set up the Edhi Foundation to continue the work he began in Karachi's Mithadar. The foundation is the only charitable organization of its kind and scale in Pakistan with centres throughout the country. He was decorated with the Magasaysay Award in the Philippines, and the Sitara-i-Imtiaz in 1989.

arbitrary policies causing untold misery to millions, particularly during the Bengal famine. After nine years, he left the civil service and worked as a labourer and locksmith, before he joined the Jamia Millia in Delhi, as a teacher. In 1950, he became the principal of Victoria College in Comilla, East Pakistan and in 1958, was appointed Director for the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development there. He acted as peacemaker when ethnic strife broke out and encouraged Orangi's many communities to resolve their differences. Furthermore, when the Baloch in Orangi were attacked and fled to their farming kinsmen on Karachi's outskirts, the OPP not only helped them to return to Orangi and rebuild their houses, but started a programme to help those arid Baloch villages or *goths* by building wells, windmills and introducing drip irrigation.[36] The importance of Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan's work in Orangi cannot be overemphasized. He has provided an original, alternative and viable solution to the mismanagement and disorder that is generally considered synonymous with the proliferating megapolises of the third world. In less than two decades, Orangi has developed into a dynamic, thriving community with a literacy rate of seventy per cent, inclusive of both men and women. Orangi now has 15,000 business units, many run by women, and backed up by an easy system of loans and credit made available by OPP's Orangi Charitable Trust. The OPP has trained other organizations to replicate its work and disseminate that knowledge to countries with similar problems. The younger generation guided and inspired by Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan includes architect Arif Hassan and civil servant, Tasneem Siddiqui, who have received the International Year of the Shelterless Award and the Aga Khan Award respectively for their pioneering work in development.

MAULANA ABDUS SATTAR EDHI

One of Karachi's most respected and dedicated living social workers, Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi has provided the nearest that Pakistan has to an alternative and comprehensive social welfare system. He has cut down paperwork and office procedures to the minimum, has never accepted official funds and has demonstrated how much one organization can achieve. Abdus Sattar Edhi was born into a family of Memon traders and grew up in Bantva, a village near Junagadh. From childhood his thrifty mother taught him to give half of his daily pocket money to someone poor. Soon he developed a habit of seeking out people in genuine need.[37] In 1947, he migrated to Pakistan with his parents. The family settled in Karachi's Jodia Bazaar. By then, he had left school at thirteen, having no interest in academics. His father, a commission agent in a cloth shop, encouraged him to be independent and manage money by working as a street vendor, or running small businesses on his own. Abdus Sattar Edhi started to work for a charitable organization in 1948, run by the Memon community to which he belonged. He soon challenged its unrealistic, traditional concepts of hand-outs and patronage to people of the same community. He wanted to solve the real problems of people he encountered daily, regardless of community, caste or creed. His outspoken views offended his elders and he was ostracized, but he was

SIX

AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

SHAHIDA WIZARAT

At the time of independence Pakistan was an agricultural country, exporting primary commodities, mainly raw jute and cotton and importing manufactured goods, mainly consumer goods. Karachi, which became the capital of the newborn state, was a small town with hardly any manufacturing capacity—the Dalmia Cement Factory and a few isolated manufacturing units being the exception. Areas that comprise Pakistan were by and large agricultural, growing raw material for industries located in areas that later became part of India. This colonial pattern of production and exchange between Pakistan and India continued even after partition. However, as an aftermath of the Korean War all the major sterling area currencies were devalued, the Government of Pakistan decided not to follow suit, as the country was experiencing a boom in demand for its raw cotton. The Indian Government refused to accept the new parity of the Pakistan rupee, as a result of which trade between the two countries came to a halt. This caused a major disequilibrium as Pakistan was left with a massive agricultural raw material surplus, a large market for industrial consumer goods, supplies to which had been disrupted. Lewis (1969) explained industrialization in Pakistan due to working off the disequilibrium created as a result of partition, and the break up of the customs union between Pakistan and India, which made agricultural raw material available for domestic production on the one hand, while on the other, it made available a large domestic market for consumer goods.

Rapid industrialization has been pursued in Pakistan since its inception, and particularly after the disruption of trade with India. The reasons for promoting industrialization were three: first, in view of the surplus labour conditions prevailing in the country, it was argued that sustained growth of per capita income was possible only if there was a massive shift of labour from agriculture to industry and services. Second, on account of slow growth of demand for primary commodities in world markets, it was pointed out that a strategy based on export of primary commodities would result in slow growth of

The Cotton Exchange Building.

Inset: Art Deco detail of entrance.

increase in investment in the manufacturing sector. The import substitution encouraged by these policies was very rapid in consumer goods industries.

On account of high protection to manufacturing during the 1960s, most of the industries that came to be located in Karachi were consumer goods industries. Increased liberalization caused a slight increase in the share of intermediate goods industries. But it was not until the industrial policy laid out in the Sixth Five Year Plan, i.e. 1983–8, that emphasis was laid on import substitution of capital goods and export oriented consumer goods industries. Among the capital goods, highest priority was to be given to the forward linkages of the steel industry, which include transport equipment, railway wagons, rails, electrical equipment, telecommunication, and industrial machinery.

The liberalization of the regulatory environment that was initiated in 1987 gained momentum from 1990. These include removal of the requirement for investment sanction, reduction in the list of specified industries that require government sanction to four, removal of non-tariff barriers and reduction of tariffs on raw material, intermediate and capital goods. Investors can now set up a project, irrespective of its cost, by applying directly to commercial banks and development finance institutions for finances. The procedure for obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the provincial government has also been done away with. Most of the incentives to manufacturing being offered by the government are of an area specific nature with a view to dispersing industries away from developed cities like Karachi. However, the industry specific incentives apply to Karachi, as well as all other areas of the country. These are the key industries and include bio-technology, electronics, fertilizer, fibre-optics, solar energy, engineering, cement, dairy and mining industries. Full benefits have yet to be realized from these measures, as the law and order situation and political instability have been the inhibiting factors. As stated earlier, Karachi has been transformed from a small port city into a leading industrial, commercial and financial metropolis of the country.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN KARACHI

Only a small percentage of agricultural activities of the province are carried out in Karachi as is revealed by Table 1. Of the total cultivated area in Sindh only about 1 per cent was in Karachi over the period 2002–5. In terms of cropped area Karachi's share has ranged from .228 to .242 during the same period. Similarly the number of bulldozers in use in Karachi has declined from 1.02 to 0.76 per cent during the period 1999–2000 to 2003–4 as can be seen in Table 2. The percentage sale of fertilizer in Karachi in total Sindh sales has however increased from .830 to 1.302 per cent over the period 1999–2000 to 2002–3 as can be seen in Table 3.

The Finance and Trade Centre.

income and employment. And third, it was thought that long-term improvement in the balance of payments could be achieved through export of manufactured goods on a massive scale.

The forces of industrial agglomeration led to transforming Karachi, from its initial status of a small town to the metropolitan city and the centre of industry, finance and trade it is today. It has been observed that forces of industrial agglomeration are stronger in the developing countries than they are in the developed countries. The availability of social overhead capital and inter-industry linkages create 'growth poles'. The growth poles first attract the key industries, the key industries then attract other manufacturing and commercial activities through inter-industry linkages, leading to migration of labour from rural areas to the growth centres. As a result of brisk economic activity, financial institutions also get located in these areas. Studying the factors affecting industrial location in Pakistan, Papanek (1970) observed that immigration of Muslim traders from India after partition in 1947 to Karachi was on account of linguistic affinity, proximity to the capital and port facilities. This, along with public investment on infrastructure in these areas, resulted in very rapid growth of Karachi.

Rapid industrialization occurred in Karachi, and in the country for that matter, through the use of industrial policy. Import licences and quantitative restrictions were used to provide protection to domestic manufacturing. By giving unfavourable exchange rates to agricultural exports and curtailing import of manufactures, the domestic prices of manufactured goods were kept at a high level, while those of agricultural goods kept low. This increased the profitability of manufactured goods in the country, causing rapid

TABLE 3: SALE OF FERTILIZER IN SINDH (INDIGENOUS & IMPORTED) 1999–2000 TO 2002–2003

IN 'N' TONS

	NITROGEN N	PHOSPHATE P	POTASH K	TOTAL N+P+K
1999–2000				
SINDH	443931	77770	7113	528814
KARACHI	4067	318	6	4391
%	0.916	0.408	0.084	0.830
2000–2001				
SINDH	459609	97751	4302	561662
KARACHI	6379	585	0	6964
%	1.387	0.598	0	1.239
2002–2003				
SINDH	539489	131390	3986	674865
KARACHI	7757	964	69	8790
%	1.437	0.733	1.731	1.302

SOURCE: DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS OF SINDH, 2006, BUREAU OF STATISTICS, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

Pakistan Steel Mill, Karachi.

TABLE 1: LAND UTILIZATION IN SINDH, 2002–3 TO 2004–5		
	TOTAL CULTIVATED AREA*	TOTAL CROPPED AREA*
2002–2003		
SINDH	5797	3065
KARACHI	63	7
%	1.086	0.228
2003–2004		
SINDH	5714	3640
KARACHI	63	9
%	1.102	0.247
2004–2005		
SINDH	5749	3294
KARACHI	63	8
%	1.095	0.242

* AREA IN '000' HECTARES
SOURCE: DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS OF SINDH, 2006, BUREAU OF STATISTICS, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF BULLDOZERS IN SINDH					
	1999–2000	2000–2001	2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004
SINDH	166	142	141	131	131
KARACHI	2	1	1	1	1
%	1.20	0.70	0.70	0.76	0.76

SOURCE: DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS OF SINDH, 2006, BUREAU OF STATISTICS, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

Total number of tube wells installed in Karachi as a percentage of tube wells installed in Sindh has been quite negligible as can be seen in Table 4. Private electric tube wells installed being the exception. In 2003–4, of the private electric tube wells installed in Sindh 3.15 per cent were installed in Karachi, with the percentage rising to 18.10 per cent in 2003–4 and 24.32 per cent in 2004-5.

Agriculture, which still contributes the major proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs a major proportion of the total labour force in Pakistan, is however, not a major contributor to Karachi's economy, as can be seen from Table 5. Agricultural crops grown in Karachi include wheat, *jowar*, maize and sesame, although the proportion of these in total Sindh production is negligible. Among the fruits, dates, bananas, guavas and mangoes are grown in Karachi. Likewise, output from the livestock sector is also negligible due to scarcity of water and grazing land.

There are a large number of foreign banks that have branches in Karachi, these include some of the well known ones like ABN-AMRO Bank, American Express Bank Ltd., Bank of America, Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Bank of Tokyo, The Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd. etc. Of the total foreign bank branches a large number are based in Karachi.

The Karachi Stock Exchange (KSE) was established in 1949 with ninety members and thirteen listed companies only. In the early years the stock market grew slowly, but with the passage of time, the growth rate accelerated, both in terms of listed companies and the paid up capital. The rate of growth increased substantially in the 1960s as a result of pro-industry policies of the government and the rapid industrialization that followed. There were two major setbacks to this process. One, the dismemberment of the country in 1971. And second, the nationalization programme of the government during the early 1970s. But in 1977 these policies were reversed, and the decentralization and deregulatory policies of the government had a favourable impact on the market (Memon 1995). The market capitalization of ordinary shares at the KSE increased from Rs 328.8 billion in January 2002 to Rs 2878.8 billion in January 2006 (Table 8). Total turnover increased from Rs 29140.66 million in 2002 to Rs 79454.3 in 2006. The increase in the turnover between 2002 and 2006 is quite, spectacular (Table 9).

TABLE 8: MARKET CAPITALIZATION OF ORDINARY SHARES

YEAR	MONTH	BILLION RS
2002	JANUARY DECEMBER	328.8 317.4
2003	JANUARY DECEMBER	600.3 554.0
2004	JANUARY DECEMBER	1083.0 905.6
2005	JANUARY DECEMBER	1797.9 1596.5
2006	JANUARY DECEMBER	2878.8 2669.6

SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORT 2005–2006, STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN

TABLE 9: TOTAL TURNOVER OF SHARES AT THE KSE

YEAR	MILLION NOS.
2002	29140.66
2003	53076.88
2004	96957.75
2005	88301.2
2006	79454.3

SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006 STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN

We find that of the total number of large-scale units in Sindh, almost 69 per cent are located in Karachi with a value of fixed assets which is a little over 74 per cent of the total, employing almost 72 per cent of the total employed labour force in the large-scale sector in Sindh. Value of output produced by these units is almost 75 per cent of the total large-scale output produced in Sindh (Table 7).

TABLE 7: KARACHI'S SHARE IN LARGE SCALE MANUFACTURING, 2000–1

CITY/ PROVINCE/ COUNTRY	NO. OF UNITS	VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS (000 RS)	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	EMPLOYMENT COST (000 RS)	VALUE OF OUTPUT (000 RS)
SINDH	1768	166951549	259267	32525869	531664770
KARACHI	1218	124124914	186384	25785834	398140942
PERCENTAGE SHARE OF KARACHI	68.89	74.34	71.88	79.27	74.88

SOURCE: DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS OF SINDH, 2006

FINANCE AND BANKING

At the time of independence Pakistan did not have a capital market. The only source of long-term funds were a few insurance companies, while the banks financed commercial activities. In order to cater to the financial needs of industry, the capital market was developed. The capital market institutions in Karachi are commercial banks, specialized banks and financial institutions, insurance companies, non-banking financial institutions, post office savings account, and the Karachi Stock Exchange. Government securities are mostly held by the State Bank of Pakistan, commercial banks, insurance companies, public corporations, local bodies and provident funds.

The head office of the State Bank of Pakistan is located at Karachi. All the major Pakistani banks like the Habib Bank, National Bank, United Bank, First Women Bank, Muslim Commercial Bank have head offices located at Karachi; Allied Bank, being the only exception with its head office located at Lahore. Other important banks that have head offices located at Karachi include Faysal Bank Ltd., Habib Credit and Exchange Bank Ltd., Indus Bank Ltd., Metropolitan Bank Ltd., Schon Bank Ltd. and Prudential Commercial Bank.

Banks were initially providing short-term funds to meet commercial needs, but later they got involved with term financing. Besides the commercial banks, there are development financial institutions that have offices in Karachi, like the National Development Finance Corporation (NDFC), Bankers Equity Ltd. (BEL), Investment Corporation of Pakistan (ICP), Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan (IDBP), National Investment Trust (NIT), Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation (PICIC) and House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC).

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Muslim Commercial Bank tower.

TRADE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Trading has always been an important contributor towards income generating activities in Karachi. This derives from the fact that more than 150 years ago Karachi Port served the needs of a small fishing community. At the time of Partition in 1947 Muslim immigrant traders came to Pakistan and started trading and the profits earned in trade financed the industrialization of the country. At that time the total traffic handled at the Karachi Port was 2.5 million tons per annum. Since then the amount of traffic handled has increased manifold and the port has undergone modernization. Further modernization has been undertaken by the Karachi Port Trust (KPT), and in line with the Government of Pakistan's (GOP) privatization policy, the private sector has been invited to participate in a number of port projects. Besides, Port Muhammad Bin Qasim situated fifty kilometres southeast of Karachi has been developed to handle conventional cargo, and provide port facilities to Pakistan Steel Mills and Bin Qasim Thermal Power Plant. While the bulk of the cargo is still handled at the Karachi Port, around one third of the total is handled at Port Qasim.

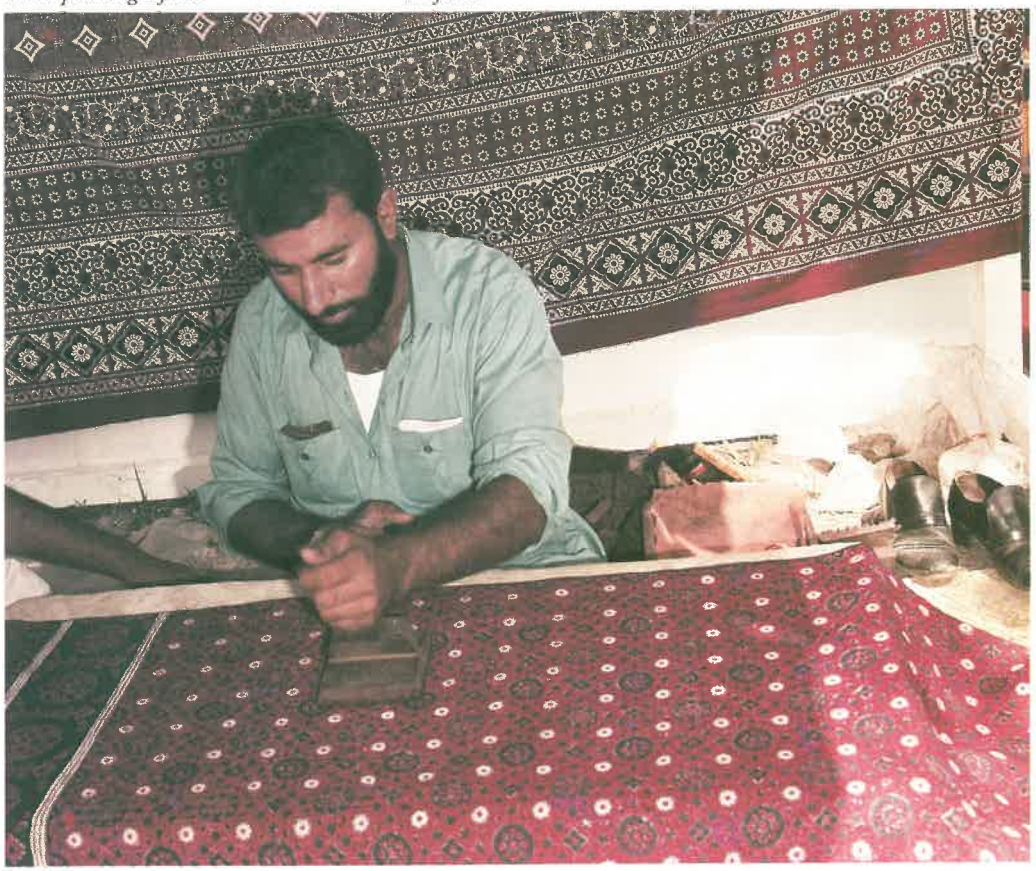
Another major economic activity in Karachi is construction. This includes construction of housing, commercial buildings, public buildings, infrastructural projects etc. The service sector has grown remarkably during the last few years as a result of the growth of services rendered by doctors, lawyers, chartered accountants, architects and consultants.

Park Towers shopping mall, Clifton.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

expected to become more sophisticated as well. Further, accelerated development of the Karachi Port and Port Qasim, opening up of Central Asia and peace in Afghanistan, will mean that trading will contribute significantly to Karachi's income. The educational system in the city will have to be geared towards the needs of the economy that arise as a result of transformation and modernization of the city and its economy. This would entail improvement in the standard of education at the existing institutions, opening up of new institutions imparting quality education and a greater orientation towards vocational and skill-oriented education.

Block printing Ajrak: a traditional textile art form.



PHOTOGRAPH BY M. ISMAIL

POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF KARACHI AND ITS HINTERLAND

What lesson can the interior of Sindh learn from the development of Karachi and what can the government do to promote a mutually beneficial and reinforcing relationship between Karachi and its hinterland in the interior? These are important questions that need to be borne in mind by policy makers, when embarking on development and industrialization of the country, particularly the underdeveloped areas of the country. First, when formulating a development strategy for the interior of Sindh, the OPP model needs to be kept in perspective. It can be replicated in the interior with a view to developing the underdeveloped areas, and provide productive employment to the rural people where handicrafts, ethnic embroideries, fabrics, and other cottage industries can be developed. The decay afflicting most Pakistani institutions and the success of the OPP model reflects that in order for institutions to be successful there should be sense of ownership by the workers, which would inspire organizational commitment. Second, for industrial policy to be used successfully to promote regional industrialization, it is important to bear in mind that across the board incentives to industries have not been successful. These incentives were able to locate industries in the underdeveloped areas, but their withdrawal made the industries non-viable. A lot of the sick industries in the country have been the consequence of across the board incentives. The incentives offered to industries in interior Sindh should be industry-cum-area specific. They should be for specific industries that locate in the specified area; for example, only those industries should be eligible for these incentives that are based on the raw material produced locally and are located in the interior. This would ensure that the industries are viable even after the incentives have been withdrawn. By ensuring that these incentives are not available if these industries locate in the cities, the government can reduce the exodus towards larger cities. Replication of the OPP model in the interior, and the industry-cum-area specific incentives approach will mean that industries locating in the interior will mainly be cottage based household units, small-scale and medium scale industries, like textiles, mustard oil, cotton ginning, yarn and fabrics. These are generally labour-intensive in nature and will go a long way in increasing employment levels in the interior. Locating these outside Karachi will also mean a slower rate of urbanization, and thus less pressure on the already scarce civic amenities in Karachi.

Industries that are likely to get located in Karachi will he technology and capital intensive in nature, like engineering, electronics, petro chemicals, transport equipment, automobiles and railway wagons. Karachi's economy would thus become more oriented towards large-sized capital and technology-intensive industries. Moreover, services will acquire an even greater importance in the economy of Karachi. Liberalization and privatization policies, and the development of the capital market, will expand the demand for professional bankers, commercial consultants, cost and management accountants, doctors and lawyers. Not only will there be an expansion in demand for these services, these are

SEVEN

THE GROWTH OF A METROPOLIS

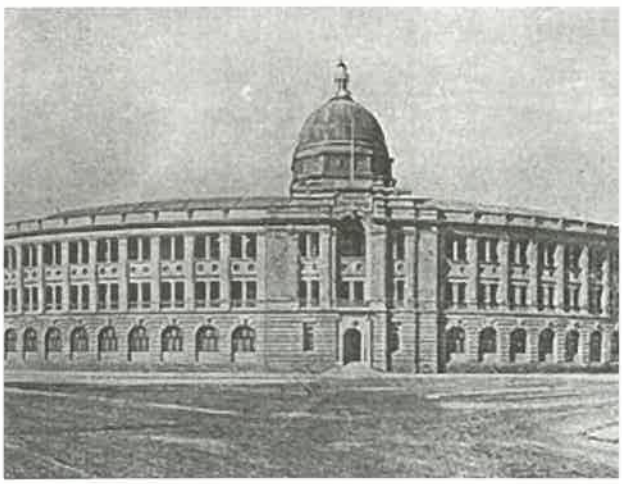
ARIF HASAN

On the eve of independence, Karachi, the capital of Sindh, had a population of about 450,000. Slightly over 50 per cent of this population was Sindhi speaking. The other languages spoken by different communities living in the city were, in order of importance, Balochi, Urdu–Hindi, Punjabi, Gujrati, Kutchi, Brahui and Marathi. Fifty-one per cent of the population was Hindu, 42 per cent Muslim, 3.5 per cent Christian and 1.1 per cent Parsi.[1]

In physical terms, the city was clearly divided into two: the European city and the native city. The European city consisted of the Cantonment, Civil Lines and the Saddar Bazaar. It was inhabited by Europeans and Europeanized Indians and those who served them. Saddar Bazaar was the home of the Parsi and Goan communities and contained retail markets, shops and eating places very similar to those in European cities. It also contained social facilities, community centres, clubs and religious buildings belonging to the communities that lived here. Thus, it was dominated by churches, mission schools and Parsi institutions. Christmas and Nauroze were celebrated with fervour and May balls were held regularly. The city was well laid out with wide roads and open spaces.

The native city was close to the port and consisted of the old pre-British town and its suburbs. It was dominated by Hindu and Muslim merchants and the working classes. It contained most of the wholesale markets of the city (such as the *Dhan Mandi* and *Khajji* Market) and a large number of Hindu temples, *dharamshalas*, mosques, *imambaras* and shrines. Hindu and Muslim festivals, rather than Christmas and Nauroze, were celebrated here, and business and markets were very much in the Indian style. The streets were narrow and winding and within the old town there were almost no open spaces. The city proletariat lived to the west of the old town, in Lyari. In this settlement there were a number of tanneries and other manufacturing units.

Karachi Port Trust Building.

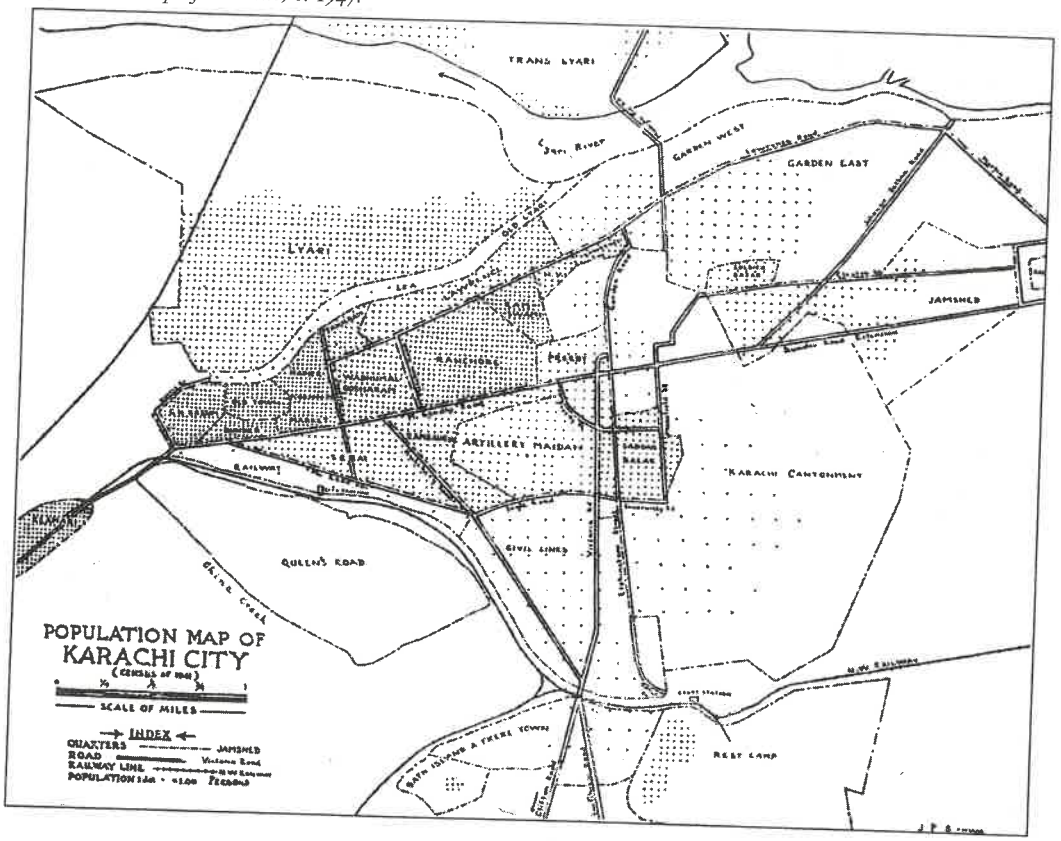


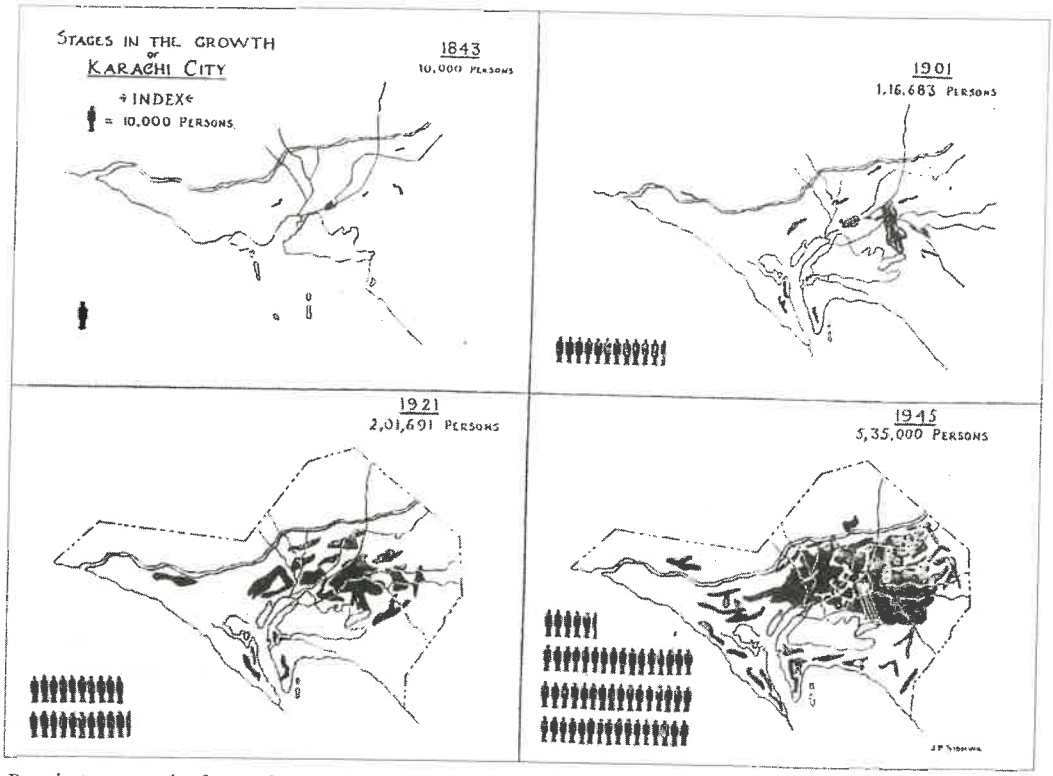
Karachi Port Trust Building as it was in the early 20th century.

In addition to the city itself, the Karachi district also contained over 1,200 *goths* or villages. The coastal *goths* were inhabited by fishermen and the inland *goths* by agriculturalists and herders. The majority of these *goths* were Sindhi speaking and a sizeable number were of Balochi origin. Most of these *goths* have now been swallowed up by the city sprawl and in many cases their inhabitants have been forced to relocate elsewhere. The Karachiites were very proud of their city. It was supposed to be the cleanest city in British India; its municipal committee established in 1853 was the oldest in the Empire; and the first aircraft that came to India landed first in Karachi in 1918.

Major changes took place in Karachi within a few months after independence. The most significant change was demographic. Within a few months after it became the capital of the country, Karachi received 600,000 refugees from India. In addition, it received a large number of government servants and support staff from other provinces of Pakistan. This huge influx was accompanied by an out-migration of the Hindu population from the city. By 1951 the population of the city had increased to over 1.137 million, and the number of migrants from India and other parts of Pakistan to 815,000. 170,000 Hindus had left the city. As a result, by 1951, over 50 per cent of the city spoke Urdu as its

Population map of Karachi, c. 1947.





Population growth of Karachi, 1843–1945.

The area between the two parts of the city consisted of the Bunder Road-McLeod Road-Kutchery Road triangle and extended south to the port. This area contained the Karachi Port Trust (KPT) warehouses and railway yard, port related business and commercial concerns, civic and municipal functions, and the major institutions of higher education such as the D.J. and S.M. colleges.

The three areas were linked by a diesel operated tramway system established in 1884 (first as a steam operated one and then as a horse drawn one), and at any point in Karachi one was never more than three kilometres away from the tramway. Karachi Port handled less than two million tons of cargo a year and all of it was handled by the railway and stored in the KPT yards.

To the west, the Lyari River was the frontier of the city, and on its western bank there were extensive orchards and fields. To the east was the suburb of Clifton. It was near the sea and was a place of recreation and holidaying. It was connected to the city by a narrow road which passed through mangrove marshes. To the north-east was the Malir oasis. Karachiites of all classes visited its gardens for picnics and recreation. It also supplied Karachi with much of its vegetables and fruits.

cooperative housing societies. Most of this development catered to government servants, their relatives and to the more privileged or 'respected' of the refugee population. However, the vast majority of the poorer refugees and migrants from other provinces, continued to live in the squatter settlements within and around the city centre, and in public and religious buildings.

To tackle this issue, the state successfully removed the refugees from public-use buildings and settled them on land belonging to the Sindhi *goths* along the Lyari River. Displaced persons colonies were also developed on over 2,500 acres of land between 1950 and 1953.[4] These colonies were at considerable distance from the city centre and transport, though inadequate, was developed to service them. These remarkable achievements were made possible by the establishment of the Karachi Improvement Trust in 1950. However, the solutions, especially for the poor, were on too small a scale and the problem of housing not only remained but intensified with further migration, natural growth and the passage of time.

The first attempt to tackle this issue comprehensively was undertaken in 1950, when the government of Pakistan hired the services of Merz Rendall Vatten (MRV), a Swedish firm of planners, to develop a 'Greater Karachi Plan'. This plan came to be known as the MRV Plan. It envisaged the upgrading of the existing civic centre around Bunder Road and its linking through Bunder Road with a new centre near where the University is located today. The new centre was to contain the university city, and the federal secretariat and legislative buildings. The plan envisaged the resettling of refugees in ten storey apartment blocks within the city so that they would be near their places of work. In addition, the plan proposed development guidelines, a road network, and a mass transit rail system for the future expansion of the city. It estimated that the city of Karachi would have a population of three million by the year 2000, a figure that was reached by the city in 1970!

The MRV plan was never implemented. Anti-government student movements rocked Karachi in the early fifties and were supported by the poorer sections of the refugee population and by trade unions who were comparatively powerful at that time. It is said that as a result, the government questioned the wisdom of having the university near the administrative and legislative centre, or having the poorer sections of society living within the city centre. Other plans were developed which proposed taking the administrative centre away from the city to Gadap, or on the New Karachi hills, and the university was relocated at its present site. However, apart from the university relocation, these plans were never finalized and a decision on whether the 'poor' or the administration would leave the city, was not taken till 1958. Meanwhile, the Karachi Improvement Trust was upgraded to become the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) in 1957, and it continued with the policy of developing housing schemes, mostly on the west bank of the Lyari River. In 1958, Ayub Khan established martial law in Pakistan. His government took a number of decisions that have had a major impact on the demography and

mother tongue and only 8.6 per cent was Sindhi speaking. The Muslim population constituted ninety-6 per cent of the city and the Hindu population was reduced to less than 2 per cent.[2]

This massive demographic change was also accompanied by physical and cultural changes. The Pakistan Secretariat was established in the Artillery Maidan next to Saddar Bazaar. Most countries established their embassies in the Civil Lines area. A university was established on what is now Baba-i-Urdu Road. All these functions were within walking distance from each other and from Saddar Bazaar, and the civic and educational institutions located on and around the Bunder Road-McLeod Road-Kutchery Road triangle.

The refugees squatted in most of the public and Hindu religious buildings in the native city, and occupied almost all the open spaces in the Cantonment area. These refugee colonies, especially in the Cantonment, were multi-class settlements. They contained government servants, poets, artists, journalists and intellectuals, as well as artisans and the proletariat. They were also within walking distance from Saddar Bazaar and cycling distance from the wholesale markets in the old city. Thus, Karachi became a high density multi-class compact city with no transportation problems.

The interaction between politicians, intellectuals, government servants, students, diplomats, businessmen, and the working classes, coupled with the sharing of a common urban space, enriched Karachi in cultural terms. Within a few years after independence, Saddar Bazaar emerged as the city's intellectual and entertainment centre. By the mid-sixties, it contained over twenty bookshops, sixteen cinemas, thirty-eight bars and billiard rooms, six libraries, and seven night clubs. In addition, seven of the most important schools of the city were located here and so were most of the public halls, auditoriums, and playgrounds.[3]

Intellectual and political activity centred on coffee houses, eating places, and bookshops, of which the Indian Coffee House, Cafe Grand, Frederick's Cafeteria and Kitab Mahal (which claimed it had every Urdu publication ever printed in stock), were perhaps the best known. Political rallies and meetings were held at Jahangir Park, which was also in the heart of Saddar. Most student activities, such as variety programmes and debates, were held in the institutional buildings, such as Khaliqdina Hall or Sohrab Katrak Hall, in and around Saddar. The new eating places developed on the north Indian pattern, initially around Burns Road, where migrants from Delhi settled, and subsequently all over the city. *Nihari, paya* and *paan* became a part of Karachi culture. The major problem that Karachi faced after the refugee influx was of housing the migrants, developing infrastructure for water and sewage, and creating space for the further development of the capital city. The new government very quickly took a number of steps to resolve this crisis. Housing was developed for government servants in and around the periphery of the city, and between 1949 and 1953 over 14,000 plots were developed by promoting

cooperative housing societies. Most of this development catered to government servants, their relatives and to the more privileged or 'respected' of the refugee population. However, the vast majority of the poorer refugees and migrants from other provinces, continued to live in the squatter settlements within and around the city centre, and in public and religious buildings.

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Greater Karachi area—major community groupings.

There were many reasons for shelving the plan. The main reason was that industrialization in the colonies did not take place and as such employment was not generated. As a result, many people came back to squat in the city centre. In addition, the state faced serious financial problems in providing housing as the expected repayment from the beneficiaries did not materialize.

The Greater Karachi Resettlement Plan also established the direction of growth for the city towards the north-east and developed a road network which has, to a large extent, determined the form the city has taken. It was also responsible for the development of the circular railway, which connects most of Karachi's work areas and links them to some of the working class residential areas.

The decisions of the Ayub government and the Doxiadis Plan affected the city in many other ways as well, especially in the decade of the sixties. Since squatting in the city became difficult and housing was not available for the poor, informal settlements, or *katchi abadis* as they came to be called, developed along the roads linking the city to New Karachi and Korangi. Most of these settlements were developed by middlemen, and are located on or along natural drainage channels. This development was the beginning of large scale informal sector housing development in Karachi and the origin of the land 'mafia' which figures in most writing about Karachi today. In addition, the Doxiadis

development of Karachi since then. A number of external factors have also contributed to these changes.

The Ayub government decided to introduce green revolution technologies in the agricultural sector in Pakistan and also took aggressive steps to industrialize the country. This resulted in a mass exodus of peasants and small land owners, mostly from the Punjab, to the urban areas. Almost all of the industrialization took place in Karachi and hence people, displaced by the green revolution, migrated to the city in search of jobs. Thus, about 50 per cent of the city's growth during this period was due to migration.[5] Also, in 1958 the Kotri Barrage on the lower Indus was commissioned and in the 60s the Tarbela Barrage. As a result, the Indus delta, deprived of water, shrunk from 3,500 square kilometres in area to 250 square kilometres. A large number of villages in the delta, mostly of fishermen, were left without drinking water. They migrated en masse to Karachi and catered to the newly developing fish industry. This development was the result of the establishment of the fisheries department, with the help of the FAO, which aggressively promoted mechanized fishing, nylon nets, and credit for fishing activity. As a result, fishermen from all over the riverine and coastal areas of Pakistan also migrated to Karachi. Due to this migration, fishing, which was previously entirely managed by the locals, came to be dominated by migrants from Mianwali. The sociology of the fishing *goths* in and around Karachi also underwent a change as an increasing number of self-employed fishermen started working for middlemen and contractors.

Two other decisions taken by the Ayub government were of great importance to Karachi. One, that the capital of Pakistan would be shifted from Karachi to Islamabad; and two, that the refugee colonies would be removed from the city. As a result of the first decision, diplomats and government servants had to leave Karachi. To facilitate the second decision, the government of Pakistan employed Doxiadis Associates, a well known Greek planning firm, to develop the Greater Karachi Resettlement Plan. The plan was to house 119,000 homeless families living in the city centre and to develop housing for 300,000 additional families in a fifteen to twenty year period.[6]

As phase one of the plan, it was decided to create new townships fifteen to twenty miles to the east and west of Karachi in Landhi-Korangi and New Karachi. In the vicinity of these townships, large industrial areas were also planned and incentives provided to the industrialists to develop these areas. Clearance of the inner city informal settlements, and the shifting of the residents to the new sites was an integral pan of the plan. It was felt that the residents of the new townships would be provided jobs in the proposed industrial estates and as a result, Landhi-Korangi and New Karachi would become independent satellite towns. Initially, 45,000 one-room nuclear houses were planned for these two colonies, complete with all urban services. However, only 10,000 units were built until 1964, after which the plan was shelved.[7]

newly developed four and five star hotels, or cultural centres of foreign missions. This further promoted the physical division of the city into rich and poor areas.

As a result of industrialization and surpluses produced by the green revolution, port activities expanded manifold. However, warehousing and the rail system, did not expand in the same proportion and, increasingly, road transport began to cater to cargo movement. This transfer from rail to road was facilitated by the support the oil and automobile lobby received from the state, at the expense of the rail road. As a result of these developments, Karachi's old city which is near the port, started to get converted into warehousing, and the city's roads started to get congested with heavy cargo carrying vehicles. In addition, the wholesale markets in the city which were made to cater to a population of under one million, expanded to cater to a much larger population. This expansion, coupled with the development of a supporting transport and services sector, started to further congest and degrade the old city. As a result, the more affluent residents also started to move out from the old city into the newly developed suburbs.

In demographic terms, the population of Karachi between 1951 and 1961 increased from 1.137 million to 2.044 million. Again, between 1961 and 1971, the population increased from 2.044 million to 3.606 million. Most of the increase between 1961 and 1971 was the result of migration from other parts of Pakistan.[8] This migration introduced new communities in the city. The most important of these communities came from the NWFP. They were Pakhtoons or Hazarawals. Their migration was supported by the political patronage that was offered to them by the military rulers, whose leaders also belonged to the NWFP. These migrants, through their hard work and contacts, came to dominate transport, and building construction activities thus replacing the local population. They also acquired an important position in the police force in Karachi and were increasingly recruited as port and industrial labour. Meanwhile, in the absence of any major government programme for housing low income communities, *katchi abadis* continued to grow in the sixties and by 1971 it was estimated that there were over 1.3 million people living in them. It was against this background of transport problems, increasing inner city congestion and degradation, development of unserviced *katchi abadis*, and related infrastructure inadequacies, that the government of Pakistan in 1967 asked the United Nations for assistance in tackling Karachi's many problems. In 1968, the UNDP agreed to assist the government of Pakistan and, as a result, a semiautonomous organization known as the Karachi Master Plan Department was established in the KDA to prepare the Karachi Master Plan (KMP) 1974–85.

The most ambitious programme proposed and implemented by the KMP was related to low income housing. The plan estimated that there were more than 1.5 million low income people living for the most part in *katchi abadis*. It further estimated that by 1985 there would be an additional 590,000 new households in Karachi, out of which 250,000 would be from the lower income groups. To provide for them, the housing programme undertook the development of 40,000 plots a year, complete with services, during the

Greater Karachi, preliminary master plan—main road systems.

Plan and the development of informal low income areas away from the city centre, laid the foundations for the physical division of the city into rich and poor areas.

Again, since jobs could not be generated in the New Karachi and the Landhi-Korangi townships, people had to travel from these settlements to the city, port area, and to the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE) on the city fringe. This was the beginning of the transport problems that have plagued the city ever since. In addition, since a rational road network had not been developed, most of this transport passed through Saddar turning the city's cultural centre into a transit area. With this development, and the evolution of a services sector to transport in Saddar, the city centre became increasingly degraded in environmental terms. The elite and the middle classes, unwilling to live in environmentally degraded conditions, also moved out from Saddar to the new cooperative societies, and with them much of the retailing and community activities also moved out and were relocated in their new settlements. Civic and social functions could no longer be held in the institutional buildings in the degraded city centre, and they shifted to the

always have to depend on road transport. It also identified the needs of the services sector to transport, and identified locations for bus terminals, depots and workshops. The plan also proposed the upgrading of the circular railway as a mode of mass transit and linking it with an underground/elevated light rail system. Studies were undertaken and proposals developed to expand the rail system into the suburbs and develop a light rail corridor through the city, so as to serve Saddar and various locations in the business district.

A road network along with a number of bridges on the Lyari River was proposed. This proposal aimed at linking various areas of Karachi to each other, so as to reduce distances and prevent unnecessary movement through Saddar and the inner city. In addition, a southern bypass was planned which would make it possible for all port traffic to bypass the city through the National Highway. A northern bypass was also envisaged and planned to link with the Super Highway. It was foreseen that much of the port and inland trade related activities would move from the inner city to these bypasses. This would reduce traffic, decongest the inner city, and make its rehabilitation possible.

The KMP also developed land use plans identifying areas for institutional development, recreation, environmental enhancement, and industrial growth. Locations for metropolitan and sub-metropolitan centres were identified in the suburbs of the city and the concept of cohesive and sustainable communities was developed for these areas. Some of these areas are Liaquatabad, NIPA Chowrangi, North Karachi, and Baldia.

Except for the development of the road network, bulk water supply, building of bridges on the Lyari, and the part development of the southern bypass, none of the above proposals of the master plan ever materialized even well after the end of the plan period. The development of the road network, however, opened up new areas for development and shortened distances.

Other changes in the decade of the seventies also had a major impact on Karachi's development and planning. During this period, the state encouraged the construction of medium-rise and high-rise apartment buildings. Land at subsidized prices was allotted to developers, and credit from state institutions was made available for the construction of these housing complexes. As a result, Karachi's skyline started to change and a 'flat-culture', which has now become an integral part of Karachi's sociology, began to develop. It was also the beginning of the development of a strong developer's lobby which over the years was to increasingly determine state policy related to housing and land in the city in particular, and in Pakistan in general.

The building boom, described above, was facilitated by investments from Pakistani workers in the Middle East. It is estimated that almost 50 per cent of Middle East remittances from 1.25 million emigrant workers, during this decade, said to average Rs 30,000 per worker per year, were invested in Karachi in small businesses and real estate. This availability of finance has largely been responsible for the real estate

Buses creating bottlenecks.

plan period. This was in addition to over 100,000 plots that were developed, or were being developed, for various income groups in Karachi through various KDA schemes. An important feature of this development were the 'metrovilles'. These metrovilles were to provide not only land and infrastructure but also technical advice, credit, and materials for construction. Social sector facilities were an essential part of the metroville programme.[9]

The housing programme managed to develop the plots and the required infrastructure. However, credit, technical advice, and other social sector facilities did not materialize. In addition, the cost of development was unaffordable to lower income groups, in spite of large subsidies. As a result, the schemes remained empty for years on end and much of them were subsequently purchased by speculators, or the middle classes. By the late seventies, the programme was all but abandoned.

The KMP also accurately identified Karachi's transport needs and stressed the development of an appropriate bus system, since the vast majority of Karachiites would

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speculation which has made formal sector land and housing unaffordable to the vast majority of the city residents.

The Dubai connection also generated a consumer culture and wholesale markets for electronic goods, motorbikes, and household appliances started to develop in Saddar and in the inner city. This development congested the inner city further and started to change the character of Saddar.

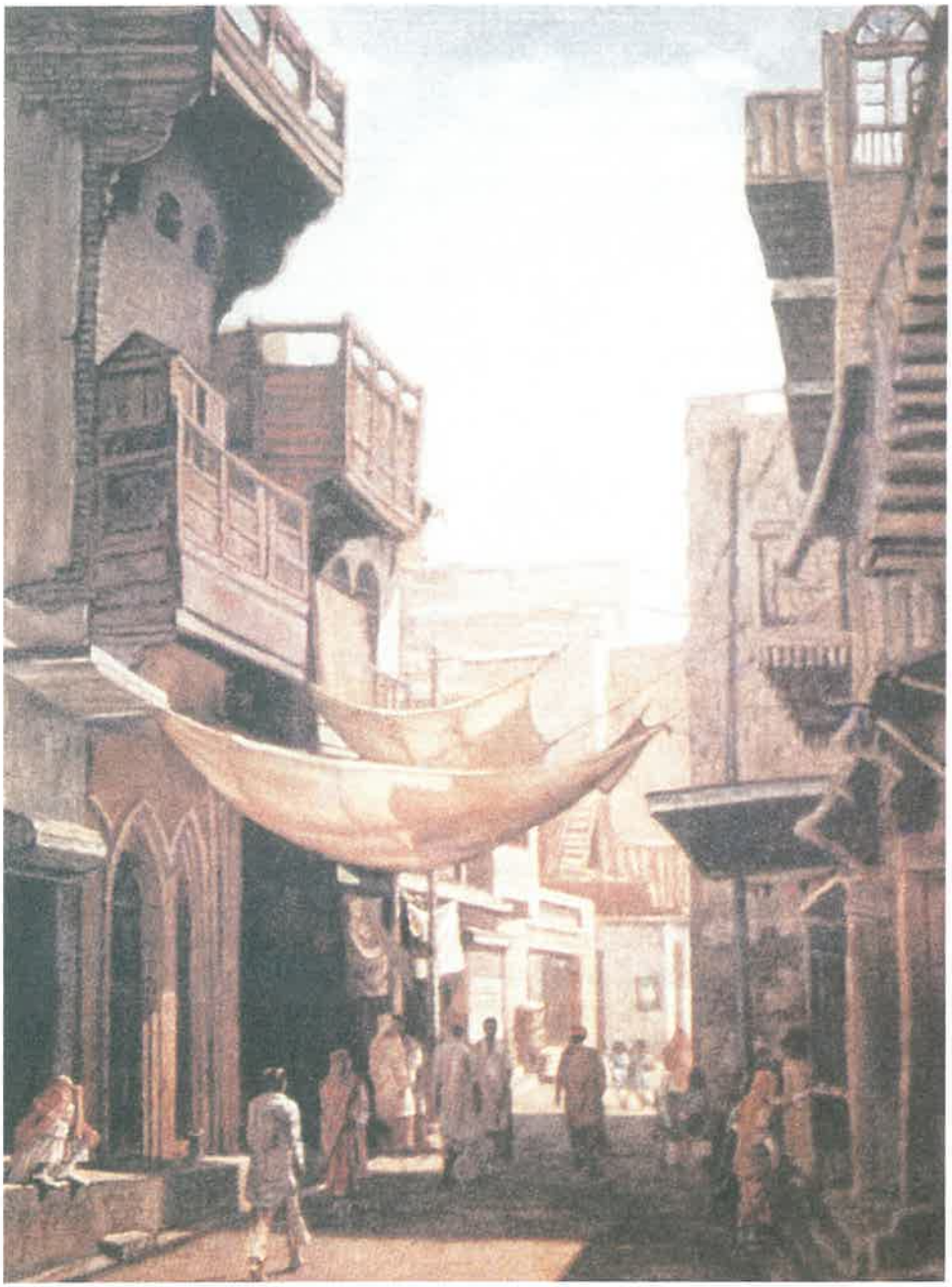
Saddar, in the seventies, underwent other changes as well. New building bye-laws were introduced, permitting the development of high and medium-rise buildings. This, and the related developments described above, led to the demolition of a large number of old buildings and the construction of new medium-rise structures. The inner city's architectural character and scale began to change. With the shifting of the university, the intervention of commercial interests, supported by new bye-laws, the availability of funds for construction, and the 'Dubai syndrome', Saddar's intellectual and cultural life declined.

However, connections with the Middle East and the availability of money brought about other changes in the city. Saddar's night life expanded and new cabarets, some featuring international groups, discotheques and bars surfaced. A casino was constructed in Clifton but was never commissioned. The Karachi Race Course acquired a reputation that was well known beyond the frontier of Pakistan, and people from the Middle East and the rest of the country came especially over the weekends to participate in its activities. Meanwhile, international film festivals continued to be held regularly in the Saddar cinemas.

It was in the seventies that the development of the Boat Basin and Kehkashan was undertaken, and large areas of land along Clifton Beach and in the eastern parts of the city were reclaimed for high income residential and commercial complexes. At the same time, large scale development was undertaken towards the west of the city for housing low income and lower middle income groups. In this manner, the division of the city between rich and poor was further enhanced.

Most of the Master Plan recommendations were to be implemented in the late seventies and early eighties. However, as a result of the political crisis following the 1977 imposition of martial law in the country work on many programmes of the master plan was discontinued. Due to this non-implementation, a powerful informal sector emerged to cater to the needs of the city. This informal sector has continued to grow. Had the master plan been implemented Karachi today would have been a very different city.

The most serious problem created by the non-implementation of the master plan programmes has been the absence of planned infrastructure for the *katchi abadis* that have grown as a result of the failure of formal sector housing delivery systems. The physical integration of these settlements into the larger Karachi framework has also posed



Crowded lanes of Karachi, painting by Salim Mansuri.

growing corridor of the city. This development to the extreme east added to Karachi's already serious transport problems. Unfortunately, the existing rail link between the city and Pipri (where the Steel Mills and Port Qasim are located) has not yet been developed for commuter purposes.

The Afghan war and the Iranian revolution also had a major impact on the social, physical and political conditions in the city. About 200,000 refugees were added to the city's population, in addition to the 350,000 that had come from Bangladesh between 1972 and 1978. Karachi became the centre of the drug trade that financed the Afghan war and, as it always happens, this trade was accompanied by a trade in guns and the subservience of important state institutions to the mafia. This was also the period of dictatorship in Pakistan. The absence of space for a political consensus, combined with the development of the drug and arms mafia, increased alienation among certain sections of the population of Karachi, leading to ethnic politics, violence, and large scale administrative apathy and corruption. Armed gangs emerged to control various areas of the city, and kidnappings for ransom, and other crimes, became widespread.

This situation resulted in the ghettoization of the rich. Increasingly, they started to live surrounded by armed guards and security systems. They developed recreational, cultural, and educational facilities in their own settlements. Their relationship with the rest of the city ceased to exist, except for work purposes. This led to further degradation of Saddar and the inner city, and the development of new retail outlets and eating places in the affluent areas. Many of these retail outlets and eating places were old Karachi business houses that have relocated from the inner city to the richer areas.

However, in spite of these developments, Karachi continued to receive migrants, not only from the rest of Pakistan but from other countries as well. Bangladeshis and Burmese migrants replaced the locals in the fishing industry in the 1990s and a large number of Sri Lankans and a few Filipinos have become domestic servants to the richer Karachiites. It was during this period that Afghani food became popular in Karachi and is now available in all areas of the city.

In the late eighties, the government of Pakistan with UNDP assistance initiated another city planning exercise. As a result, the Karachi Development Plan (KDP) 2000 was prepared. Unfortunately, the plan did not take into consideration the informal development lobbies that had become important providers of services in Karachi during the eighties. These lobbies, which had by then become important interest groups were neither consulted, nor did they participate in the plan formulation. Furthermore, it assumed that the state planning and development institutions had the necessary organizational culture and skills to implement the KDP 2000. In addition, the steering committee of the plan, of which the chairman was the chief minister of Sindh, was unable to even convene its meeting to approve the plan. As such, the plan had no legal standing and many of its recommendations have continually been violated. The non-

problems of both a physical and sociological nature. The population of *katchi abadis* increased from two million in 1978 to 3.4 million in 1988 and by 2005 it was well over five million.[10]

The failure to implement the transport related proposals of the master plan and the bypasses, also resulted in a large number of problems for the city. Before 1972, public transport in Karachi consisted of large comfortable buses operated by the public sector and transport companies. These companies and the public sector had proper terminals, depots and workshops for their vehicles. However, due to an increasing demand for buses, the government gave permission to individuals to operate mini-buses on certain routes. Slowly the mini-buses became the dominant mode of transport and the private companies closed down, unable to compete with the mini-buses. The public sector was also wound up in the early 90s as it was running at an increasing loss. As a result, instead of proper buses or a rail system, the lower and lower middle income groups in the city today rely for the most part on 13,000 uncomfortable mini-buses for commuting. These buses are individually owned. The owners purchase these buses by funds acquired from money-lenders at enormous rates of interest. The constant threat of having the bus taken away due to a default in payments, makes the bus owners (who are also the drivers and conductors) work overtime. They are able to violate traffic rules and regulations because they pay the police informally to do so. Many of them, tongue in cheek, say that their work is in reality a police-bus owner's joint venture. In addition, there are no bus terminals, depots and workshops for the mini-buses. Thus, the roads of the city have been turned into depots, workshops and terminals, and a services sector for transport has developed around them causing congestion and environmental degradation. The city government has recently taken up this issue and sites for inter-city and intra-city terminals have been identified and work has begun on some of them. Meanwhile, in the absence of the building of bypasses, the inner city continued to develop as warehousing and storage for port related and inland trade. As its degradation increased, manufacturing, sweatshops and the recycling industry started to locate itself here further adding to the degradation. Much of Karachi's traffic problems, environmental degradation, and congestion is the result of the issues discussed above.

In 1976, the Islamization process also brought about major changes in the culture of the city. Bars, billiard rooms, discotheques and cabarets disappeared and the race course was closed down. This development completely changed the nature of Saddar and parts of the inner city. Areas that remained open all night now closed down soon after sunset and, as a result, landuse changes were initiated which led eventually to a large number of cinemas, bookshops, and institutional buildings being replaced by markets and shops.

The seventies also saw the development of the Steel Mills complex, the Export Promotion Zone and Port Qasim. These developments took place towards the east of Karachi and created what is known as the eastern corridor. In the eighties it became the fastest

An aerial view of Karachi which shows the High Court building in the centre.

system was failing to do. To deal with the increasing violation of human rights, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and various legal aid cells have emerged, pushing for judicial reform and providing aid to victims of human rights abuses.

In the decade of the 1990s, NGOs and some academic organizations also started to question the loans that were being taken from IFI's for the development of Karachi. They pointed out that development through these loans was many times more expensive than through normal government mechanisms and that most of these IFI funded projects had been failures. In addition, they increased the debt burden on the city which is serviced from deductions from the provincial development budget. The anti-loan lobby has become stronger over time although the government today is taking more loans than ever before so as to fund the new Karachi mega-projects.

A major change took place in Pakistan with the promulgation of the Local Bodies Ordinance. As a result, Karachi became a city district divided into 18 towns and 178 union councils. The city, towns and union councils all have *nazims* (mayors) and *naib nazims* (deputy mayors) with the power to decide on development related issues. As a result of the Ordinance, the bureaucracy also became subservient to the elected representatives. This has brought about a major change in the manner in which the city is governed and development related issues are decided upon. The first *nazim* governed for four years (2001–4) during which attempts were made at introducing CNG large buses, improving the road network and inducting foreign investment for which a larger number of MoUs were signed. The transport initiative has been a failure since the foreign

approval of the plan and the non-convening of the steering committee, simply indicates that Karachi's planning has not been a priority with the four governments that have been in power during the plan period (1990–2000) since the plan document was completed in 1990.

The decade of 1990s saw an increase in the trends described above. Informal housing increased; older low income housing, in the absence of alternatives, become more congested creating further environmental degradation; transport services deteriorated and the law and order situation became worse due to ethnic politics and a failure of the major power groups to arrive at a political consensus. The decade of the 1990s also saw the implementation of structural adjustment, the imposition of GATT and WTO conditionalities and pressure from the 'culture of globalization'. This led to a curtailing of subsidies in health, education and social housing. It also led to a rapid increase in the number of private schools, universities and professional colleges and a decline in the public education and health systems. This was accompanied by a push for privatization of government assets and utilities and the induction of the international corporate sector into the economy of the city. These developments further divided the city into rich and poor areas and systems, increased unemployment (especially among the unskilled and the poor) and further weakened the efficiency and effectiveness of city planning, managing and monitoring institutions. Globalization and the induction of international capital also meant increased prosperity for Karachi's elite, professional classes and the upper-middle class. Shopping malls, designer boutiques, super markets, international fast food chains and a variety of entertainment and services sector outlets have emerged to cater to this new affluence. Zamzama in Defence Housing Authority (DHA) has emerged as a shopping and recreational centre for the elite. Boutiques, malls and fast food outlets have also been established in the middle-middle income areas of Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Gulistan-e-Jauhar and Nazimabad. The demand for land for the corporate sector and the expanding middle classes has increased land values and rentals making housing increasingly unaffordable to the low and lower-middle income groups in the city. However, new areas were opened up for development in the north of the city and along the National Highway to the east. In both cases informal developments in housing in these areas far exceeds the development provided by the formal sector.

The 1990s decade also saw the maturing of a strong civil society movement in Karachi whose roots go back to the 1980s decade. The work of the Orangi Pilot Project institutions received international acclaim and their strategies for upgrading of informal settlements were adopted by government institutions both in Pakistan and abroad. The Edhi Foundation emerged as a more important provider of social services than the state itself and the NGO Shehri challenged the power of the developers' 'mafia' and the corruption and misuse of government powers related to land, building control, zoning regulations and the larger issues of the environment. In addition, the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee was able to provide access to justice and related information which the police

in creating an 'inclusive city'. How this conflict plays out will be determined in the coming decade.

Since 2000, the government has taken a number of decisions regarding projects that have been pending for a long time. The Northern Bypass recommended by the 1975–85 Master Plan is nearly complete. The Lyari Expressway along both the banks of the Lyari River has been initiated. It is a highly controversial project and was cancelled twice because of community and civil society objections. It has been controversial because it was demolishing more than 25,000 houses belonging to low income communities. Some of whom have lived here for more than a hundred years, and over 8,000 businesses which employ about 40,000 persons. These demolitions also adversely affected the schooling of more than 26,000 students. The construction of the expressway initiated a major debate as to whether the expressway was necessary and also as to the nature of development that the city required. The media by and large was supportive of the civil society point of view. The controversy was internationalized by Pakistani professionals and NGOs to an extent that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements arranged for an international Fact Finding Mission to visit Karachi to study the housing rights violations that were taking place due to the project. The Mission's report confirmed the point of view of Karachi's civil society organizations but that did not stop the project from continuing.

In the last seven years, the Circular Railway option for mass transit has been explored and many studies have been prepared for its revitalization and extension. However, none of them have been finalized and as such work has not begun on this important project. Meanwhile, the city government has completed studies on rapid bus transit for the city and this has received a favourable response from academia, professionals and communities. If the bus way project is constructed then it will bring major relief to commuters in Karachi since it will considerably reduce car usage and as such reduce traffic congestion which has become a major problem for all commuters in Karachi. This traffic congestion has increased in the last few years because of the easy availability of loans from banks and leasing companies for the purchase of vehicles. The seriousness of this problem can be judged from the facts that in the year 2005 about 400 vehicles per day were registered in Karachi.[14] Indications are that the figure for 2006 is higher. There is a growing understanding among all sections of Karachiites that traffic congestion can only be solved by the availability of a cheap, comfortable and easily accessible transport system.

According to the 1998 population census, the population of Karachi at that time was eleven million of which 1.2 million were 'aliens' which included migrants from Bangladesh, Burma and Iran and refugees from Afghanistan. If these figures are projected then Karachi's population today is between 12.5 to 13 million. The growth rate has declined from 5.07 per cent between 1972–81 to 3.3 per cent between 1981–98. However, in statistical terms the number of persons added to Karachi's population per

companies who were a part of it have, according to the city government, defaulted. The companies on the other hand accuse the city government of violating the terms of the contract. The Karachiites had benefited enormously from the CNG bus initiative and its failure was a big blow to them. The improvement of the roads also suffered as a result of heavy rains in 2005 and 2006 due to which the entire city was submerged and many of the roads, including the new ones, were washed away. However, during the tenure of the first *nazim* after the enactment of the Ordinance, consultants were appointed for the preparation of a Karachi 2020 Master Plan. The master plan recommendations have not been finalized but the Karachi Nazim has decided that Karachi is to be a 'world class city'. His concept of a world class city is the building of flyovers, under-passes, signal-free roads, elevated expressways through the city centre and the replacing of *katchi abadis* by eight storey apartment blocks. None of these initiatives is of benefit to the majority of Karachi citizens and communities. The signal-free roads have created immense problems for pedestrians in crossing the roads and as a result deaths and accidents, according to the media, have increased. In addition, the DHA and the federal government have initiated a number of massive real estate development projects along the Karachi coast. The DHA project seeks to commercialize 14 kilometres of beach by building condominiums, elite clubs, theme parks and expo centres on more than 80 per cent of the beach. This development is being undertaken by Malaysian and Dubai companies at a cost of US$1,500 million.[11] Civil society groups have expressed their opposition to this project since it will deny access to the beach to ordinary Karachiites thus depriving them of an important recreational and entertainment asset. Ecological concerns have also been expressed by the media. Meanwhile, the federal government has sold two islands at the mouth of the Korangi Creek to a Dubai based company for US$54 billion for real estate development catering to tourism, elite housing and entertainment.[12] Manora Island, the Sandspit and Hawksbay beach and their back waters have also been sold for the development of 'Sugar Land City' consisting of elite high-rise apartments and related commercial complexes.[13] Again, civil society organizations argue that these developments are not for Karachiites and will result in depriving the citizens of the natural assets of the city. In addition, they argue that these projects will adversely affect the environment and ecology of the region Karachi is situated in; will make homeless thousands of poor households and adversely affect the livelihoods of the fishing communities in the Karachi region.

The plans of the city government and the concerns of civil society organizations are not being reconciled through dialogue and debate. The *nazim*, according to the critics, is merely trying to make Karachi 'look good' for foreign investment. He is trying to make it another Shanghai. He is concerned with beautifying the main corridors of movement, especially the one from the Airport to the downtown area of the city. These developments, the critics claim, exclude large areas of the city where no investment is being made. The civil society organizations are concerned about environment, social sector planning and

of the city, are below the poverty line.[20] Meanwhile, poverty in Karachi has increased. In 1998, 36 per cent of the city households lived below the poverty line. Recent estimates put this figure at 40 per cent.[21] In addition, there is a major demand-supply gap in water and electricity supply as a result of which there is acute water shortage (especially in low income settlements) and electricity power cuts for long hours, especially in summer. These power cuts adversely affect the functioning of industry, commerce and small workshops, causing a loss of billions of rupees per day to the city and its citizens.

Another major infrastructure related issue is of trunk sewers and treatment plants. Karachi's sewage system is planned to dispose into its natural drainage system. Government investments have been enormous in trying to divert this to trunk sewers and treatment plants. However, they have not succeeded in doing this because this means digging up the entire system and relaying it which is not feasible in construction and economic terms. Consequently, the trunks run dry and the treatment plants function to a fraction of their capacity. Recent plans, developed on the basis of the work of the Orangi Pilot Project, propose to turn the existing drainage channels into box trunks linked to treatment plants. Meanwhile, 400 million gallons of sewage per day goes into the sea untreated causing large scale marine pollution and threat of diseases. The sewage also contains industrial effluents. Tests on fish life indicate toxic pollution. Poultry and eggs are also contaminated since most Karachi poultry farms use fish feed.[22] However, environmentalists agree that the situation is not yet serious.

Karachi's inner city and main corridors also contain some of the highest levels of urban air and noise pollution in the world. Studies have shown that this pollution is now adversely affecting the health of the residents of these areas, as well as of school children and policemen who manage traffic.[23] As a result, inner city residents, mostly from low income areas, continue to move to the peri-urban *katchi abadis*, where environmental conditions are comparatively better. They prefer to spend additionally on transport rather than live in the environmentally degraded inner city.[24]

The natural drains that carried the rain water to the sea have also been encroached upon, or have been allotted to powerful interest groups who have built commercial and residential complexes on them. For instance, the Karachi Port Trust has reclaimed mangroves along the coast for its officers' housing society, blocking the exit to the sea of two major drainage channels as a result of which all of the Bath Island and the low lying area of Clifton were inundated during the rains in 2006. In addition, the DHA has also encroached on the Manzoor Colony *nala* turning its flood plain into residential plots. It is the land hunger of the Karachi elite and those who represent them that are responsible for this ecological disaster. Alternatives to the drainage crisis in Karachi have yet to be seriously developed.

Solid waste management is another major problem that the city has so far failed to resolve. Only 60 per cent of the city's solid waste is lifted and transferred to landfills by

year has increased to 466,200, which is more than the population of the majority of the cities on the globe.[15]

According to the 1998 census, 48.52 per cent (down from 54.3 per cent in 1998) are Urdu speaking; 13.94 per cent (up from 13.6 per cent) are Punjabi speaking; 11.42 per cent (up from 8.7 per cent) are Pushto speaking; 7.22 per cent (up from 6.2 per cent) are Sindhi speaking; 4.34 per cent (down from 4.4 per cent) are Balochi speaking and 2.11 per cent (up from 0.35 per cent) are Saraiki speaking.[16] These figures suggest that migration from NWFP and the Sindh and Sarai areas has increased considerably. Also, since there has been no major migration of Urdu speakers, their number in percentage terms has declined.

Surveys made for the Karachi Development Plan (KDP) 2000, established that an increasing number of Karachiites are living far away from the city centre. Projections of these surveys seem to suggest that by the year 2020, the vast majority of Karachiites will be living beyond fifteen kilometres from the central business district.[17] These figures point to the necessity of developing a suburban rail system for the city, especially since the number of week day person trips has increased from 5.26 million in 1987 to 24,227 million in 2006.[18]

The urbanized area of Karachi has also expanded enormously. In 1971, it was 289 square kilometres, in 1974, 349 and in 1988, 3,520 square kilometres. The area of Karachi city district today is 3,527 square kilometres, and by the year 2020 the city will have expanded well beyond its administrative frontiers.

Housing and infrastructure remain Karachi's most pressing need. The city requires about 80,000 housing units per year over the next decade to meet the demand of housing backlog, population growth and replacement. However, the formal sector in the early nineties was producing around 27,000 housing units per year.[19] The resulting demand-supply-gap was being taken care of by the development of *katchi abadis*, densification and postponement, or replacement of construction. In percentage terms the situation could not possibly have improved since there have been almost no projects for low income housing since 1987.

In terms of infrastructure at the household level, the 1998 census figures show a major improvement from the 1981 census figures. Water connections in the house increased from 44.45 per cent to 74.38 per cent and electric connections increased from 65.78 to 93.79 per cent. However, these figures are deceptive since there is a major difference between the figures of the higher income and lower income districts of the city. There are even greater differences with regard to infant mortality,, gender distribution, crude birth rates, and education levels between the lower income and higher income settlements. These have been adequately summarized by the Karachi Master Plan 2020 which points out that 90 per cent of the population of *katchi abadis*, which constitute over 40 per cent

surveys of the KDP 2000 and has been further enforced by the Karachi Master Plan 2020 surveys which show that 50 per cent of household heads are self-employed.[26] Surveys and observations indicate that formal sector jobs are not increasing in percentage terms and that for the near future this informal sector is the only employment generation activity in the city.[27] However, this informal sector desperately needs credit and technical assistance for the improvement of its products, and expansion of its production. The only source of credit that is accessible to it is also from the informal sector at ten to twelve per cent rates of interest per month. This is, in most cases, beyond its affordability limits. Technical assistance, on the other hand, is not available at all. In spite of these constraints, the sector continues to expand and the lower middle income population of Karachi, mainly due to this sector's activity, has increased visibly. In the past few years, a number of micro credit programmes, to deal with this important issue, have been set up in the public, private and NGO sectors. It is too early to assess the extent to which they have been successful in supporting the informal sector in reducing poverty and generating jobs.

Karachi is a city whose 75 per cent population belongs to the low and lower middle income groups. They are residents of *katchi abadis* and formal under-serviced settlements. They are pedestrians, commuters and hawkers. Their requirements are related to housing, employment and transport. None of these are being fulfilled today and nor are there any short and long term programmes in place for them as yet although discussions and proposals are constantly being made since the 1975–85 Master Plan. Karachi is also a city of young people; 60 per cent of its population is below the age of 25. This population is literate. Its literacy figures are above 75 per cent with almost no difference between male and female literacy. Its main source of information is the television which now captures the world. The married population in the age group of 15–24 has decreased from 39 per cent in 1981 to 26 per cent in 1998.[28] Women form the overwhelming majority in universities and professional colleges. Eighty-six per cent of households live as nuclear families[29] which is a major change from the past. This new generation requires entertainment, recreation and cultural activities. In the absence of the extended family, it requires day care centres for its children when women go to work which they increasingly do. Attempts at providing these are being made both by the city government and community organizations but they still have a long way to go. The changes in society also require old people's homes, employment for senior citizens and institutions that can help the victims of rapid social change. Some of these facilities are provided by the Edhi Foundation and increasingly by philanthropic NGOs. But again, there is a big gap between need and supply for these services.

The description of Karachi given above is, to say the least, dismal. However, the nature of its growth and its sociological conditions are no different from those of other Third World mega-cities. But it must be said that over the past decade and a half, the performance of its development and civic agencies, have declined considerably, whereas

the city government.[25] Here again, there is a disparity between the planned and unplanned areas. What saves Karachi from being swallowed by its solid waste, is the fact that all inorganic waste is collected by contractors and middlemen, appointed scavengers, and sold to the informal recycling industry. Thus, all waste paper is turned into cardboard, rags into fluff for upholstery, waste plastic into utensils and toys, while bones are ground and mixed with feed for poultry. This recycling industry has expanded to such an extent that it imports various types of inorganic waste from the Gulf and Saudi Arabia for recycling purposes. However, plastic bags are not recycled and they have become a major source of pollution for parks and beaches, and are responsible to a large extent for the blockages in the city's sewage and drainage systems. Recently, the city government has banned the use of plastic bags but the ban has yet to be enforced. From the looks of it, it will fizzle out.

Another serious problem that the city faces is environmental degradation, leading to the destruction of its architectural and historic heritage. As discussed earlier, this is due to the continued development of *ad hoc* cargo and bus terminals, and port-related activities, within the inner city. At the city level major planning interventions (such as the building of bypasses and development of areas for storage and warehousing) are required so as to create the necessary conditions for the development and implementation of a comprehensive conservation strategy for Saddar and the inner city. Here, it must be said, that Karachi has the finest and most extensive nineteenth and early twentieth century colonial architecture in Pakistan. In the periphery of the old town, almost all of this architecture has been replaced by ugly medium-rise buildings which have storage spaces on the ground floor and rooms for day wage labour on the floors above. Apart from the physical degradation, many of these areas have become male only areas and a culture of gambling, prostitution, and drugs has developed around them. However, some positive work which holds considerable promise is being carried out on this issue. Under the Sindh Cultural Heritage Act (Preservation) Act 1994 a listing of important heritage buildings has taken place. A committee has been set up to list and de-list buildings and a criteria for this process has been developed. However, for the process to succeed anomalies in the existing legal framework have to be removed and a technical cell for advice to listed building owners and for monitoring purposes needs to be established. So far, these have not been a priority with the Department of Culture, government of Sindh, who is supposed to manage all matters related to the Conservation Act. The city government has recently also decided to shift some of the wholesale markets out of the inner city to the Northern Bypass but plans have not yet been finalized. Also, the desired changes in land use within the inner city after the shifting of the markets have still to be determined.

Another factor that is important in the case of Karachi is that about seventy-five per cent of its population works in the informal sector, in small businesses, workshops, manufacturing units, and in transport related activities. This fact is supported by the

underway. This struggle and other similar initiatives are bound to succeed and to create new institutional arrangements for governance of the city. They are bound to succeed because the majority of Karachi's population now consists of second generation Karachiites who have come of age. They are of various ethnic origins and unlike their parents and grandparents, they are not pioneers, but citizens who belong to the city and have claims on it. But these claims will only be accompanied by a sense of pride if these new citizens of Karachi know the history of the city and the forces that have created and sustained it. The city needs memorials to its heroes, such as the leaders of the guerrilla warfare against the British immediately after their conquest of the city; or the leaders of the rebellion against the British in 1857 who were blown up from the mouths of cannon in Artillery Maidan. They need to know about Mai Kolachi and about Morerio, the hero of Shah Abdul Latif's *Sur Ghatta*, who lies buried off Manghopir Road and whose descendants now live in the coastal village of the city. They need to know how Karachi has influenced the development of political ideas in Pakistan, contributed to the evolution of the student and labour movements, and laid the foundations of both leftist and rightist thinking in the country. To understand Karachi's history and its contributions to the political and cultural aspects of Pakistan, it is necessary that the city should have a metropolitan museum, and a museum of modern art.

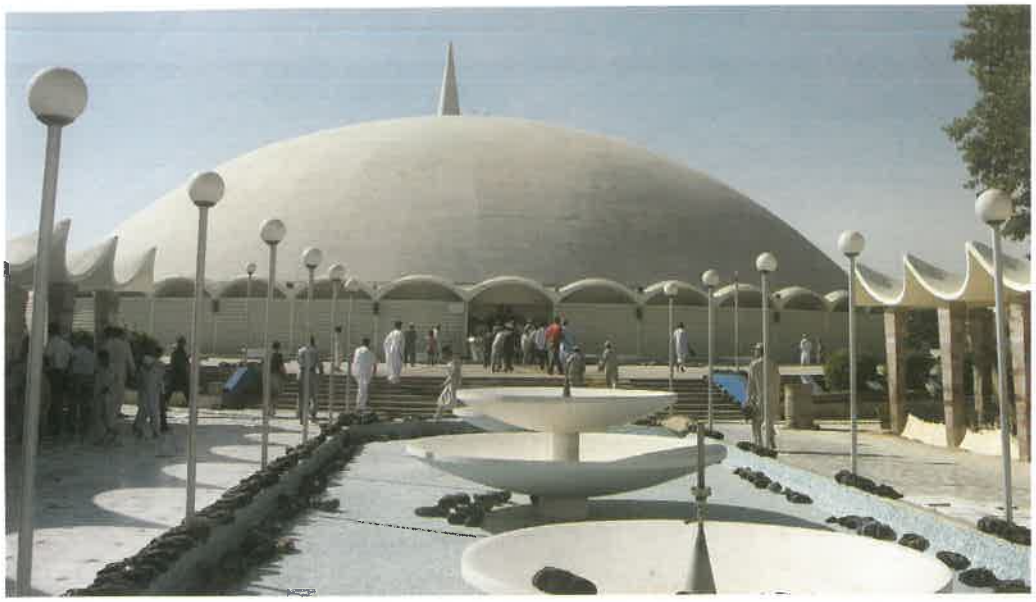
As Pakistan's population increases and capitalist farming consolidates itself in the rural areas, Karachi's population will continue to grow. It is estimated that it will be nineteen million by 2011, beyond which urbanization through migration is unlikely to take place in Pakistan. The present day and future politicians, and planners of Karachi will have to remember that, unlike the past, they will now be dealing with Karachiites, and not with migrants searching for a better future. In addition, instead of asking communities to 'participate' in their programmes as is common today, they will have to accept, facilitate and build on the work that the Karachiites, in the absence of government initiatives, have undertaken. For this to happen, a process of consultation and accommodation will have to be arrived at between Karachi's politicians and planners and the city's community, interest groups and academia. Hopefully this will happen with pressure from below and respect, love, affection and understanding from above, and as a result the city will serve the social and environment related concerns of its citizens while at the same time accommodating the needs of its economic growth in this age of globalization.

in most other Asian mega-cities there have been substantial improvements. It is too early to evaluate the institutional changes that have been carried out as a result of the Devolution Plan but there are positive trends such as *nazims* with *de jure* power to bring about change, something that did not exist before. Attempts are being made to use this power to develop an institutional arrangement under which federal and provincial land owning agencies, such as Cantonment Boards of the Ministry of Defence, Railways and the Karachi Port Trust, follow a common plan and building by-laws and zoning regulations with the city government as the apex planning institution. If this happens, the important issue of fragmented planning and its implementation, that has plagued Karachi for decades, will be overcome.

However, in spite of these positive developments, increasing disparity between the rich and the poor, and the closing of a shared common physical and cultural space between them, as a result of the new mega projects being promoted by the city government, are having serious social repercussions which are likely to become even more serious over time. This division between rich and poor is further complicated by a growing alienation of the city from the rest of the province. Urban planners, both in physical and socio-economic terms, will have to give priority to these two issues in the planning process for any future development.

It is true that the state has played a negligible role in Karachi's development since the end of the 70s decade, and much of the city's problems are related to the absence of this role. However, in sharp contrast to the state's indifference, the people of Karachi, who have migrated here from all over Pakistan and India, have managed to take care of themselves to a great extent. An informal sector provides employment, housing, education, health, and transport facilities. Households in low and lower middle income neighbourhoods join together to finance and build their local level infrastructure and lobby with the state for the services that they cannot develop themselves. Their efforts are supported by informal sector entrepreneurs and contractors. It is because of these activities that the housing stock in Karachi has improved considerably over time in terms of rooms per house, persons per room and permanent construction.[30]

In addition, sports clubs, lending libraries, video halls, and thousands of social welfare and cultural organizations provide intellectual stimulation, recreation and entertainment, the quality of which would improve considerably if public sector support for them was available. On holidays the beaches and the badly maintained parks of the city are full of families and increasingly of young couples belonging to the low and lower middle income groups. People play cards and carrom in whatever open spaces are available, families picnic wherever possible and children play cricket and football on holidays, or whenever there is a strike, in the empty streets and squares. In addition, in recent years, neighbourhood organizations are increasingly fighting off land speculators, who are often supported by politicians or bureaucrats, or both, from occupying the open spaces within their neighbourhoods. A struggle for protecting amenity plots from misuse is also



Masjid-e-Tooba.

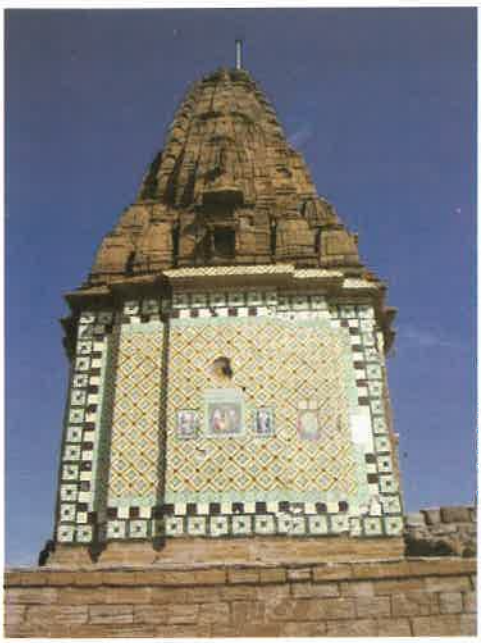
Abdullah Shah Ghazi Mazar.

Kharadar Jamatkhana.

Karachi Synagogue.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ABDUL HALIM ANSARI

Parsi Fire Temple.



A Hindu Temple, Manora, Karachi.

St. Anthony's Church.

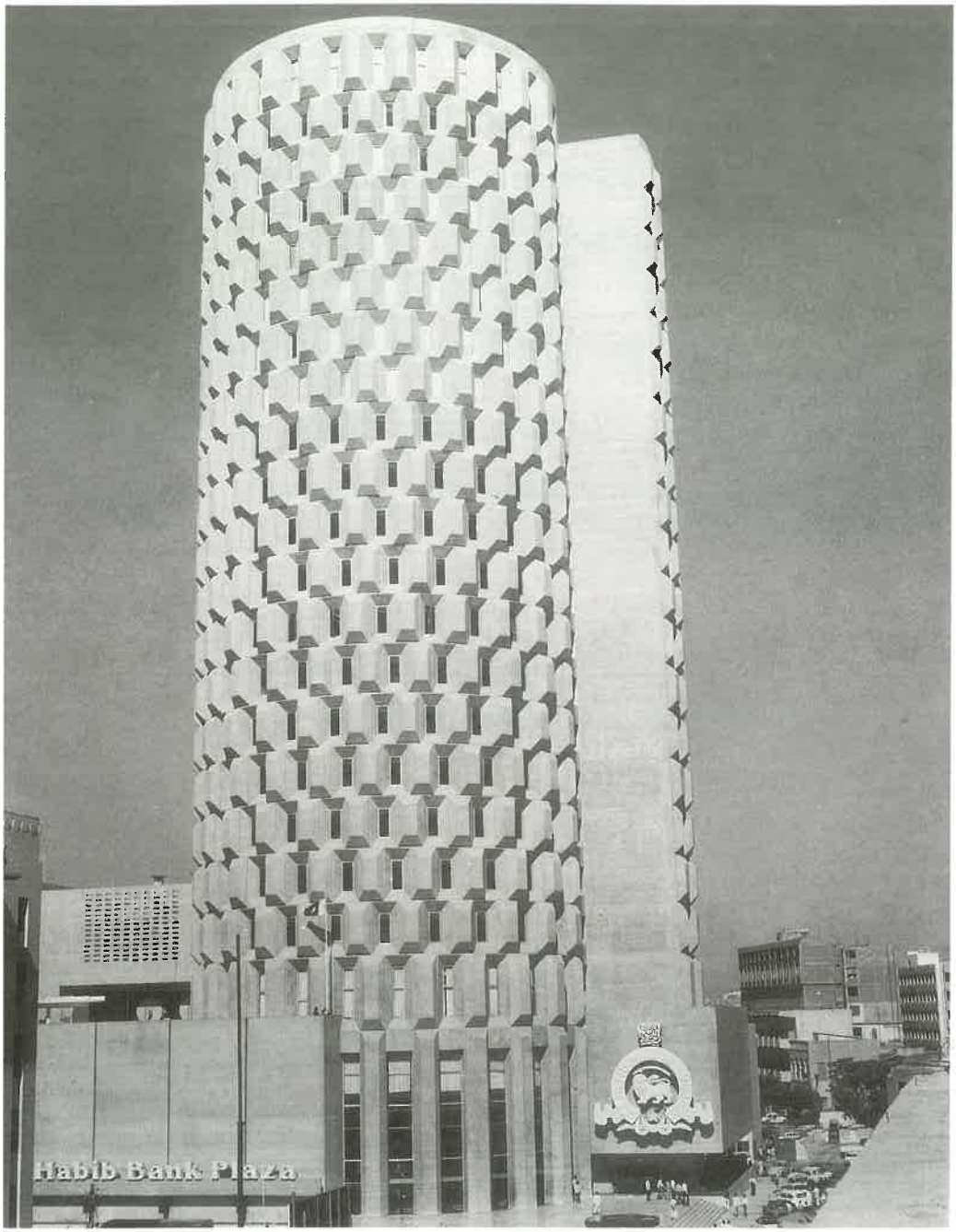
EIGHT

MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY OF TRENDS

NOMAN AHMED

Architecture is a dynamic subject. It changes its course with the passage of time and in the process evolves systems of built environment that mature gradually. Each such system obtains its nourishment from the pre-existing and prevailing socio-economic, cultural, political and physical conditions. As this cyclic journey continues, its periodic changeovers furnish new dimensions to the process creating trends. These trends provide a comprehensive account of the architectural 'journey' and the in-built labyrinths of associated fields. It links time with space and presents a clear scenario of its origins, transformation and the search for excellence.

Karachi has gone through numerous and distinctive phases in its brief history. The initial development of the city was influenced by a strong regional character which did not have time to mature because of the changes in the socio-cultural habitat. This is the main reason that buildings reminiscent of that era hardly exist, and those that do are not in a proper state. With the exception of a few Lohana residences and shrines that still remain in the Old Town, the urban fabric is devoid of building examples of the pre-colonial era. The British colonial period revealed its strength effectively in shaping Karachi according to its own standards. The variance in its built forms was subject to the scientific and technical excellence that the west was able to master during this period. Although the vernacular trend was able to survive, its apparent fabric absorbed a strong shade of the colonial impression. In fact, the hundred years of colonial rule produced a cultural dualism in which the cultural values of the British held sway over the private lives of people who were trying to sustain continuity of their regional relevance. Western values prevailed on the conduct of public affairs of the state, the government, in general, and urbanized elite, in particular.



Habib Bank Plaza.

Techno City: a fine example of modern architecture.

Pakistan State Oil Building.

Aga Khan University and Hospital.

Karachi Civic Centre.

Commercial Union Building.

With the partition of the subcontinent and independence in 1947, Pakistan inherited a state structure set up by the British, together with a western concept of architecture that acknowledged westward-looking professionals only. This attitude is still with us. Today after the passage of more than half a century, the country in general and the city in particular, has not been able to release itself from western concepts and still follows them in every walk of life. At the time of independence, Pakistan had few urban centres—Karachi being the most promising among them. The architectural forms that formulated the urban fabric of the city followed the pre-existing set of principles of early/mixed colonial styles. This is evident in the National Bank of India Building (State Bank of Pakistan Library), among the first eminent public buildings of the city in a typical simplified colonial style. As far as administrative buildings are concerned, the city inherited key edifices from the British regime that continue to serve till now.

During this period, public architecture attained premier importance, as Karachi was the state capital with all the state administration and activities that varied from trade to commerce. It was also a busy industrial production centre. These forces collectively intensified the construction activity in the city. The private sector also contributed and office buildings, such as Qamar House and Mohammadi House, came up. Their architectural input was of a comparatively liberal and modern nature. At a later stage, Dawood Centre, near PIDC House, displayed the same modern outlook. The high grade of mannerism that is practiced in these buildings was of tremendous importance, since it showed a turning point in the built forms, both in functional typology as well as aesthetic character. Cinemas and theatres started coming up early on, though their extrovert vocabulary was feeble and did not leave a lasting impression. Recreational and hotel architecture slowly emerged.

The Beach Luxury Hotel is another example of this mannered trend, as was domestic architecture in its very initial stages. The pattern of Bombay—styled facades became common. Some vivid examples still exist in Shikarpur Colony and Muslimabad. This trend started to change when houses inspired by the works of Frank Lloyd Wright and Paul Rudolph began to be built. Houses showing Wright's innovation appeared in the new housing localities of the elite, e.g., PECHS, KDA Scheme No.1 and Muhammad Ali Society. It should be noted that the rest of the city remained at a mediocre level of development, without the appropriate professional input.

The decade of the sixties produced some articulate changes. Philosophies nurtured in the west made a forceful entry in the local context. The building of the Karachi Arts Council can be cited as among the first examples of a Corbusian style. The amazing simplicity of the complex had not been seen before; the contextual relevance of its built forms reinforced the character of its facades as well as interiors. Thus, such buildings were able to perform much broader functions. An office complex was not simply a building but symbolized the status of the organization behind it, such examples also served as a landmark in the surrounding urbanscape. Habib Bank Plaza is an admirable example of

Marriot Hotel.

typologies—new treatments of facades with extravagant glass usage, and huge neon publicity signs were devised. The interiors were changed; a central open space was created to congregate the shoppers and disperse them according to the diverse attractions of the shops. To facilitate movement, lifts, fancy elevators and escalators became a common feature. However, individual shops preserved the traditional cubical form, wherever it was possible to do so.

Towards the later part of the seventies and in the beginning of the eighties, new architectural trends appeared. Four and five star hotels furnished the city with a true cosmopolitan appearance and linked it to the international transit circuit. The southern cordon of the city provides evidence of this relatively new-born trend; Regent Plaza (former Taj Mahal Hotel), Karachi Sheraton Hotel and Towers (built at the site of the Palace Hotel), Avari Towers, Mehran, Marriot and Plaza International to name a few specific examples.

Alongside refinements in architectural input, variant ideas based on foreign and local styles continued to influence the fabric of the city, and mould it in relation to contemporary aspirations. Prestigious buildings such as the Aga Khan Hospital, and the Finance and Trade Centre came up. Consequent changes in space usage, due to the vacillations of the business and financial markets, also produced a direct impact on specific buildings types. Cinemas and theatres were pulled down and replaced by shopping arcades, marking the failure and assumed success of two different commercial activities. Residential single family dwellings gave way to high-rise multi-storeyed apartment blocks or commercial complexes. A notable phenomenon that took the city by storm was the conversion of residential row type front houses into marriage halls. This

this genre, other prominent buildings followed the trend. Boldness of façade within a supportive scale frame that enabled it to show its depth of character continued to be built. Houses and house forms also underwent change. Increasing land values and growing market pressures produced a direct impact on plot sizes. Plot dimensions decreased considerably; however, the owner's demands for added facilities increased. Designs in straight lines bearing plain facades were an outcome of this decade. The best evidence can be witnessed in the early developed sectors of Federal B Area, that is Blocks 5, 6, 7 and 8, North Nazimabad Blocks A, B, C, D, F and H. The acquisition of durable goods, such as televisions, motor cars and other appliances created a need for their own proper spaces; TV lounges and car porches became household terms.

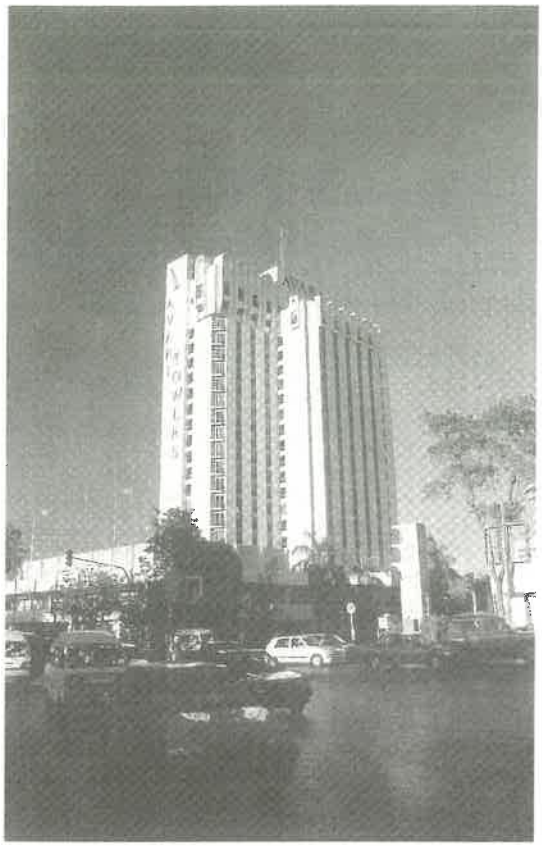
Monumental architecture, pertinent to its true definition, sprang up on the cityscape. The Quaid's Mausoleum was built justifying its placement in the city layout with axial linkage and scale/height considerations. Despite controversies over the design competition that eclipsed the final choice, the mausoleum is undoubtedly one of the strongest urban landmarks erected in the metropolis. By-laws and construction guidelines were prepared with respect to the sanctity of this important edifice. During this phase, the first well defined belt of industrial buildings began to appear on the urban landscape. Industrial buildings were; and are still, mostly built in an ad-hoc fashion without considerations of functionality and aesthetics. The industrial zones of Landhi-Korangi, Sindh Industrial Trading Estate, West Wharf and the Industrial Zone in Federal 'B' Area are mediocre shack-like structures. As the population of Karachi continued to grow, additions to the commercial, recreational and administrative fabric also proceeded, giving a diversified outlook to the city.

A turning point in the architectural trend, initiated during the early seventies, as an alternative to houses. Although this system was first introduced in the 1960s in Government Employees Housing at Federal Capital Area flats and Martin Quarters, they were not able to attract the private sector till the next decade. They finally took off as economically viable dwelling units. The concentration of apartment high-rises remained in Federal 'B' area, along the Super Highway and its neighbourhoods. Al-Azam Square was among the first range of lower middle income apartments. This trend gained pace with time to accommodate the increasing populace and to provide opportunities for sound investments. The quality of the buildings continued to improve and the typology of decorative elements diversified, as did the ratio of the covered area. Another change was the introduction of multi-storeyed shopping plazas. Previously linear shopping was considered to be the norm, with shopping districts performing proportionally to the needs of the people. However, increasing urban intensity and dispersion of shopping/ commercial functions to various outer business districts created the feasibility of 'walk-up' shopping within walking distance. Shopping complexes came up in Saddar; later they spread to sub-metropolitan areas of Tariq Road, Bahadurabad and North Nazimabad. The architectural function of these building types was altogether different from prevailing

allowed large scale real estate ventures to flourish. Many international relators can also be found developing joint projects with the local counter parts. The element of comfort is now facilitated by the use of multi-ranged technologies, gadgets and products. The ideas and images related to the built environment are largely developed to show the gloss and glamour which has become the ultimate aspiration of all and sundry. However, the building solutions available for low income groups are extremely limited and evolved without the input of corresponding professionals. For this reason, we find that the quality of life and the corresponding built environment for low income groups is degrading fast. In Karachi, one finds many visible architectural developments in the above respect. A significant trend is the patchwork of corporate spaces in the existing buildings. In this phenomenon, the corporate enterprises choose a portion of an existing building and transform it according to their requirements. Building interiors, partial external elevation, signage and décor, partial landscape and even invisible infrastructure are changed to suit to the corporate standards. Hundreds of buildings in Karachi have been given such partial face lifts. The usual clients include mobile telephone franchises, banks, leasing companies, fast food chains, boutiques and the like. This approach has created melodramatic effects on the built fabric. One finds a shining, well articulated and bright looking built space in on an other wise shabby and run down structure. In other words, the contrasts in input and appearance of buildings is too sharp to be ignored.

Automobile show rooms of very gaudy kinds are another visible trend that has consolidated itself during the past few years. Major arteries where the elite and upper middle income groups move have been converted into outlets for glowing auto show rooms. Khalid Bin Waleed Road, Shahrah-e-Faisal, Rashid Minhas Road, Korangi Road

Teen Talwar roundabout.



Avari Towers Hotel.

change spread to most parts of the city but the major concentration can be seen along Rashid Minhas Road, Super Highway and North Nazimabad. Another peculiar trend is the utilization of commercial or residential plots for private medical centres. Such structures have a typical built form; the first level is used to receive patients and comprises specialized consultancy clinics, the upper storeys, sometimes as many as fourteen, are used for ancillary hospital functions. One can regard these trends as ultimate offshoots of the changing socio-economic emphasis that prevails in the city.

The rise of the new millennium gave many changes and new dimensions to the architectural fabric of the city. Corporate head offices were a distinct addition to the built environment. Head office building of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) on main Sir Shah Suleman Road was a dominant structure designed and supervised by eminent architect Habib Fida Ali. In his simple, straight lined yet ornate approach, he has designed the exterior in fair face concrete. The elegant grey cement appearance provides a weather proof effect which not only makes the building efficient but also contextually relevant. The intelligent use of glass enhances the optimum use of daylight, making the building energy efficient. ABN-Amro Building by another eminent architect Yasmeen Lari on Sir Abdullah Haroon Road is a fine addition to the city architecture. Aesthetically balanced use of granite and glass has given the assemblage a smart appearance. Pakistani architecture also saw some new records. The tallest building—MCB Towers was finally completed and inaugurated. Designed by Arshad Shahid Abdulla, the building comprises a balance of glass fenestration and facing material with subtle grooves and niches. The building acts as a dominating edifice of its kind.

Besides the strength and vigour of corporate sector, especially multi-nationals, other influences are also showing reflections in the buildings and spaces created in the recent past. Flexibilities in the financial markets and new products in leasing/loaning have

Mehran Hotel.

Pearl Continental Hotel.

Sheraton Hotel, built on the site of the Palace Hotel.

and New M.A. Jinnah Road in Karachi are a few examples where this phenomenon is visible. Glass facaded structures with optimum use of glass, outlandish building elements and powerful illumination are a typical configuration of this mundane assemblage. The architects who have designed such structures have been pinned down by their demanding clients to increase the capacity and visibility of their merchandise. The trend is growing fast. As the automobiles are being marketed and acquired with most flexible conditions, the car show rooms are likely to grow in number, though not in quality.

Condominiums and multi-storeyed apartment projects are on the rise. Due to international partnerships, the foreign entrepreneurs have brought the formulae and images for new avenues of luxuries and comforts corresponding to a global life style. Exotic verdures, gymnasia, restaurants, fitness centres, swimming pools and club houses are a few of the accessory spaces routinely incorporated in the real estate development projects. This rising trend has taken over the prize locations such as beach fronts, highway edges and affluent neighbourhoods. The ecological considerations are compromised against the prospective revenue gains. Some of the projects are already underway while several others are undergoing different phases of development. Quality of design has become subservient to the marketing. Much of this retrospect shows that the architectural stride is all lucrative and shall continue to flourish at least in the near future.

Before analyzing the ebb and flow of different architectural trends, a primary axiom has to be established. The professional architectural input in proportion to the net magnitude of the built environment is less than one per cent even today. Therefore, the role of the architect in constructing the new city of Karachi has been minimal. There are four

The proportion of trained professionals in the field of architecture was way below the required standards. To meet the urgent needs of Karachi there was no option but to rely heavily on the services of foreign architects, who were entrusted with some of the largest and most prestigious projects in the city and which, consequently, had considerable influence on its contemporary architecture. The work of these foreign architects had a mixed impact. Some of this architecture was responsive to the local environment, and went beyond mere imitations of academic conventions of the modern movement, such as the various complexes of Karachi University by the French architect, Echochard. In his campus buildings, louvers and perforated fins are inserted to safeguard the interior space from the sun—kept as disciplinary elements of facades modified and incorporated to provide thermal comfort. He also contributed to the campus master plan which has been violated by university authorities. Similarly William Perry produced buildings that rationally followed a well defined system. Dawood Centre also depicts the efficacy of identical sun protection on each façade, and in a consistent manner. In the Institute of Business Administration, his detailing of beam and column joints seems almost symbolic of timber rather than of reinforced concrete, and presents an overall integrated design solution to a campus building complex. Another forceful architectural expression can be seen in the form of the Aga Khan Hospital designed by Payettee Associates, in association with local consultants. The hospital leaves a strong impression on the contemporary architecture of Karachi. From subtle building details such as wind towers to the space

Residence of Amirali Qamar. Photograph courtesy Amirali Qamar. Source: 100+1 Pakistani Architects and Their Own Houses by Mukhtar Husain.

Residence of Danish Azar Zuby. Photograph courtesy Danish Azar Zuby. Source: 100+1 Pakistani Architects and Their Own Houses by Mukhtar Husain.

distinct categories of architects that have played important roles in shaping the built up environment in their respective areas. The first category comprises the architects trained during the pre-independence period. Most of them belonged to the J.J. School of Art in Bombay (now Mumbai), while several received further education abroad, usually in England. In the early 1950s, this small group of qualified architects came together to work towards obtaining official recognition of their profession. It was important to keep the direction of architectural development within proper guidelines. In unfavourable circumstances, they were still able to produce examples of architecture that were worth emulating, distinguishing their output from the works of non-professionals. Prominent names of the first generation of architects include M.A. Ahed, Tajudding Bhamani, Minoo Mistry, Pir Muhammad, R.S. Rustomjee, H.H. Khan, Mehdi Ali Mirza, Peter Powell, Abdul Hussain Thariani and Pirzada A.R. Siddiqui and Syed Sibtain Sadiq Naqvi. Their contribution to the profession has been outstanding.

The next generation comprised architects who had studied abroad and had practical working experience with international architectural firms. They introduced new trends into the local frame of reference. Trends like the modern movement, functionalism and Corbusianism were infused for the first time into the country, especially in Karachi. Architects Yasmeen Lari, Habib Fida Ali, Navaid Husain, Hasanuddin Khan, Ejaz Ahed and Arif Hasan are some of the renowned names of this generation. Building examples from their work include Burmah Shell Head Office by Habib Fida Ali, PIA Squash Complex by Unit 4 (Navaid Hussain and Hasanuddin Khan), early residences by Yasmeen Lari, and Hasan Square by Arif Hasan, all demonstrating profoundly impressionistic shades of the styles they had absorbed during their experience abroad. One can consider that by virtue of these architects, Karachi was able to be linked to the international architectural network.

Residence of Tariq Alexander Qaiser. Photograph courtesy Tariq Alexander Qaiser. Source: 100+1 Pakistani Architects and Their Own Houses by Mukhtar Husain.

Detail. Residence of Tariq Alexander Qaiser.

Residence of Parvezul Haq Ansari. Photograph courtesy Parvezul Haq Ansari. Source: 100+1 Pakistani Architects and Their Own Houses by Mukhtar Husain.

utilization in the exteriors, the hospital complex has enveloped the indigenous spirit into the contemporary architectural form with the functional elements still intact.

At present, numerous private architectural concerns, partnerships and collaborations are working in this field. Most of these architects qualified abroad and tend to follow one or the other school of practice in western architecture. Amongst them foremost mention must be made of Arshad Shahid Abdulla. Predominantly followers of post-modern impressionism, their designed buildings depict serene facades, well monitored finishes and a profound manipulation of internal spaces. PIC Towers by Ahed Associates have added yet another example by treating the facades of a high rise with pure traditional elements from Sindh. Yasmeen Lari's Finance and Trade Centre has been at the centre of criticism by architectural critics for a long period. This building comprises multi-elemental implications derived from various styles, but the entity that out rightly diminishes all other aspects of the building is its cosmetic look of a costly gem rather than that of a public use building complex. Comparing it to the KDA Civic Centre designed by Rizki & Company, one can get a relative idea of the degree of practical significance that a design can impart to a building which an extravagant material cannot do. The distortion of plain-trix continuity of fabric along I.I. Chundrigar Road by Bank Al Falah (former BCCI) Building (designed by architect Saleem Ahmed) is another example. Some of the young and mid career professionals, who have done useful work, include Yawar Jilani, Mehboob Khan, Tariq A. Qaiser, Hanif Daud, Naheed Mashooqullah, Tariq Hasan and many others.

Alongside the established professional architects exists a second-rate group that is responsible for the majority of built-up development in the city. Such practitioners are mere signatories for contractors/developers and are not qualified to take up large scale jobs. A large percentage of commercial fabric has been generated by these jerry-builders. Their products can be observed along Shahrah-e-Faisal, Tariq Road, University Road, partially I.I. Chundrigar Road and its by-streets. A majority of the city's public, office and commercial buildings are mediocre, copied from examples shown in international magazines and periodicals. The architecture of the city sub-centres is an example of this shortcoming. The office cum-commercial complexes built along North Nazimabad, Babar Market in Landhi and different phases of Defence Housing Authority are typical examples of this so-called 'architecture'.

The morphological impact of the squatter settlements which comprise more than forty per cent of the total housing stock in Karachi overshadows the entire urban landscape. This transient populist form of architecture is shaped by the people themselves and has its own aesthetic and construction logic. No less than half of the urban housing of the city is constructed in this manner.

Architects can be generally regarded as the main formulators of the architectural trends of a city. During the time of its emergence as a metropolis, Karachi was extremely short of architects and this gave rise to an era of extensive practice by the handful of architects then working in town. They can be regarded as the responsible creators of Karachi, turning imagination into concrete. Initial developments of Saddar, the central business

A private residence in a newer Karachi neighbourhood.

Residence of Ayla and Asim Raza.
Photograph courtesy Ayla and Asim Raza.
Source: 100+1 Pakistani Architects and Their Own Houses by Mukhtar Husain.

In has been forcefully stated that an architectural trend is 'elite-borne'. This statement bears considerable weight as far as domestic architecture is concerned. The client possesses every right to shape his abode according to his desires. However, in public architecture this may not be true. As can be observed in Karachi, the in-practice paradigms of state directly interfere in the formulation of architectural trends. The seventies saw a liberal government and marvellous hotels, bustling restaurants, elite clubs, lavish night clubs, casinos, and pent houses came up. This trend came to a sudden halt with the new government which had an entirely different outlook towards life for its subjects. Under its regime a wave of Islamization swept across the country. Numerous mosques built on new and old sites, and public and commercial buildings began to show symbolic Islamic motifs. The subsequent regimes continued this confused policy. The rise of clubs and other places of liberal recreation and entertainment reflects the approach of the present regime to paint a soft image of the country.

Postmodernism hits Karachi.

It should be understood that architecture represents the actualities that a society possesses. The curves are clearly dependant on trends that take place in the cultural or socio-economic systems. However, when the population is divided into those that are aware/unaware, and literate/illiterate, the intensity of an architectural trend shrinks. As one descends from higher to lower degrees of awareness, the masses accept or are made to accept whatever is given by the trend-setters. This phenomenon spirals downwards in society with a gradual decrease in its vocabularic intensity. This can be observed with the help of examples—in an affluent locality the town house concept is angular facades, pitched roofs and Manglore tiles, the same trend is replicated in the mid-level localities on a smaller and more limited scale. This establishes an indirect relationship between architect and the non-paying client. Such replications are not restricted to house forms, they can be found in public and commercial buildings as well. The usage of mullioned exposed glass on outer facades was introduced by architects of the first grade, and on some of the best edifices. It has been copied in buildings in informal and lower income settlements without the formal input of the architect.

The Aga Khan University Hospital.

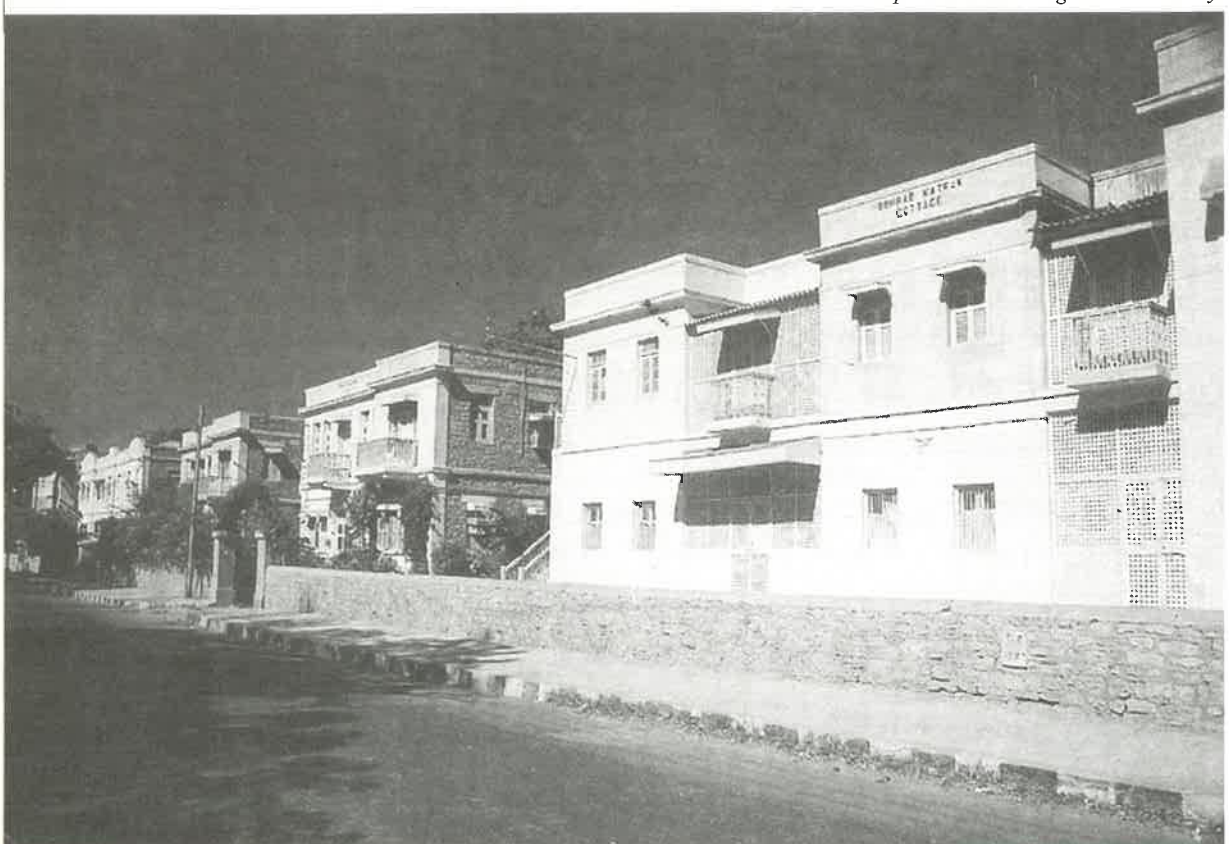
district and linkages, prove this fact to a great extent. Parallel construction activity sponsored by the government, semi-government, and public agencies, outrightly refused the inclusion of private architects, engineers, and apprentices for their projects. True, Pakistan's Public Works Department had the pride of having Mehdi Ali Mirza and Khawaja Zahiruddin on its team but their involvement was not spread to all aspects of its work. Government buildings, in most cases, do not display or attain proper architectural performance standards.

Opinion holds that society is responsible for their cities because it inflicts its influence on its architects. According to this opinion, the architect produces what society demands—his/her power of influencing the clientele is very limited. Within these parameters, how successful has the architect been in contributing qualitatively to the inputs of the clients, in particular, and generally to the metropolis? Unfortunately, in the majority of cases, the results have been disappointing. Architects cannot be relieved of their complicity, they are supposed to act as directional leaders for trends. This is not only valid for the 'architecture created by architects' but also for the imitators who follow. In the light of the words of Mehdi Ali Mirza, 'just anything written is not literature, anything built is not architecture'. Therefore, this 'architecture' becomes the responsibility of all architects who are equipped and trained to set the guidelines on a proper course.

To conclude this account of present day architectural trends in Karachi, it can be said that architectural progression appears to be in a more promising state, compared to the immediate era after independence. Whereas there exist various constraints that demand practical efforts from the professional architects and allied personnel, the primary recognition that the term 'Architecture' needed to firmly germinate itself has been attained. One key factor that can play a vital role in the acceleration of this process would be to increase the awareness of the masses. However, poor literacy rates, current civic upheavals, and narrow-minded investment directives concerned with profit, make this an almost unattainable solution. On an optimistic note, one may conclude that if architects and other related professionals will try to comprehend the broader socio-economic realities of the context they live and practice in, positive changes can occur. After all, it is always a small group of like-minded people that paves the way for the first step towards the betterment of society.

Middle income apartment buildings.

Apartment buildings in Parsi colony.



NINE

THE LITERARY SCENE—ENGLISH I

TARIQ RAHMAN

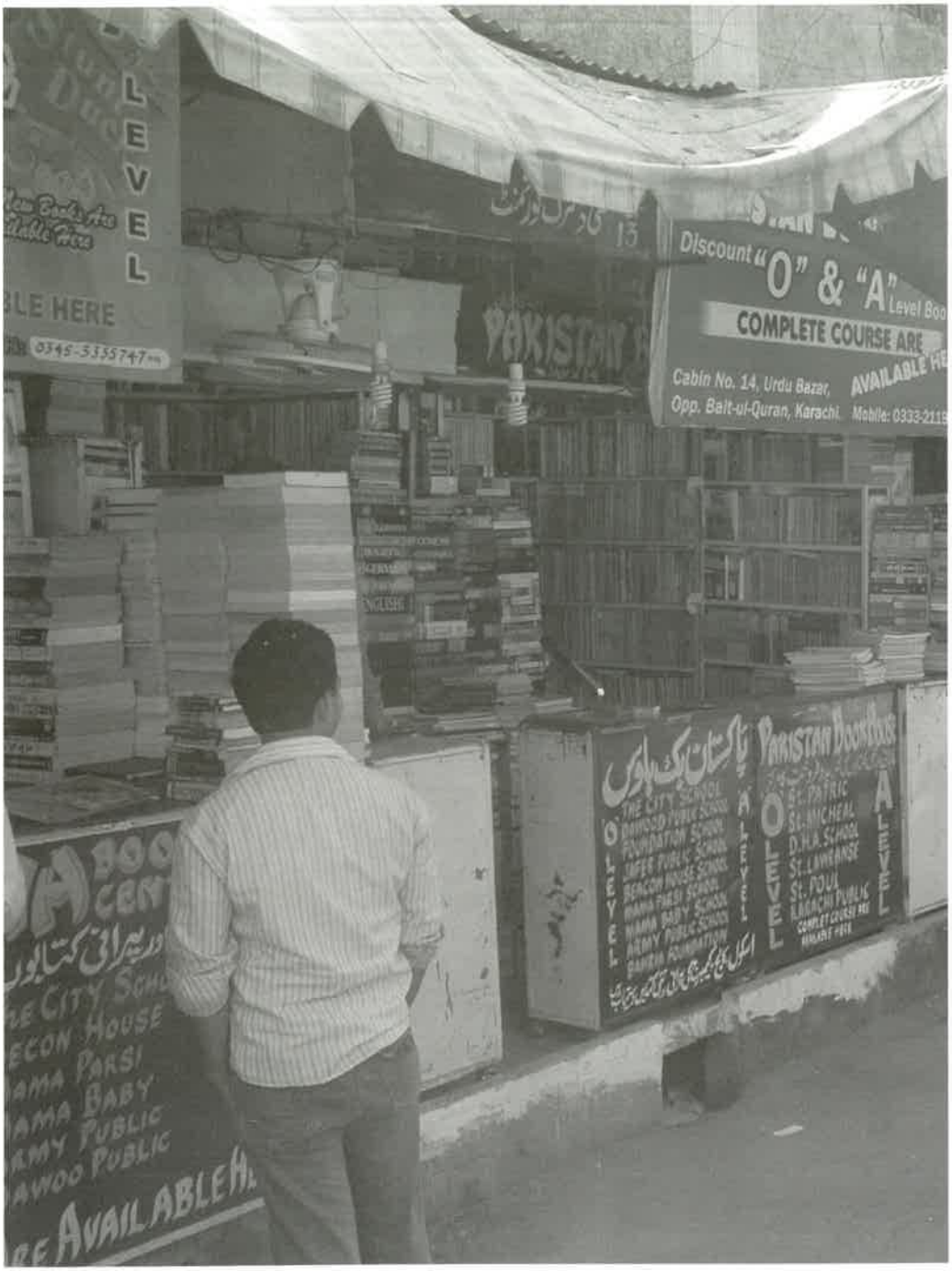
When Pakistan emerged on the map of the world, the areas comprising West Pakistan changed. But where this change was most manifest—almost like a magical transformation—was the city of Karachi. Let our first witness of change be the census reports of 1941 and 1951.

Whereas in 1941 Muslims were only 42 per cent of the total population of the city; in 1951 they were 96 per cent.[1] So, Karachi became an almost wholly Muslim City. This brought about a complete change in the culture, the essential character of the city. For the most part the new Muslims who had come to Karachi were Urdu-speaking immigrants—called *mohajirs*—from northern India. Indeed, about 57.55 per cent of the total population of Karachi—the majority was Urdu-speaking in 1951.[2]

These *mohajirs* were different from the Sindhis, Balochis, Gujratis, Sikhs, and Hindus who lived in Karachi before 1947. Their literacy rate was 23.4 per cent whereas it was only 13.2 per cent for Sindh as a whole;[3] they were more urbanized; they depended on employment for a living. In short, in Hamza Alavi's terms, they were predominantly a 'salariat',[4] though in time their less educated members also went into business. At that time however, the educated *mohajirs* were generally either employed or, as was often the case, in search of employment.

The *mohajirs* had reached Pakistan after the trauma of the Muslim, non-Muslim riots about which much literature has been produced. Most of it is, of course, in Urdu but some is in English too.[5]

However, in this article we shall ignore this vast literature in order to focus upon the experiences of the *mohajirs* in Karachi.



Bookshops in Urdu Bazar.

The ordinariness is symbolically significant for it is the ordinary man who is cursed by all sorts of arbitrary forces in Pakistan. In this case the forces are medieval, symbolized by Shah Baba, a spiritual guide—as well as modern.

The latter are symbolized by the narrator, the I, who is from a rich family and whose friend Shamsie, a leftist, is killed in Zahid's house. In this clash of the medieval and the modern, Zahid, the ordinary man, suffers the most. His wife and daughter are abducted, for beauty is conquered by the powerful in a lawless land, and in the end he is left mutilated, violated and desecrated. The symbol which stands for the politics of the country is the skeleton of a boy in whose orifices insects go in and out freely. Zahid sees this[14] and becomes like this: 'the flies that kept moving in and out of Zahid's living holes seemed happy enough with him'.[15]

Such is the macabre message of the novel, but then the situation of the ordinary man was, and remains, desperate.

Mirza Raquib Beg's novel, too, is about the ordinary person. But his Jamshed Ali, alias Jimmy, is a beer-quaffing, English-using Anglicized naval officer. In his middle class Urdu-speaking home, an atmosphere of genteel poverty prevailed but the values were Indian Muslim (Mughal). In his social circle, on the other hand, the values were westernized—one said 'hello', drank, shook women's hands and talked of the 'figures' of girls. Caught among these two worlds—a condition common to many young people educated in English-medium schools or working in elitist institutions Jimmy tries to get married. But at this point let us stop and consider the other side of the coin—the life of people like Zameenzad's Zahid.

In this novel such a man is Anwar Khan, a servant in the house of Jimmy's European friends. His daughter Kulsoom, too, is supposed to get married. But while Jimmy is leaving the arrangements of his marriage to his mother, in Kulsoom's case it is her father who controls her destiny. While Jimmy dates the beautiful Anita, Kulsoom hardly leaves her home without a chaperone. While Jimmy's Karachi comprises posh hotels, beaches and beautiful drawing rooms, Kulsoom's is made of squalid little houses in narrow alleys. But the two worlds impinge upon one another. When Jimmy and Anita's relationship breaks up they come back from the beach and 'the stench and ugliness at the last turning of Mauripur road was appalling'[16]—the world of the ordinary citizen is appalling! And in this 'appalling' world Kusloom lives her insecure life. But when she enters the world of the rich—indeed she is forced into it after having been abducted, she comes to a world which looks impressively grand and beautiful but which is appalling in its cruelty and exploitativeness. She has been brought to the big house to be raped but she escapes. The escape, however, is *deus ex machina* and quite incredible. And after this the novel becomes melodramatic as Jimmy eventually marries Kulsoom and vows never to 'indulge in any sort of unlawful sex' or drink alcohol.[17]

Surprising, there is not much literature in English about this highly significant experience of the *Mohajir* psyche. There is, however, a novel called *Refugee* (1974) by Linda and Khalid Shah.[6]

Khalid experienced the flight from India at the age of ten when, having fled from Aligarh, the family came to Bombay and sailed for Pakistan. Eventually 'by nightfall the ship had eased slowly into Karachi harbour'.[7] And now here they were in an alien city 'swollen to its very limits by the haunted faces of the homeless and destitute'.[8]

The rest of the novel captures the essence of life for the immigrants in those uncertain days of transition: the protagonist, Rehman, hunts desperately for a job and all he finds is manual labour. But in the quest for a new life a map of the city, the new city of refugees, emerges: *Phupi* Fatima's house on Martin Road; the officers of the bureaucracy; the crowded streets; an abundance of cheap labour—a condition of flux with human beings living through a quantum leap between an orderly agrarian existence to uncertain modernity. The rest of this novel is about the family's onward journey into the Punjab to work in the salt mines. The essence, however, is the experience of migration and of this Karachi is the symbol.

This aspect of Karachi is also the theme of M.A. Seljouk's short story *The Bandit*. The narrator begins the story with the words, 'I was living in the slums of Karachi then. The year was 1958...even the slums of Karachi looked like paradise to me. For here I was at least free.'[9]

The story then describes vividly the Karachi of 'tin shacks, tent-extensions, mudrooms... bursting with refugees looking for work'.[10]

In this Karachi of chaos and desperation a man takes to stealing and is killed by the servants of a rich man into whose house he breaks in. But this isolated incident does not make Karachi a city of violence. It is the city of desperation; of hectic activity; of the pursuit of money and respectability.

But there is another side to the city also—that of power, fabulous riches and corruption. There are two novels on these themes: Adam Zameenzad's *The 13th House* (1987) and Mirza Raquib Beg's *A Blossom in the Dust* (1992).[11]

Zameenzad, probably a *nom de plume* spent his childhood wandering along the eastern coast of Africa. He then went to live and work in Pakistan and now lives in England.[12]

His first novel is set in the lower middle class neighbourhoods of Karachi. The protagonist Zahid and his beautiful wife Jamila live in 'an ordinary house: the type that is always springing up somewhere in the numerous potpourious suburbs of Karachi since its continual expansion after the fateful birth of Pakistan.'[13]

> It is our conviction that it does not rain in Karachi. That it has never rained in Karachi. That it will never rain in Karachi. Everything in this city is anchored to this conviction.
>
> But when it rains, it does not just rain, it pours. Then there is much activity described as follows:
>
> The politicians emerge out of hibernation, charity workers start looking around for old blankets. Speeches are made, press statements are issued, civic leaders undertake tours of the city.[23]

This description has interesting parallels with Mooraj's description of a 'ten minute torrential downpour' in Karachi.[24]

Omar Kureishi's satire, in his own words, attempts 'to convey some of the frustration and some of the exasperation that is being felt by a lot of us'.[25]

To this frustration and its consequences we will come later. For the moment let us dwell a little more on the Karachi of the peaceful years.

In the fifties and sixties, Karachi was the centre of cultural activity in general. It was also the centre of poetry written in English. Ahmed Ali, who is famous for writing *Twilight in Delhi* (1943), a well-known novel about the downfall of the Muslim elite of Delhi, lived in that city.[26]

He was also a poet as were a number of other people. Most of these others were younger people linked with the Department of English at the University of Karachi. Syed Ali Ashraf edited *Venture* which gave the young poets a platform. The first anthology which was published was *First Voices* (1965) and this was followed by *The New Harmony* (1970); *Pieces of Eight* (1971) and *Wordfall* (1975).[27] The poets of Karachi were never in a numerical majority but Karachi itself was the centre of activities. However, Maki Kureishi, Ahmed Ali, Syed Ali Ashraf, and Masood Amjad Ali lived in Karachi. Later Kaleem Omar too settled down there. The point, however, is not the physical location of the poets, but the fact that most of these anthologies were published by the Oxford University Press, Karachi and it was that city which coordinated English-literary activities. The only rival to Karachi was Lahore, and later on what little was left of creative writing in English had no focal point not even in Islamabad where groups like the *Margalla Voices* held irregular poetry sessions.

This aspect of Karachi—the intellectual and cultural life—is mentioned in passing by many people, notably Anwer Mooraj. However, Nasir Ahmad Farooqi makes it a focal point in his novel *Faces of Love and Death* (1961), and it is mentioned (as a city in which one gets anything one desires) in *Snakes and Ladders* (1968). In both he describes the days of the early years of Pakistan when intellectual debates went on in the press and bureaucrat-intellectuals lorded it both in the drawing rooms and in the press. However, in the first novel, where Karachi gets wider coverage, the heroine, Annie (possibly Qurrat

But, however flawed the novel may be as a piece of art, it describes the city of Karachi in the fifties better than other works of fiction in English. Here, for instance, is a description of Nazimabad:

> The streets of Nazimabad were full of people in their colourful clothes, with varying headgear, ranging from thin muslin caps shaped like slices of melon to those made of velvet and fur. Intestines of sacrificed animals were strewn all over. Beggars, who had said their prayers earlier than the others now came out in hordes, seeking alms.

The colourfulness of Karachi comes out in a number of prose writings too. Anwer Mooraj, for instance, has captured the spirit of the life of the city in a number of articles in *Sand, Cacti and People* (1960), *Wild Strawberries* (1992) and *Harbour Lights* (1992).[18]

Mooraj's first book, *Sand, Cacti and People*, comprising small prose pieces, is mostly about Karachi. They are enjoyable because of their wit and clarity. Here, for instance, is a note on 'the cup that cheers',

> Tea is the most popular beverage in Karachi. Almost everybody drinks it. But unlike England where people work in between cups of tea, in Karachi the beverage is consumed before, during and after work.[19]

Whether it is speech-making, getting a haircut or commuting, chewing betel leaves (pan), or getting married, Mooraj has something delightfully witty to say about it. For instance in *Memories of Old Elphi* the city comes alive with its gramophone records, Greenwich Bookshop and the 'Manhattan soda fountain where boy met boy and sometimes girl'.[20]

In another article 'Amado Mio on Sundays' one learns of Bohri Bazaar where someone sold sherbet, and the author and his friends 'sampled every bottle of nectar that was arranged on the dusty shelves during the hot summer evenings'.[21]

Mooraj's command over English and his humour make his articles a treat. Laughter, after all, is always a part of life and so is the exuberance of youth. The Karachi of the fifties was, after all, not such a violent city as it is now and for the young—or at least those who were not completely destitute or ill it was a city of innocent fun, and a culture of diversity and tolerance.

In fact, one might say that Anwer Mooraj's humorous prose has succeeded in presenting us with the social history of Karachi just as Khalid Hassan had done for Lahore in *Scorecard* (1989).[22]

Other humorists such as Omar Kureishi have also used wit, humour and irony in their descriptions of life in Karachi. For instance, here are a few lines from an article on the bad drainage system of Karachi

been treated in fiction. Off and on a writer, like Kamal Jabbar, tells us that 'people in this city would use guns everyday'[30] but he does not use this fact to create a story. Unemployed young men are to be met with, to be sure, in Diana Storr's novels. In *Solar Dust* (1990), we are given a journalistic description of the city:

> Karachi had become the scene of gang crimes, dacoity, daylight robberies and bank hold-ups had taken on an ominous regular colour. Valuables and human life were no longer safe. The ethnic battles had created pockets of opportunists.[31]

But the description of a burglary and rape in a rich area of Karachi are merely sensational. Indeed, Diana Storr's novels use the formula of violence, action and sex to catch the readers' attention, which may create readable popular fiction but not the qualities one looks for in literary writing.

Aspects of life in the eighties in Karachi also come to us from unusual sources: a brief biographical essay by Hanif Kureishi—of the play *My Beautiful Laundrette* fame—and poems. Describing an upper-class party in Karachi, Kureishi tells us that he 'once walked into a host's bathroom to see the bath full of floating whisky bottles being soaked to remove the labels, a servant sitting on a stool serenely poking at them with a stick'.[32]

But, having made fun of the elite's hypocrisy, he says:

> The family scrutiny and criticism was difficult to take, as was all the bitching and gossip. But there was warmth and continuity for a large number of people; there was security and much love. Also there was a sense of duty and community—of people's lives genuinely being lived together, whether they liked each other or not that you did not get in London.[33]

But this upper-class life was under attack. Unemployed youths made gangs to rob individuals and business; poets wrote about fabulous riches cheek by jowl with abject poverty; and people like Abdus Sattar Edhi and Akhtar Hameed Khan tried to create a welfare state on their own. Being concerned with literature let us look at some of the poems of this period.

Let us first take the occasional poems by poets who generally write on other themes. In one such poem Ejaz Rahim says:

> Karachi, you have become a symbol
> of all our wasted words
> And still-born runes.[34]

In another poem, by Parveen Pasha,[35] we have the following haunting words:

> In the vast prescient ebbing-light
> in radiance of fading dust,
> horizons ringed with sorrow,
> an end—to end the endless

ul Ain Hyder of the *Aag ka Dariya* fame) operates the equivalent of a sophisticated Parisian salon of the eighteenth century. The bureaucrats and intellectuals surrounding her write in the leading newspapers and one of her cousins, Dr Alam Ali 'had studied with Harold Laski at the London School of Economics' and 'remained at heart a Fabian socialist'.[28]

People discussed Islam, socialism, Islamic-socialism and other fads. Although the Pakistani intelligentsia did, and even now does, try to walk a tightrope between the west and the east, modernity and tradition, these serious concerns are trivialized in the drawing room world of Faruki's novels. Even politics, which could have been given serious treatment, only becomes a side reference one can use for dating the events. In Mehr Nigar Masroor's novel *Shadows of Time*,[29] Karachi gets only a passing reference though Lahore is given detailed treatment. But Faruki's snobbery—his reference to intellectuals and their ideas without the necessary distancing and irony which should have gone with it—mars his novels even though they do portray an essential aspect of life in Karachi up to the sixties.

Surprisingly, there is very little response in fiction to the changes which took place in Karachi in the nineteen eighties and nineties. Even the language riots of January 1971 and July 1972, which contributed towards creating the *mohajir's* ethnic identity, have not

Department of English, Karachi University.

And no running
Cooking or drinking
Water in Korangi
Why is it
That there is
So much money, wealth
In Defence Housing Society
And so little money
In Korangi or Lyari
And why are
So many hands, eyes
Turned towards the heavens
When there is
So much sorrow, poverty
Down on this earth
In which we live
Our life[36]

And here is Omar Tarin's comment[37]

Urban warfare
Six more die
Karachi cries
Blown brains
And rapid fire rains
.....
Some still say
We are *quite well,* thank you,
And going to be an
Asian Tiger,
A stuffed one
I'm sure....

Such comments, however trenchant, are not enough to create a body of literature. Indeed, although some of the novels mentioned earlier have been published only recently, there is no significant delineation of life in Karachi after the rise of ethnic violence in the eighties—at least in English.

I cannot think of an explanation for this. Those who claim that great literature is born out of human anguish seem to be wrong. Indeed, it would appear that if the savagery is excessive, literature too is killed. And even if it were not; even if a great epic is born out of all the torture, all the dehumanization which the people of Karachi have endured in the past fifteen years; would it compensate them? I think not! Indeed, when it comes to real life one wishes that all the suffering there is should only be in the world of fiction. That of course, is a dream, but dreams are the stuff of literature, not bullets!

fear of morrows,
coppercalm gleam of the sea
a perverse hope for tranquillity;
where roads erase
where silence ends
the day *pounds:* fully armed
the lidless sun pours brilliance
on terraces of noon

Is this only dust, the taste of dust?

But in addition to such occasional poems, there is a collection of poems by Arif Viqar which is entitled *Karachi* (1983). In this it is not violence or ethnicity but class differences, or rather the injustice of the co-existence of great wealth with degrading poverty, which is the major theme. The Defence Housing Society is the symbol of fabulous riches while Lyari, Korangi and slums symbolize squalor. One representative poem is as follows:

Why is it
That there is
So much water
In the sea
In front of Korangi

A poetry reading session.

TEN

THE LITERARY SCENE—ENGLISH II*

NAVID SHAHZAD

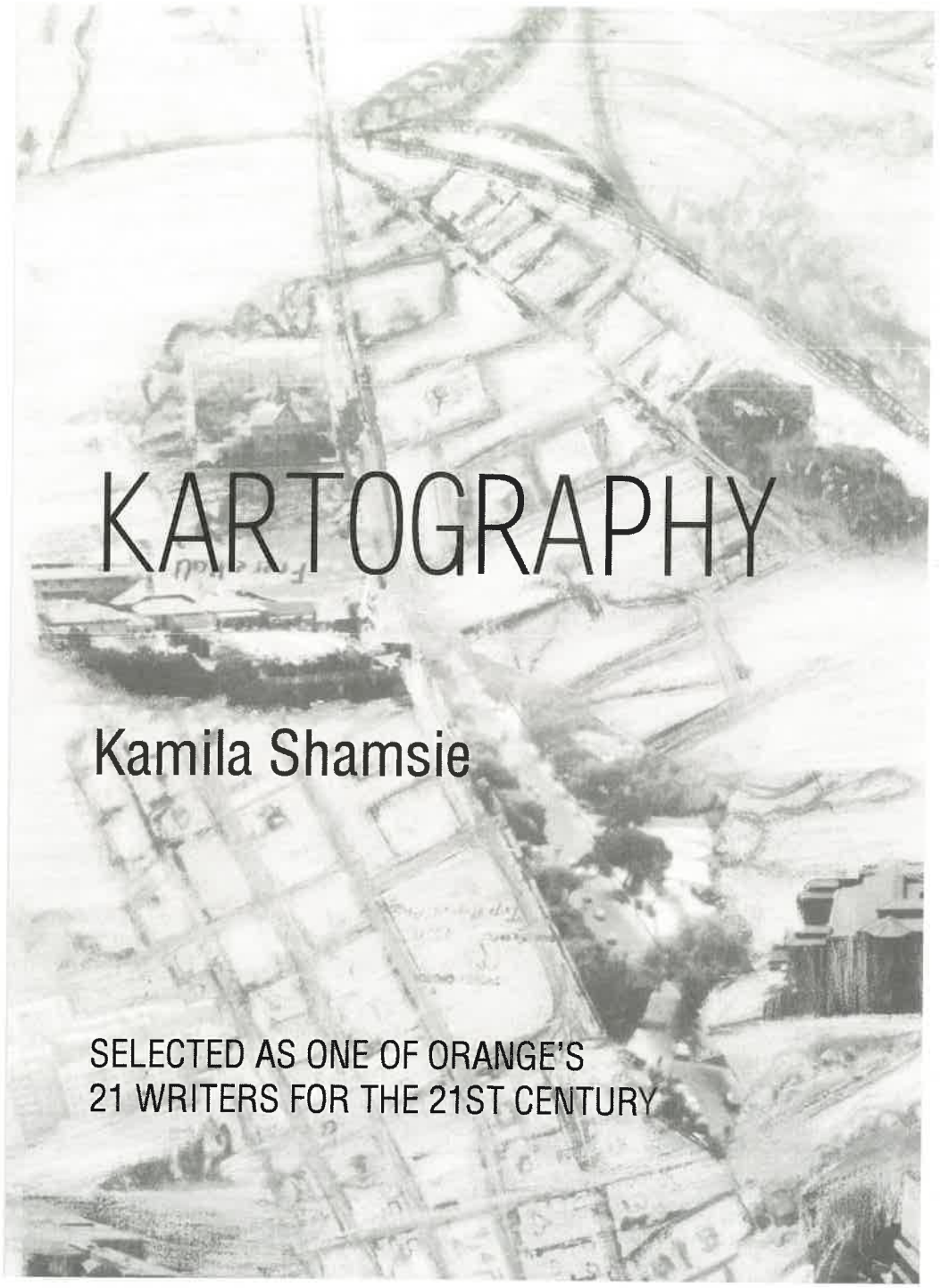
There is not much literature in English of the immigrant experience in Pakistan barring a novel called *Refugee* (1974) by Linda and Khalid Shah, which attempts to capture the essence of life for immigrants in those uncertain days of transition. The protagonist, Rehman, hunts desperately for a job but finds only manual labour available. The new and alien city of refugees is peopled with characters such as *Phuppi* Fatima and the officers of the bureaucracy silhouetted against a background of crowded streets; and an abundance of cheap labour which is 'swollen to its very limits by the haunted faces of the homeless and destitute.'[1]

Consequently, Karachi becomes a symbol of the human condition poised between a familiar (hence comforting) orderly agrarian existence and a future that appears increasingly uncertain. The theme finds a second voice in M.A. Seljouk's short story *The Bandit* as the narrator describes Karachi as a city of 'tin shacks, tent-extensions, mud rooms...bursting with refugees looking for work.'[2] Yet, despite the scenes of chaos and disorder perpetuated by a mass of teeming humanity that has reduced parts of the city to a ghetto, Seljouk's story vividly recaptures the sentiments that acted as the catalyst for the migrations. In the words of its narrator's opening lines: 'I was living in the slums of Karachi then. The year was 1958...even the slums of Karachi looked like paradise to me. For here I was at least free.'[3]

That freedom exacts a prohibitively expensive price is illustrated ironically as the burglar of the title breaks into a rich man's home and is, in a turnaround of events, killed by his servants. In these writings the city is portrayed as a melting pot for hectic activity; desperation and a relentless pursuit of money powdered over by a stamp of respectability which protects the powerful, the fabulously rich and the corrupt.

Adam Zameenzad's *The 13th House* (1987) and Mirza Raquib Beg's *A Blossom in the Dust* (1992)[4] reiterate a similar theme of ordinary men living ordinary lives. Zameenzad

* This chapter is a slightly revised version of Chapter 9. (Eds.)



A novel with Karachi as the protagonist.

strewn all over. Beggars, who had said their prayers earlier than the others now came out in hordes, seeking alms.'[9]

Yet, despite the squalor and the ugliness, Karachi in the fifties and sixties was the centre of cultural activity in general. It was also the centre of poetry written in English though most of the poets were linked with the Department of English at the University of Karachi. Ahmed Ali, academic, poet, short story writer, novelist of *Twilight in Delhi* (1943) fame lived in the city[10] as did Syed Ali Ashraf, editor of *Venture* which gave young poets a platform.

Urdu had had its godfathers in that writers such as Ahmed Ali spearheaded the Progressive Writers Movement whose manifesto was deeply influenced by the residual impact of the Russian Revolution. The Movement gathered momentum with the writings of luminaries such as Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Ahmed Nadeem Qasimi and Intezar Hussain with the result that by the twentieth century, Urdu literature had begun to be perceived as a viable medium for socio-political comment. English, on the other hand, carried a subterranean stigma in the psyche of the people only lately freed from the stranglehold of imperialism. Consequently, among all the languages spoken in Pakistan, English was and remains, a language spoken by a small percentage of people and written in, by an even smaller number.

This aspect of Karachi—the intellectual and cultural life—though mentioned in passing by novelists and poets becomes the focal point in Nasir Ahmad Farooqi's novels *Faces of Love and Death* (1961), and *Snakes and Ladders* (1968).[11] Both describe the days in the life of a young nation which practiced fierce intellectual debates without much reference to life lived outside elegant drawing rooms. In the first novel, where Karachi gets wider coverage, Farooqi's heroine, Annie (possibly Qurrat ul Ain Hyder of *Aag ka Dariya* fame) hosts the equivalent of a sophisticated Parisian salon of the eighteenth century. The urbane and sophisticated bureaucrats and intellectuals surrounding her belong to a world divorced from the mundane life of the city whose claim to fame rests on a studied air of intellectual snobbery as in the case of Annie's cousin, Dr Alam Ali who 'had studied with Harold Laski at the London School of Economics' and 'remained at heart a Fabian socialist.'[12]

Reminiscent of the ambience created in Eliot's *Lovesong of Alfred J. Prufrock,* the conversation at the salon encompasses a broad East-West canvass which includes Islam, socialism, Islamic-socialism and issues of tradition and modernity. Though Farooqi's novels do portray an essential aspect of life in Karachi up to the sixties; they remain seriously flawed works. Immensely influenced by the wave of Franco-centric intellectual discourse led by Sartre but unlike the master, the author practices a sneering contempt towards objects of his own creation and fails to distance himself from his characters. The result is predictable. Instead of what could have been an ironic portrait of the intellectual-cum-bureaucrat straddling the national landscape; the narratives fizzle out

spent his childhood wandering along the eastern coast of Africa, lived and worked in Pakistan, and finally settled in England.[5] *The 13th House*, a first novel, is set in the lower middle class neighbourhoods of Karachi where Zahid and his beautiful wife Jamila live in 'an ordinary house: the type that is always springing up somewhere in the numerous potpourious suburbs of Karachi since its continual expansion after the fateful birth of Pakistan'.[6]

The ordinariness is symbolically significant for it is in the lives of ordinary men that we find the polarised forces of medievalism and modernity stretched to breaking point. Shah Baba, a spiritual guide—symbolizes the orthodoxy of the past while the narrator represents a post independence sensibility.

In a first person narrative, the novel revisits the popular perception that even in a 'free' country, it is the ordinary man who suffers the most. Nothing is sacred in a lawless land; and even 'beauty' is dishonoured by the powerful. Possibly the strongest, though grisliest political statement *The 13th House* makes is in the description of insects scurrying in and out of the orifices of a boy's skeletal remains—a metaphor for life desecrated, for promises unfulfilled, for the brutality suffered by the spirit.

Mirza Raquib Beg's novel is also about the ordinary person. But his Jamshed Ali, alias Jimmy, is a beer-quaffing, English-speaking Anglicized naval officer whose middle class Urdu-speaking home reeks of genteel poverty propped up by a value code that is distinctly Indian Muslim in thought and practice. By contrast, his social circle warms to more westernized values—one says 'hello', drinks, shakes women's hands and talks of the 'figures' of girls. Trapped between these two worlds—a condition common to many young people educated in English-medium schools or working in elitist institutions; Jimmy tries to settle into domesticity. While he allows his mother to take charge; Jimmy's situation is contrasted with the parallel narrative of Kulsoom whose father, a domestic servant, controls her destiny. The individual worlds of both characters impinge upon one another to forge a landscape of posh hotels, wide open beaches and luxurious drawing rooms contrasted with the shadowy world of squalid shacks lined along dark narrow alleys.

In a melodramatic *volte face* Jimmy ends up rescuing Kulsoom from her appalling circumstances, and marries her, vowing never to 'indulge in any sort of unlawful sex'[7] or drink alcohol. Flawed though the novel is in its naive attempt to 'save' Kulsoom—the blossom in the dust—from rape and violence perpetuated by a soulless social divide, Beg's writing paints a credible portrait of the city of Karachi in the fifties which could easily pass for present day sounds and sights: 'the stench and ugliness at the last turning of Mauripur road was appalling',[8] and 'the streets of Nazimabad were full of people in their colourful clothes, with varying headgear, ranging from thin muslin caps shaped like slices of melon to those made of velvet and fur. Intestines of sacrificed animals were

In another article 'Amado Mio on Sundays' one learns of Bohri Bazaar where someone sold sherbet, and the author and his friends 'sampled every bottle of nectar that was arranged on the dusty shelves during the hot summer evenings'.[21]

It is obvious that for those who were not completely destitute or ill, Karachi was a city of innocent fun, marked by a culture of diversity and tolerance. Mooraj's command over English and his humour make his articles a treat against the skyscape of a city that was far less violent than that perceived by Zameenzad or Beg. In effect, Anwer Mooraj's humorous prose presents a carefree, exuberant social history of Karachi just as Khalid Hassan had done for Lahore in *Scorecard*.[22]

Mooraj is not the only one who resorts to humour. Others such as Omar Kureishi also use wit, humour and irony in their descriptions of life in Karachi. The city's bad drainage system comes in for a sly comment with:

> It is our conviction that it does not rain in Karachi. That it has never rained in Karachi. That it will never rain in Karachi. Everything in this city is anchored to this conviction. But when it rains, it does not just rain, it pours'...as a result of which...
>
> ...The politicians emerge out of hibernation, charity workers start looking around for old blankets. Speeches are made, press statements are issued, civic leaders undertake tours of the city.[23]

How accurate Kureishi's description of events is, merits a comparison with Mooraj's description of a 'ten minute torrential downpour' in Karachi.[24]

But to anyone who has ever lived in Karachi, both are valid observations since the weather, like much of life is whimsical and unpredictable. Despite the fact that humour prevails in the writings of both, Kureishi's satire is more than a nostalgic recapturing of the past, attempting in his own words, 'to convey some of the frustration and some of the exasperation that is being felt by all of us.[25]

With so many writers tackling contemporary themes such as the search for self and national identity, it is surprising that despite the feelings of *angst* voiced by men of Kureishi's generation, there is very little fiction which mirrors the changes which took place in Karachi in the 1970s and early 80s. Even something as serious as the language riots of January 1971 and July 1972, which were a major contributor towards creating the ethnic identity of the *mohajir*, have been largely ignored in English fiction.

The later part of the last century however, saw a new generation of writers emerge on the literary scene for whom history was no longer synonymous with 1947. A group of women, young and older, appear to tell stories which explore a complex variety of domains ranging from the rich tapestry of their private selves to concepts of self and identity developed through education and exposure to the west.

in a personal diatribe vented against stereotypes of men and women that Farooqi obviously despised.

Though Muneeza Shamsie, editor of *Dragonfly in the Sun: An Anthology of Pakistani Writing in English* (1997)[13] while borrowing the title from one of his poems, rates Zulfikar Ghose's *The Murder of Aziz Khan* (1967)[14] as 'the first cohesive, modern English novel written by a writer of Pakistani origin', she marginalises a much earlier work in English. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided*[15] traces the saga of families during the birthing of the two nations, India and Pakistan. Unlike Shah Nawaz whose home in Lahore acted as the nucleus for the Muslim League's Women's Wing; Ghose though born in Sialkot, which became a large industrial city in latter day Pakistan, never lived in the country.

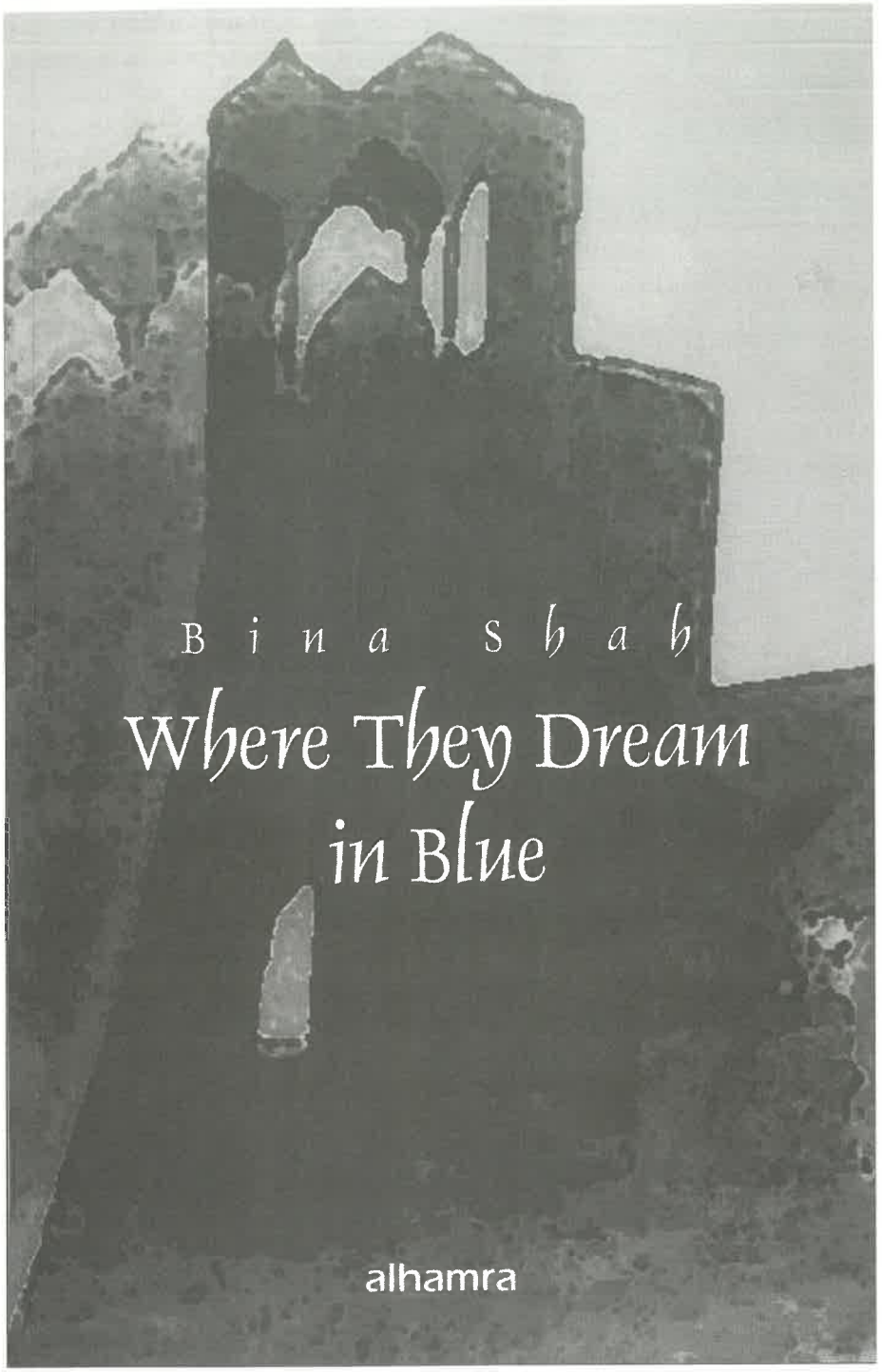
This posits several major questions about the 'identity' of writers. If physical presence is a prerequisite for a national identity, Ghose's inclusion in Shamsie's second anthology *Leaving Home: Towards a New Millennium*[16] opens up a host of wider issues; despite Ghose's own statement '...from my childhood, I've been forced into exile, a condition become so permanent that I can never have a homecoming: I've no nationalistic attachments to any country....'[17]

Yet another novel, written in English but published in India also frames its narrative against the tragic background of the Partition trauma: Mehr Nigar Masroor's novel *Shadows of Time*[18] tackles the story of three families through three generations complicated by a socio-political conflict emerging from the interaction between different communities. Masroor's narrative gives Karachi only a passing reference though Lahore is given detailed treatment.

A non-fiction attempt to capture the spirit of the 'city of lights' may be traced in a number of prose writings by Anwer Mooraj. In the earlier *Sand, Cacti and People* (1960) and the three decades later works: *Wild Strawberries* (1992) and *Harbour Lights* (1992).[19]

In stark contrast to the gut wrenching, grimmer portraits of the city in the works of Zameenzad and Beg; Mooraj's *Sand, Cacti and People*, comprising small prose pieces, is mostly about the every day details that life in the metropolis comprises of. Whether it is speech-making, getting a haircut or commuting, chewing betel leaves (*paan*), or getting married, Mooraj has something delightfully witty to say about it all. The vignettes are marked by a fine wit and clarity. On 'the cup that cheers', Mooraj writes:

> Tea is the most popular beverage in Karachi. Almost everybody drinks it. But unlike England where people work in between cups of tea, in Karachi the beverage is consumed before, during and after work.[20]



The first novel of the author of 'Animal Medicine'.

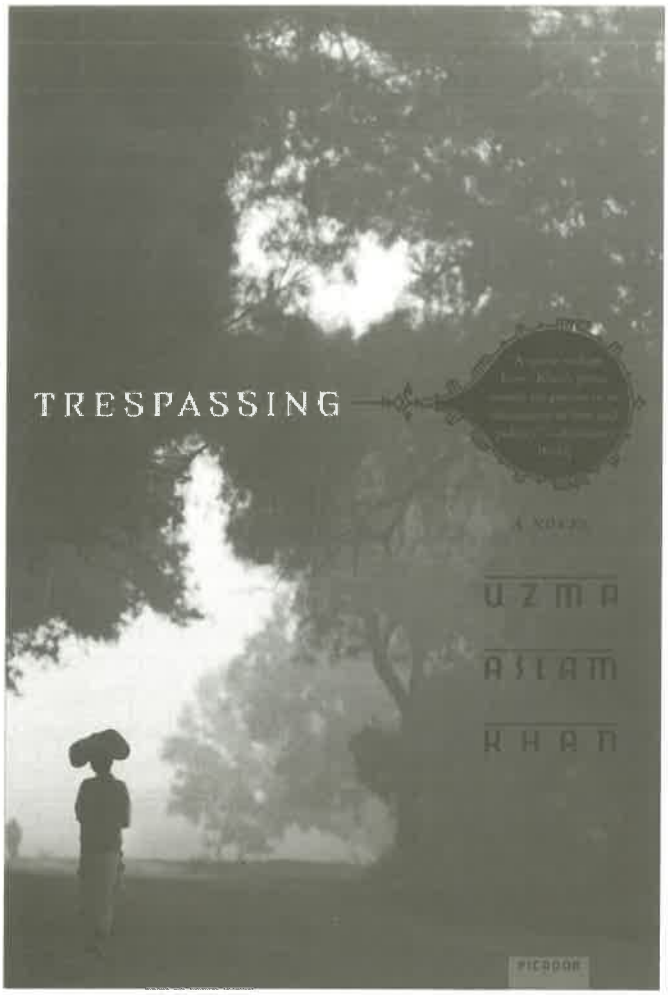
Kamila Shamsie, born in Karachi in 1973, and three novels under her belt by the time she was thirty; describes the English literary scene in Pakistan as 'sparse'. Shamsie's first novel *The City by the Sea*[26] was published in England and India, her second *Salt and Saffron*[27] found an even wider audience but she truly arrived on the literary map with *Kartography*[28] with the 'K' alluding to the geographical setting of the book. Poignant, wry and funny by turns, Shamsie says she was struck by the fact that 'anyone who is familiar with Karachi knows that it is impossible to find a decent map of the city'.[29] The narrative therefore focuses on a boy's attempt to chart a map of the metropolis, which was becoming more violent by the day. More than anything else, the protagonist in Shamsie's novel is none other than Karachi itself with all its contradictions and in the author's own words 'rather whimsical techniques of navigation...'[30] referring to the common practice of giving directions with reference to landmarks rather than streets. As in her other novels, Shamsie concerns herself with a privileged elite class of people from the 'right side of the Clifton Bridge'[31] paralleling the different socio-economic backgrounds of characters that pepper western narratives with their offensive 'white trash'[32] divides demarcated by train tracks.

Bina Shah adds her voice to that of Shamsie writing about a city both authors obviously love as they sorrow for it. Her first book, a collection of short stories called *Animal Medicine*[33] was followed by her first novel, *Where They Dream in Blue*[34] and a second *The 786 Cybernet Café* in which Shah paints an evocative portrait of a city where 'flats (are) like cages and balconies are enclosed by strips of metal and steel.'[35] It would not be entirely far-fetched to trace a metaphor in Jamal Tunio's dreams of setting up a café; particularly with 786 standing for the numerical code for *Bismillah* (in the name of God) for a nation's search for a cohesive identity since the similarities are too obvious to be ignored. Pakistan too, was created as a homeland for the subcontinent's Muslims and Jamal's plan for his future parallels the efforts of a post colonial people in search of a secure future.

As the years speed by, violence and the city become more than passing acquaintances. Karachi's woes being exacerbated in the wake of a gun running, drug and mafia culture resulting from the backlash of the war in neighbouring Afghanistan. Kamal Jabbar tells us that 'people in this city would use guns everyday'[36] though he does not feel the need to create a story. This violent portrait is lent additional support in Diana Storr's popular fiction such as *Solar Dust*:

> Karachi had become the scene of gang crimes, dacoity, daylight robberies and bank hold-ups had taken on an ominous regular colour. Valuables and human life were no longer safe. The ethnic battles had created pockets of opportunists.[37]

Aspects of life in the eighties in Karachi also seep through from the diaspora: in the shape of stories by women, as well as a brief biographical essay titled *The Rainbow Sign* by Hanif Kureishi. Describing an upper-class party in Karachi, Kureishi tells us that he



An eminently readable novel.

By the end of the last and beginning of the new millennium, the fact that women are increasingly orchestrating a search for their individual selves as they challenge patriarchal structures, reflect and fine tune new identities, is symptomatic of a struggle to liberate their own true voices. Of those living in Karachi and setting their stories in the city, Uzma Aslam Khan is a welcome addition to the ranks of accomplished writers. The painstakingly written *Trespassing*[46]—it took six years to write—was preceded by Khan's first novel *The Story of Noble Rot*.[47] For the reader, the hiatus between the two works during which Khan journeyed from a rather tortuous mode of expression in the earlier work towards the exquisite tapestry of the latter novel comes as a lyrical surprise. A densely packed narrative detailing the lives of Daanish the grieving son, Dia, cocooned within the strands of her mother's silk worms and Salaamat, the turtle watcher; the book, despite its sorrows and hints at mysteries, ends on a note of hope. The strength of Khan's craft lies in her ability to draw credible, human characters driven by their need to live life fully. The sea and the beach, the mulberry fattened worm, the nautilus and the turtle are the inheritors of a natural world contrasted with the man-made metropolis in which violent, displaced, anguished individuals trespass onto each other's territory with the regularity of a high tide. Khan's use of the pupa's lifecycle serves as the perfect metaphor for a rebirth—which her characters yearn for—in which even something as delicate as love can be a form of trespassing. Multi-strand narratives encompassing themes of homecoming and metamorphosis are woven with immense dexterity through the rich tapestry of a city at war with itself, making *Trespassing* eminently readable.

'once walked into a host's bathroom to see the bath full of floating whisky bottles being soaked to remove the labels, a servant sitting on a stool serenely poking at them with a stick'.[38]

But, having made fun of the elite's hypocrisy, he says:

> The family scrutiny and criticism was difficult to take, as was all the bitching and gossip. But there was warmth and continuity for a large number of people; there was security and much love. Also there was a sense of duty and community-of people's lives genuinely being lived together, whether they liked each other or not that you did not get in London.[39]

By the late nineties, women had carved a niche for themselves as is amply evidenced by the number of writers; ex patriots and natives who chose English as a medium of expression. Maniza Naqvi's *Mass Transit*[40] is set in Karachi and follows twin themes of migration and arrivals through the lives of three families. The author who lives in Washington DC has recently finished her third novel. Torture, betrayal, loss, love and despair are the focal themes in *Stay with Me*[41] while *On Air*[42] is a brilliant reworking of the 'agony aunt' syndrome that the American media laps up on radio and TV.

Of these, Talat Abbasi with her *Bitter Gourd and Other Stories*[43] strikes out on a more egalitarian mode writing about Pakistanis at home and abroad. Abbasi's narrative canvass of seventeen stories sketches encounters between poor relative and upper class, native and immigrant, servant and master, man and wife struggling to free themselves from the tentacles of class, gender and ingrained culture. The seemingly detached, deceptive simplicity of Abbasi's prose is the perfect instrument for the contrasts she creates between the lives of men and women in Karachi and those who live in New York, where she now lives. Though the stories read unevenly, some 'truer' than others; these have been written by a woman who has wisely chosen to shun the subcontinental propensity for cultural excesses. From the anguished mother of '*Mirage*'[44] institutionalising her mentally challenged child to the exquisite sensitivity of an ageing daughter being foisted on a younger relative in '*Sari Petticoats*'[45] Abbasi's craft is evidenced by the lack of sentimentality and self pity that her characters display. That this is a quality shared by the author herself in her minimalist narratives (none of the stories run for more than a few pages) evidences the clever practice of an elusive, non presence which allows the reader space to empathise fully with the protagonists.

That the city by the sea owes more than a little to the mother and daughter Muneeza and Kamila, is to state the obvious. Between the two Shamsies, (and an octogenarian grandmother!) the English literary scene is richer by novels and anthologies which explore the local terrain as they challenge stereotypes of women. The worlds that they inhabit and the characters they create and the voices they liberate, in turn, construct unique spaces for writers in English.

This may be directly related to a growing perception that Karachi is a city in its death throes. The stench of neglect and decay that mark the present day metropolis serve as a constant reference point for the once dreamt of magical city that promised freedom and success. That the rites of passage may not be witnessed only by those who occupy the city spaces is testified to by the land-locked poet:

> Karachi is the only city I know
> where barbers solicit like whores, and papayas
> are considered fruit...
>
> There is no weather here as we northerners
> understand weather...
>
> No, I do not think I shall come to terms
> with this grey place. It shortens my breath
> and pinches my eyes...[53]

The city may be discoloured or even drained of colour by the co-existence of great wealth with degrading poverty, but as long as the writer continues to tell his stories, the poet spins his web; there will be an occasional rainbow in the sky. Muneeza Shamsie's anthology *And the World Changed: Contemporary Stories by Pakistani Women*[54] introduces as many as twenty-five new and old writers. Creative writing modules at private universities encourage younger writers to lend their voices to the chorus awaiting publication—even as Karachi becomes:

> ...a symbol
> of all our wasted words
> And still-born runes.[55]

Sadly, for the vast majority of Pakistanis, the writer—male or female, versifier or novelist—remains irrelevant. The 'invisibility' of women whether in the labour force or in the field of creative endeavour compounds the issue which snowballs with the further marginalization of the writer choosing English as a medium. The fact remains that the language serves as the ultimate divider, separating the masses from an influential and, an intellectual minority.

The impact of a slim volume of poetry in English called *First Voices*[48] edited by Shahid Hosain and published from Lahore, which featured six poets from Pakistan and opened up a platform for poetic expression therefore remained marginal. Yet, despite Hosain's telling description of the practice of poetry in English as working 'through a vacuum through which no voice travels', the first anthology nevertheless, quietly helped pioneer a strong South Asian cultural voice and set the stage for a spate of publications from Karachi. *The New Harmony,*[49] *Pieces of Eight,*[50] and *Wordfall*[51] followed, though not necessarily with the same cultural resonance. Ahmed Ali's poetry for instance, used Chinese imagery as its dominant metaphor while the sophisticated, multilingual Shahid Suhrawardy's work echoed with the whisperings of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot.

Nevertheless, the poets of Karachi though never in a numerical majority still managed to create a centre for cultural and literary activities. Maki Kureishi, Ahmed Ali, Syed Ali Ashraf, and Masood Amjad Ali who lived in Karachi were joined by Kaleem Omar who moved from Lahore. It was not so much the proximity or physical location of the poets, but the fact that most of the anthologies featuring these writers were published by the Oxford University Press, Karachi, resulting in what has happily evolved into a permanent springboard for English literary publications.

The intellectual life of the city continued to grow in tiny whirlpools encouraged by events such as the multi-lingual 'Mixed Voices' evenings at Adrian Husain's home in Karachi. A typical gathering would include poets Salman Tarik Kureshi, Nadir Hussein, Kaleem Omar, the exciting Maki Kureishi and the host as recalled by Muneeza Shamsie in *A Personal Odyssey.*[52]

Maki Kureishi.

Similarly, translated literature is yet another unexplored territory. This is particularly important since Karachi has featured prominently in the works of many Pakistani poets, not all of whom were based in the city. Much like the debris laden tides that wash its beaches and retreat, leaving behind tell tale signs of neglect—the city with all its contradictions, violence and air of seediness solicits responses that range from the evocative to the grim and from the sad to the lyrical by turn.

ELEVEN

THE LITERARY SCENE—URDU

MUHAMMAD ALI SIDDIQUI

Karachi has been a literary centre of Sindhi literature ever since its elevation to the administrative seat of Sindh. But like every cosmopolitan city of the subcontinent, Karachi has always had a group of Urdu writers struggling to make their presence felt.

One need not go into the genesis of Urdu poetry in Sindh. A well-known scholar of Sindhi language and literature, Dr N.A. Baloch, has traced its origin to the time of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1592–1666), and he has marshalled arguments and a 300-year old *Kalam* of some poets to prove his point.

Some Sindhi poets like Sachal Sarmast (AD 1739–1829) and Mir Abdul Husain Sanghi (AD 1851–1924), a Talpur prince who was kept in forced exile in Calcutta, have important collections of Urdu poetry to their credit. During the British period, many a Sindhi scholar enjoyed facility of expression in Urdu as well. They may not be called bilingual, but it is a fact that a branch of Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu was opened in the twenties in Karachi and, under its auspices, Urdu *mushairas* were held on a regular basis.

In an article published in the July 1937 issue of the quarterly magazine, *Urdu*, there appeared the names of some important Urdu poets of Sindh. They are Pir Baksh Asar, Sher Ali Khan Asad, Afzal Ghulam Hussain Asad, Makhdum Muhammad Moin, Bairagi Tasleem, Munshi Paras Ram Birbal Mushtari, Syed Fazail Ali Begaid, Dhanpat Rai Baikas, Jafar Ali Be Nawa, Muhammad Zaman Habib, Ghulam Mohammad Khan Khair, Makhdum Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, Mian Muhammad Shakirani Zahid, Mir Mahmud Rizvi Sabir, Muhammad Yusuf Khan Zaheer, Syed Ziauddin Zia, Qazi Abdul Qadir, Qazi Ghulam Ali Jafri, Mir Sher Ali Qaney, Makhdum Abdul Karim Karam, Syed Ghulam Muhammad Hashmi Gada, Mir Ghulam Mustafa Mehzoon, Mohsinuddin Shirazi, Seth Muhammad Ismail Maghmum, Munshi Muhammad Munir, Mir Subedar Khan, Mir Ebdul Mulk Ghaziuddin Khan, Nizam, Saadullah Ansari, Wali Muhammad Wali, and William Burwaite William.

Baba-e-Urdu Maulvi Abdul Haq.

The literature of partition denotes an unusual experience. For most it is more or less similar to the eighteenth century *Shehr Ashob,* a literary form which decried the oppression of city life. This theme would develop with the growth of urbanization. The feelings of bitterness, pessimism and ennui became the warp and woof of some writers' works. Others burst into a euphoric hysteria of sorts and they thought the birth of Pakistan had given them a Muslim homeland—a substitute for the lost glory of Muslim India. They could not adjust to the high-handed administration which replaced the British. Hence a clash of political cultures was inevitable.[3]

Three schools of literature made their presence felt among Urdu writers of Karachi in the late 1940s. The Progressive School, the Traditional School and the Modern School, and it is interesting to observe that the same stratification obtains even today.

Karachi has made a great contribution to Urdu literature in various genres. The city attracted writers of all persuasions in the late 1940s, and it is quite interesting to go through some of the names. They are Seemab Akbarabadi, Arzoo Lucknavi, Behzad Lucknavi, Akhtar Husain Raipuri, Maulvi Abdul Haq, Qazi Muhammad Akhtar Junagadhi, Mirza Muhammad Saeed, Prof. Abdul Aziz Memon, Dr Ishtiaque Hussain Qureshi, Shahid Ahmed Dehalvi, Raziq-ul-Khairi, Sadiq-ul-Khairi, Rais Amrohvi, Syed Muhammad Taqi, Arsh Taimuri, Tabish Dehalvi, Yousuf Bokhari, Fazal Haq Quraishi, Jalil Kidwai, Mumtaz Hasan, Qurratul Ain Hyder, M. Hadi Husain, Mumtaz Husain, Nihal Seoharvi, Adeeb Saharanpuri, Nazar Hyderabadi, Mahirul Qadri, Hadi Machli Shehri, Raghib Moradabadi, Agha Abdul Hameed, Abul Khair Kashfi, Akhtar Ansari Akbarabadi, Saleem Ahmed, Jamiluddin Aali, Altaf Gauhar, Iqbal Safipuri, Mehshar Badayuni, Aijaz ul Haq Quddusi, Ibrahim Jalees, Tehseen Sarwari, Abdul Raoof Urooj, Zaheen Shah Taji, Z.A. Bukhari, Iram Lucknavi, Khwaja Moinuddin, Aley Raza, Aziz Hamid Madani, Mulla Wahidi, Mubarak Husain Shamim, Syed Muhammad Jafri, Zareef Jublepuri, Habibullah Khan Ghazanfar, Kh. Aashkar Husain, S.A. Zeba, Saba Akbarabadi, Dr Ahsan Faruqi, and Prof. Mujtaba Husain.

The preceding list comprises writers who were already well-known when they arrived in their adopted country. A decade or so later, a new crop of Urdu writers appeared on the scene and they also impressed lovers of literature with their works.

They were Salim Ahmed, Shamim Ahmed, Aslam Farrukhi, Farman Fatehpuri, Jamil Jalibi, Habib Jalib, Athar Nafees, Asad Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Ali Siddiqui, Jamiluddin Aali, Anjum Aazmi, Nigar Sehbai, Obaidullah Aleem, Saqi Faruqi, Shahid Ishqi, Hasan Abid, Wahid Bashir, Qamar Sahiri, and John Elia whose *Shayad* has achieved popularity. In order to have a bird's eye view of the contribution made by Urdu writers of Karachi let us begin with fiction. Subsequently, we will take up poetry, criticism and humour.

Such an impressive array of names, published in the year Sindh secured separation from Bombay Presidency, is enough to show that Karachi was an important centre of Urdu literature even ten years before independence.

Karachi was a city of some half a million people when Pakistan came into being. The Gujaratis and Rajasthanis formed the second largest segment after the indigenous population. Punjabis and Pathans also lived here, along with a small pocket of Urdu-speaking people. The partition of the subcontinent brought about a change in the demographic complexion of the city. The incoming refugees from India replaced the out-going Hindu population of Karachi. Of the city's 1951 population of one million, over 600,000 were refugees from India.[1] In fact, most of the towns of West Pakistan came to receive a substantial number of refugees[2] and the social fabric of Pakistani society acquired a new factor which could be termed 'the migrant factor.' In areas where this factor was insignificant, compared to the indigenous population, it became part of the local mosaic. However, in some areas like urban Sindh, it did not have to contend with the immediate need to assimilate with the indigenous population, because the migrants were in a majority.

The status of Urdu as the national language also fostered a feeling of self-sufficiency, and much of the present day ethnic character of the politics of urban Sindh, comprising Karachi, Hyderabad, and Mirpur Khas—owes its genesis to the fact that Karachi, being the capital of the newly born nation, became for obvious reasons the home of the government servants, and their kith and kin who had opted for Pakistan. Urdu became the most widely spoken language of Karachi by 1951. And naturally, Karachi appeared on the scene as an important centre of Urdu language and literature.

The major category of migrants comprised those who were uprooted in the communal riots in India and they set their eyes on the 'promised national home'.

The list given above includes Muslim, Hindu, and Christian poets and shows that the appeal of Urdu poetry transcended the religious divide. Some of the poets mentioned were accomplished figures.

As a corollary to Karachi becoming the centre of litterateurs from all over British India, it was a natural spectacle to see intellectuals grappling with the problems which the *hijrat* (migration) posed. It is obvious that the bulk of the refugee population could not be settled in evacuee homes and lands. Some had to live the ghetto life, similar to the chaotic conditions existing now in some of the *katchi abadis* of Karachi inhabited by mostly workers from the Punjab and NWFP.

The Urdu writers of Karachi did not belong to any single school of thought. They brought their own schools of thought with them. Most of them portrayed mixed feelings of rootlessness and disenchantment with the prevalent situation. Some could not come to terms with the sudden change that came into their life.

Her novelette *Seeta Haran* is a sympathetic study of the great culture of Sindh. Her novelette *Housing Society* is a candid criticism of those *mohajir* elements who were indulging in the loot of evacuee homes, and were busy constructing new homes in Karachi through unscrupulous means. Perhaps this is the first candid work on the subject. Her novel *Aag Ka Darya*, written in 1959, is the most important work written in Urdu fiction so far. A novel which covers India's past and present—right from the Vedic period to the emergence of Pakistan. Qurratul Ain Hyder returned to India after *Aag Ka Darya* and created monuments of Urdu fiction there. It could be easily said of her that she provided a turning point in Urdu fiction. She died in 2007.

Another writer who enriched Urdu fiction is Aziz Ahmed. His novel *Aisi Bulandi Aisi Pasti*, is a full-length account of extreme decadence and depravity of the Hyderabad aristocracy.[4]

He studies the whole of society in the grip of the worst type of depravity. His novels *Aag* and *Gurez* are also important works. There are two collections of his short stories, *Raqs-e-Natamam* and *Bekar din Bekar Raten*. He migrated to Britain and wrote outstanding books on the Muslim community of the subcontinent. He spent his last days in Canada.

The other important novelist from Karachi was Shaukat Siddiqui whose novel, *Khuda Ki Basti*, is based on the *katchi abadis* of Karachi. Dealing with the seamy side of the socially downtrodden who are consequentially crime-prone, this novel on Karachi could very well be representative of any urban centre bursting at the seams. This work shows how a city, left to its fate, comes to acquire an inhuman character. It contains, however, a ray of hope which is the organized effort to right the various wrongs being perpetrated by unscrupulous characters. This novel, single-handedly raised the level of realism in Urdu fiction.

Other works which could be mentioned in this context are Razia Fasih Ahmed's *Aabla pa* and *Laho Laho Zanjir*, Syed Anwar's *Ek Aur Somnath*, Ahsan Farooqui's *Sangam*, and Ikram Barelvi's *Lawa* and *Pule-e-Sarat*, and Umrao Tariq's *Ma'toob*.

THE SHORT STORY

Karachi has also played a commendable role in the development of the Urdu short story. Some of the stories written after partition by Qurratul Ain Hyder, Zamiruddin Ahmed, Ibnul Hasan, and Ibne Saeed heralded a new sensibility.

It could be said that the traditional style of story writing was on the wane and that western writers had come to acquire the distinct status of 'tutelage'. The English departments in Pakistani universities had became 'clearing houses' of western influences and the university professors, a good number of them having a natural tendency of no more sitting in judgement over the works of others, presented themselves as writers as well. There was in evidence a certain claim that only writers who had a command over

FICTION

The only prominent writer who used to contribute to Urdu literary journals from Karachi in pre-partition days was Mahmuda Rizvia, whose daughter, Rasheeda Rizvia, later wrote some beautiful short stories and novels. From amongst those who migrated to Karachi, there were quite a few important writers whose literary output was quite impressive. Some of the fiction writers who helped Karachi become an important literary centre in this field were Ghulam Abbas, Aziz Ahmed, Abul Fazal Siddiqui, Akhtar Husain Raipuri, Jalil Kidwai, Zamiruddin Ahmed, Muhammad Ahsan Farooqui, Fazal Haq Quraishi, Mirza Haider Dehalvi, Ibnul Hasan, Ibne Saeed (M.H. Askari), and Nasir Shamsi.

Some of the above mentioned writers enjoyed also subcontinental fame. Shahid Ahmed Dehalvi editor of *Saqi*, Delhi, brought out his magazine from Karachi. Other important editors such as Raziq-ul-Khairi, whose monthly *Ismat* had played a very important role in awakening Muslim women of the subcontinent through fiction and educative reading material, also made Karachi his home followed by Sehba Lucknavi, who brought out the monthly *Afkar* from Karachi. *Afkar* is now defunct but played a memorable role and enjoys the reputation of being the vehicle of liberal and progressive literature. Mulla Wahidi also became a Karachiite. His inimitable prose was popular throughout the subcontinent. He wrote some memorable works in Karachi, namely *Mere Zamane Ki Dilli* followed by Shahid Ahmed Dehalvi's *Ujra Dayar*.

The uprooted writers of Delhi, the capital of Muslim and British India, generated so much nostalgia about the historic city that a great deal of it went on reverberating and still survives. Some writers continue to write about the 'good old days'. These works gave birth to reminiscing, and other writers meandered along familiar paths down their respective memory lanes. A lot of nostalgia similar to the one generated by the East European writers of the United States, such as Isaac Bashevis Singer, was produced.

Not before long a new generation of writers came along and Karachi became the focal point of their creative expression. Qurratul Ain Hyder had her beginnings as a writer in India, contributing to Shahid Ahmed Dehalvi's *Saqi* and other literary magazines, but her real career began in Karachi. She seems to have devoted her attention to the pangs of partition. Her first novel *Mere Bhi Sanam Khane*, completed in Karachi, is the first ever 'modern' Urdu novel which made full use of the techniques of contemporary Western novelists. She used the techniques of creative monologue, association of ideas, montage and flash-back. This novel portrays the fast dwindling feudal class of Oudh. She writes about why the custodians of Oudh culture, migrated to distant lands of a different political culture to face untold humiliation. Another novel *Safina-e-Gham-i-Dil* was written in 1953. This novel could be termed an extension of the first novel. It is more or less a biographical work written on her famous father, Sajjad Hyder Yaldram; perhaps the first effort of its kind in Urdu.

Urooj, Sehba Akhtar, Jalil Kidwai, Nazar Hyderabadi, Raghib Muradabadi, Ibne Insha, Majeed Lahori, Zaheen Shah Taji, Bahar Koti, Z.A. Bokhari, Himayat Ali Shair, Sehba Lucknavi, Shabnam Roomani, Sarshar Siddiqui, Shahid Ishqi, Qamar Hashmi, Syed Muhammad Jafri, Habibullah Ghazanfar, Mustafa Zaidi, Khalid Alig, Rahman Kiani, Mahir-ul-Qadri, Nigar Sehbai, Shahid Naqvi, Habib Jalib, Anjum Azmi, Ahmed Hamdani, Wahid Bashir, Qamar Sahiri, and Karrar Noori.

There was another young group soon after, which registered its presence on the landscape of Karachi's poetry. They are Fahmida Riaz, John Elia, Obaidullah Alim, Farid Jawed, Sahar Ansari, Naseer Turabi, Hasan Abidi, Sarwat Husain, Ather Siddiqui, and Anwar Shaoor.

The poets enumerated in the preceding passage do not constitute a complete list. A conscious effort has, however, been made not to leave out important names in all the age-groups.

The Karachi poets, like other poets of the country, belonged to different schools of thought, such as the Progressive School, the Halqa or Modern School and the Traditional School, including the poets who subscribed to Islamic ideology.

The birth of Pakistan had generated a kind of euphoria in the majority of poets. Some were carried away by the very emotion that the dream of Pakistan had, at long last, come true. Some thought that the politicians had created a mess and were insensitive to people's sufferings. Some poets went to the extent that they subscribed to the idea that Pakistan obtained freedom only in name. According to them, power had changed hands from the white sahibs to the brown sahibs. Generally, the progressive writers and poets had borne the brunt of the government's rough handling.

The early years of Pakistan saw curbs on the freedom of the press and the first two years witnessed the suppression of the press on a large scale.[5] It may be attributed to a lack of tolerance on the part of the dissenters. Perhaps it denoted the beginning of the manifestations that authoritarianism was on the way to becoming the characteristic outlook of the ruling elite, and a pliant bureaucracy agreed to work as its willing tool. The notion that the Islamic State of Pakistan was bedevilled by many internal and external threats led to erecting barriers to the functioning of the fourth estate. The liberals and progressives abounded in the fields of literature and journalism, and they became sitting ducks to the reactionary politicians, who wanted the implementation of Islam which the government professed to promote and implement.

The people of East Pakistan did not subscribe to the language policy of the Muslim League and they began to feel as if they were a colony of West Pakistan. And in West Pakistan, the elections in NWFP, the Punjab and Sindh alienated the intellectuals and dissenting politicians. The formation of One-Unit in 1955 created a great deal of dissatisfaction and mistrust in the smaller provinces. East Pakistan also took it as a ploy to deny them a majority in the Lower House.

English could write criticism and fiction. Poetry was not excluded from this dictum and we witnessed a time when writers, not having English literature as their background, were playing second fiddle to the English-background writers of Urdu.

Most of the novelists were basically short story writers. We see very few novels up to 1958 for the simple reason that a newly born country which was busy creating a state structure' for itself—including a federal capital and a provincial capital at Dhaka—couldn't provide its writers, some of whom were serving the government in different capacities, enough time and patience to try out the form of the novel which needed a whole society to be successfully portrayed. The short story, on the other hand, could look at a slice of life and any aspect of a character or event. Even a monologue could provide a semblance of a short story to give the readers a feel of the kind of tension which the writer is busy negotiating for eventual release.

As regards the other short story writers of Karachi, the most important authors who immediately come to mind are Muhammad Hasan Askari, who came in the 1950s, and Hajira Masroor, who came in the 1960s. All of them have contributed a great deal, and it is interesting to note that in the first two decades Karachi's short story writers have been in the forefront of the Urdu short story, even though some notable writers belonged to the north.

It is only after 1958 that we see a new crop of short story writers: Asad Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Umar Memon, Ghazi Salahuddin, Khalida Shafi, Rashida Rizvi, Umrao Tariq, Nazrul Hasan Siddiqui, Nasim Durrani, Firdous Hyder, Afsar Azar, Naim Aarvi, Mehmood Wajid Hashmi, and Sultan Jamil Nasim. The latest crop of short story writers comprises Ali Haider Malik, Zahida Hina, Asif Aslam Farrukhi, Nasir Baghdadi, Shamshad Ahmed, Saghir Malal, and Azra Abbas.

POETRY

Most of the writers who settled in Karachi, soon after partition were, of course, poets. Poetry has been the main vehicle of our literary tradition since the beginnings of our literature. The situation has changed somewhat, but even today the ratio of poets to prose-writers is heavily in favour of the former.

Karachi was fortunate in having celebrities such as Arzoo Lucknavi, Seemab Akbarabadi, Irum Lucknawi, Behzad Lucknavi, Hafeez Jullundhari, Saba Akbarabadi, Hafeez Hoshiarpuri, A.D. Azhar, M. Hadi Husain, Jalil Kidwai, Syed Aley Raza, Rais Amrohvi, Soz Shehjahanpuri, and Tabish Dehalvi as its post independence citizens.

The second line of poets comprised Mehshar Badayuni, Jamiluddin Aali, Salim Ahmed, Aziz Hamid Madani, and Akhtar Ansari Akbarabadi. Not before long, in the late 1950s, there was a new line-up of poets such as Zia Jullundhari, Hameed Naseem, Abdul Raoof

CRITICISM

Among the critics who soon after partition made Karachi their home, were Akhtar Husain Raipuri, Aziz Ahmed, Ahmed Ali, Mumtaz Husain, Ahsan Faruqi and Mujtaba Husain. Some other writers wrote critiques or appreciations but they did so by way of research articles. Maulvi Abdul Haq, crusading for Urdu's status for over thirty years in 1947, wrote scores of prefaces and introductory articles to Anjuman's publications. Yet he cannot strictly be called a critic. The other critics were Shaukat Sabzwari, Shanul Haq Haqqi, Yusuf Bukhari, Qudrat Naqvi, Muslim Zia, Tehseen Sarwari, Abdul Qayyum, Ghazanfar, and Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

During 1947–57 few works of criticism were produced. Most notable among them were *Adab aur Shaur* by Mumtaz Husain, *Tehzib-o-Tehrir* by Mujtaba Husain and *Insan aur Admi* by Muhammad Hasan Askari. The Progressive Writers Association (PWA) was declared a cultural front of the Communist Party of Pakistan and banned in 1954. It is, however, needless to say that the majority of the Urdu writers in the 1950s had progressive leanings and they had, as their ideological adversaries, the exponents of Halqa-i-Arbab-i-Zauq.

The Halqa writers started their journey soon after the founding of the Anjuman Taraqqui Pasand Musanaffin in Lucknow in 1936, which had among its supporters such stalwarts as Munshi Prem Chand, Maulvi Abdul Haq, Jawaharlal Nehru, Allama Iqbal, Zaheer Kashmiri, Taseer, Sajjad Zaheer, Akhtar Husain Raipuri, Ahmed Ali, S. Sibte Hasan, Dr Abdul Aleem Nami, Ali Sardar Jafri, Majnoon Gorakhpuri, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and many others. Miraji, who could be considered the leading light of the Halqa-i-Arbab-i-Zauq, was an active progressive writer upto 1943. But he found to his dismay that the progressive's primacy of content over form, and that too an abiding sympathy for the underdog, was a non-literary concern. He felt that it was not economics which was the key factor in reaching out to the true meaning of human life. Miraji thought, and so did the Halqa writers, that economics was not the only determinant. For him sexual motivation also played a vital role. This was an obvious influence of Freud. The progressives took a U-turn against Freud and all those writings which titillated the senses.

Most of the progressive writers accepted the decision with a pinch of salt. They thought that it was not proper to follow a lead which came from elsewhere. Pluralism is the essence of democracy and the Progressive Writers' Association which claimed to be democratic should not have acted arbitrarily. Soon after partition the decision to expel Askari, Mumtaz Shereen, Manto, Shafiqur Rahman and Taseer was taken during the Progressive Writers' meeting in 1949. This was a controversial decision and remains so even today.

Halqa writers were mostly government servants, and thought the Halqa's abhorrence of politics didn't make them suspect for the government of the day. The progressives were, in comparison, mostly free agents and therefore could go to extremes. From amongst the senior critics, Dr Akhtar Husain Raipuri and Aziz Ahmed didn't offer much criticism

The above scenario spurred the progressives to write protest poetry and anyone who has studied the Urdu poetry of the first decade of Pakistan will not fail to find a protest wave coursing through the works of the senior as well as junior progressives. They invited the ire of the government in 1954 when the Progressive Writers Association was declared a political organization, along with the Communist Party of Pakistan. The year 1954 saw Pakistan becoming an American ally. The Dulles Doctrine was in the ascendant and the police, reared in colonial times, didn't require any adjustment in its role towards the Progressives. Their commitment to the state was suspect. Progressive ideology being a forbidden fruit attracted all those who believed in the right of dissent.

The 1958 Martial Law was equally hostile to the Progressives as to the militant Islamists such as the followers of the Jamat-i-Islami and Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam. Both regarded Martial Law as a negation of Islam. Field Marshal Ayub Khan's hostile remarks against the syllabi of *Deeni Madressahs* (religious schools) incurred their wrath. Ayub Khan was a Kamalist whose friends even forgot to call Pakistan an Islamic Republic in the draft of the 1962 Constitution. The word 'Islamic' was inserted on the pointation of a Jamat-i-Islami member of parliament. The majority of writers was opposed to Martial Law as a first response, except for a motley group of writers such as Baba-e-Urdu, Qudratullah Shahab, Majeed Mufti, and Ibne Insha. Their statements were published in a government booklet entitled *Bunyadi Jamhuriatain*. The formation of the Pakistan Writers Guild enjoyed Field Marshal Ayub Khan's blessing, and not before long quite a few writers joined the Guild to escape possible victimization at the hands of the Martial Law government. Perhaps the government's tilt towards Communist China synchronized well with the esteem some top office bearers of the Guild felt for the rising Asian power.

Until 1961, Pakistan was not in sight of its second constitution. The Basic Democracies were conceived as a system to be worked under the thumb of the government. Quite a number of Pakistan poets in the post 1958 phase took to symbolism and other literary devices to escape the wrath of the government. Many writers were sent behind bars for their dissent. The progressive writers were the main sufferers while the modernist and traditional poets found ways and means to express their dissent more indirectly. Quite a number of collections appeared in Karachi in the Ayubian era and Aziz Hamid Madani's *Dasht-i-Imkaan*, Faiz's *Dast-i-Tah-i-Sang* were some of the important works of the 1958–69 era.

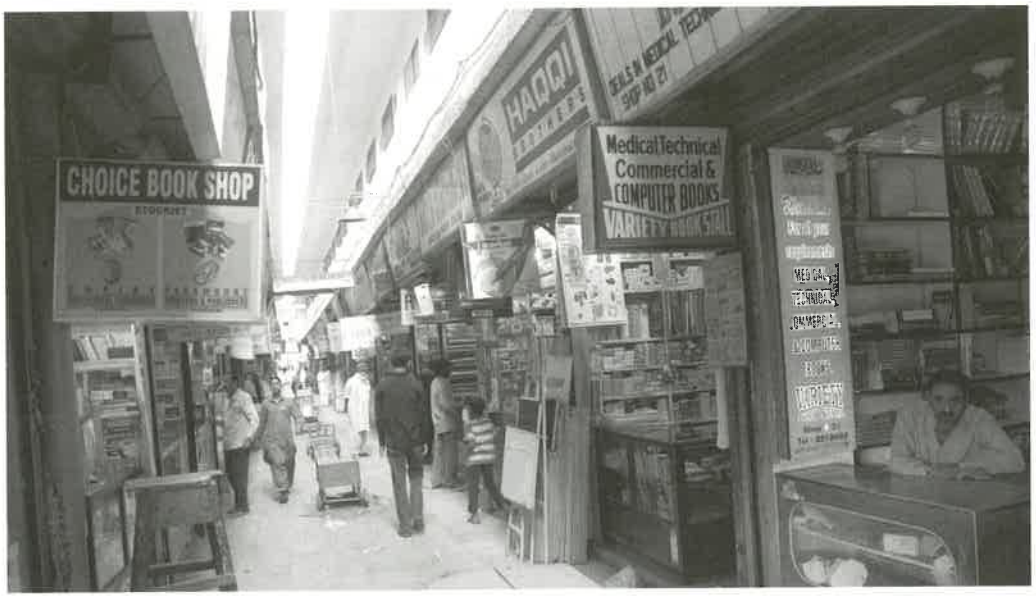
It was in the 1970s that we come across scores of poetry collections, regardless of the schools of thought. Karachi, compared to Lahore, has always leaned towards traditional and progressive poetry. Rais Amrohvi's collection of ghazals, *Alif*, and his four volume collection of *Qataat*—a socio-economic-political commentary on the affairs of the country are landmarks of the 1960s and 1970s. Also, Pervin Shakir brought refreshing sensitivity to her lyrics.

Majnoon Gorakhpuri, the doyen of progressive criticism, also made Karachi a place to be known for the fact that he came up with a work on Ghalib which is a remarkable addition to the corpus of Ghalibeana. But the surprise of the 1990s was Aziz Hamid Madani's *Jadeed Urdu Shaeri* which is a summing up of an eminent poet's criticism of his contemporaries—both senior and junior. This work could not be as candid as Madani was capable of making it.

Karachi's contribution, however, was not confined to fiction, poetry and criticism. In humour, Mushtaq Ahmed Yousufi is blazing a trail which is significantly important. At the time of partition, Karachi had two humourists of note, Maulana Irshadul Haq Gangohi and Majid Lahori. Soon after, Ibn-e-Insha, Ibrahim Jalees, and Tufail Ahmed Jamali appeared on the scene. Ibn-e-Insha succeeded in writing a variety of humour which was not based on satire or sarcasm. He has achieved unrivalled eminence because of stylistic elegance and astute political criticism. Ibrahim Jalees excelled in satire and sarcasm while Tufail Ahmed Jamali successfully combined humour and satire. Rais Amrohvi also made an important contribution.

It was only during the prime of Ibn-e-Insha that a new humorist appeared on the scene. He was Mushtaq Ahmed Yousufi, whose first book *Chirag Tale* became a modern classic. His latest work is *Ab-i-Gum*. Yousufi has rightly placed Karachi in the fore-front of Urdu humour. Karachi's contribution is an outstanding one also in autobiography, travelogue and Urdu journalism. Taking all these aspects together it is no wonder that the city of Karachi has achieved a position in Urdu literature which no other city could surpass.

Urdu Bazar, Karachi.



after partition. Mumtaz Husain was quite active and his book *Adab Aur Shaur* was a much applauded work of criticism. Mumtaz Husain provided the theoretical basis for progressive criticism by writing *Marxist Aesthetics*. His works on Amir Khusro, Ghalib, and Hali towards the last twenty-five years of his life could be regarded as milestones. He was a critic who proved to be an astute researcher.

Muhammad Hasan Askari, and Mumtaz Shirin are other critics who have contributed a great deal to the criticism of fiction. Askari's *magnum opus* in this field remains *Insaan Aur Aadmi*. Between 1947 and 1958, this work proved to be something different. Muhammad Hasan Askari was also declared a renegade by the progressives, along with Manto and Mumtaz Shirin, for his disagreement with them on certain issues, such as Pakistani ideology, Kashmir and the progressive's subservience to the communist line emanating from Moscow. Deeply immersed in French literature, he was for the autonomy of art. He did not subscribe to the idea that literature ought to act as a second fiddle to politics.

Later on his views underwent a sea change in the late 1960s and 1970s. He became an exponent of Rene Guenon's view and was influenced by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, a Deoband scholar and a mystic having a large following among those devotees who complemented the religious fiats with mystical leanings. The majority of Muslim mystics, under the influence of Wahdat-ul-Wujood, have stood for the primacy of *Tariqat* (the mystical path to God). It is an interesting development that Muhammad Hasan Askari made a monumental leap into mysticism from his life-long predilection for the French symbolists. He wrote an important book *Waqt Ki Ragini*—a collection of critical writings in which he developed the theory that the societies which broke loose from their tradition ended up in chaos. He contended that Islam demanded of its followers to live a life wedded to tradition, and no deviation from it was desirable. His other book was *Jadidiat Ya Maghribi Gumrahion Ka Ek Khaka* (Modernity, or a sketch of Western waywardness).

Another important work was Muhammad Ali Siddiqui's *Tawazun*, adjudged the best work of criticism in 1976. The main burden of this book was a critique of Wittgenstein's logical construction which made a dent in Urdu criticism. Lahore's New School of Literature under the advocacy of Iftikhar Jalib and Anis Nagi came up with the idea that conventional language could not express a writer's thought, owing to the built-in linguistic inadequacies and, therefore, the need was for evolving a universal mathematically verifiable language. But they failed miserably to evolve one, and the whole effort fell flat. *Tawazun* played a key role in this school's retreat. *Nishanat, Mazameen, Isharye, Jihat, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Aur Jiddat Pasandi, Talash-i-Iqbal, Ghalib Aur Aaj ka Shaoor* have followed *Tawazun*.

Abul Khair Kashfi, Farman Fatehpuri and Aslam Farrukhi also contributed with their research and critical writing. There were scholars and university teachers. Salim Ahmed, Shamim Ahmed, Jamil Jalibi have also contributed in their specific fields with great gusto. Jalibi's latest work is *Tarikh-i-Urdu Adab* Vol. III. Ahmed Hamdani and Atiq Ahmed also made their presence felt. Hamdani's book *Qissa Nai Shairi Ka*, and Atiq Ahmed's books *Istafada*, and *Sajjad Zaheer* also helped the progressive trends.

TWELVE

THE LITERARY SCENE—SINDHI

HAMIDA KHUHRO

The earliest extant written work in Sindhi in its modern form is the poetry of Kazi Kadan who lived and wrote in mid sixteenth century. The eighteenth century saw a flowering of the poetic talent which reached its full bloom in the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit. The *Risalo* of Shah expresses the full richness and versatility of the Sindhi language and established it as a literary language of the first rank. So far the writings in Sindhi had largely been of a religious nature, beginning with the Maktab teachers and the Ulema who produced a large number of readers and treatises for religious instruction in Sindhi verse early in the seventeenth century. Manuscripts of thirty-nine such treatises have been recently discovered, deciphered, and published by Dr N.A. Baloch under the title, *Sindhi boli jo agato muazum zakhiro* (The Earliest Versified Record of the Sindhi Language).[1] These early pioneers used the Arabic script unmodified by any dots or signs to specify the Sindhi sounds. The modifications were first made by Mian Abul Hasan of Thatta who composed the first work in Sindhi verse *Muqadimat-i-Salat* (*c.* AD 1700) in which he adapted the Arabic Naskh script to Sindhi phonetics by adding dots to represent a greater variety of sounds than were available in the Arabic script. 'Abul Hasan's Sindhi' became the standard for the Sindhi writing which was used for the next two hundred years. A large number of religious works were written in this period, particularly in Thatta, (just sixty miles or so from Karachi) which was the centre for learning. Makhdum Mohammed Hashim Thattavi, who flourished after Abul Hasan, was the most famous and prolific writer of the period on religious subjects and wrote in Sindhi (as well as in Arabic and Persian), which was essential in order to communicate with the people in their own language. While the official language continued to be Persian, the language of commerce was Sindhi, written in the local Khudawadi script. With the advent of the British in 1843, English became the official language, but the rulers needed to communicate with the people. This could only be done in the local language which was Sindhi. The Governor of Bombay minuted:

Mirza Kalich Beg.

Arabic script was advocated not only by Burton, but also by Dr Ernest Trumpp, the German scholar who wrote a grammar of the Sindhi language (1872). Other nineteenth century grammars included one by Wathen, which was very poor in Trumpp's opinion, and one by George Stack, both earlier than the one by Trumpp who had (in 1866) published a collection of the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif. The Arabic script was also advocated by influential officials who had studied the language. Thus Arabic Naskh became the base of the standardized Sindhi script which was adapted with fifty-two alphabetical letters. The Court of Directors (East India Company) in their Despatch No. 46 of 8 December 1852 decided 'in favour of the Arabic characters.'

With the standardized script in place, the government established secular Sindhi schools which in great measure replaced the old madressah education in the province. The introduction of the new education gave rise to the need for Sindhi books on different subjects. Sindhi was also made compulsory for English officers serving in Sindh which meant that books of interest to a more mature readership were required. A large number of translations were made of English books on basic sciences, as well as other branches of learning. Translations were also made of books of English literature. Lamb's tales of Shakespeare, Aesop's stories, as well as other books for children, were translated and excellent books of primary education were written for Sindhi schools. Popular works of English fiction were also translated into Sindhi, including Tolstoy's shorter stories, as well as other books with philosophic and fatalistic themes which would find a ready response in a Sindhi, or indeed Indian, readership. Persian works such as Sa'adi's *Gulistan* and *Bostan* and Nizami's *Sikandernama* were taught in schools in Sindh, but were now translated. So were Arab classics, such as *Alif Laila* and religious books. Translations were also made from Urdu and Bengali. Thus in the 1850s, when the new school system was started, school text books for the use of classes from the primary to matric had been prepared. The best known among the scholars who prepared them were Nandiram Mirchandani, Udharam, Pribhdas, Akhund Abdul Rahim, and Qazi Ghulam Ali among others. Miran Mohammed Shah was among the earliest to translate a work of fiction (*Sudha toro and kuda toro*, 1855) into Sindhi from Hindi.

The father of modern Sindhi writing is undoubtedly Mirza Kalich Beg. Originally in government service in the newly organized colonial government, his duties included translation from and to Sindhi. He used his skills to translate works from English, Persian, Arabic, and Urdu into Sindhi, including the earliest work of history written in the subcontinent, *Chachnama*, which he also translated into English. Kalich Beg not only translated numerous books into Sindhi but also authored many books on a variety of subjects. He wrote more than three hundred works. He also wrote a dictionary of old Sindhi, a history of Persian, and a book of Sindhi proverbs. The subjects he covered in his books included grammar, Sindhi vocabulary, logic, medicine, economics, philosophy, culture, religion, and gardening. He wrote the first Sindhi novel in which he dealt with the position of women (*Zeenat*). Mirza Kalich Beg was the Renaissance man par

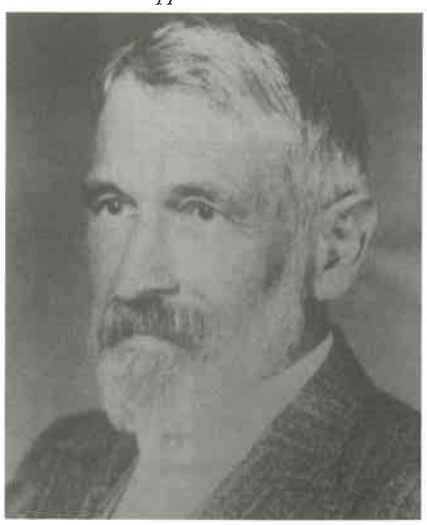
Dr N.A. Baloch.

We should introduce the language of the country (namely, Sindhee) as the medium of official intercourse. I do not see in what way our Revenue and Judicial officers (however their offices and courts may be constituted) can work effectually through a foreign medium of communication, such as Persian or English.[2]

Thus by 1851, Bombay Government Circular No. 1825 of 6 September 1851, Sindhi became the language of administration, of the courts, of police, and revenue administration, and above all, of education. So far, although Sindhi had been written in the Arabic Naskh script as adapted by Abul Hasan, there was no longer any standard adaptation of the script which could be used for the purposes of a modern government, and a modern education. Adopting Sindhi as the official language required that the alphabet be standardized. The Government of Sindh asked its Sindhi language experts to give their opinion. Richard Burton, who was starting out on his career as an orientalist and linguist from Sindh, and had become a scholar of the Sindhi language, gave his opinion that it was 'copious, expressive and capable of high refinement' and George Stack, linguist and scholar wrote

> Far from being a mere patois, or Provincial dialect, it is an ancient and distinct tongue, differing from its neighbours in some very important points...it is exceedingly copious and exceedingly dear.... The grammatical structure too is most exact and minute and in some points almost curious from its nicety. In short we will find in Sindhi, the most complete means of expressing every subject, except the arts and sciences as yet unknown to the people. Here we must borrow from more learned tongues, as has been needful in our own language.[3]

Dr Ernest Trumpp.



Although Stack advocated the adoption of the Devanagiri or Khudawadi (Sindhi *bania* script) as the official script for Sindhi, Richard Burton made out a powerful and eventually irresistible case for the adoption and adaptation of the Arabic Naskh script. He pointed out that all the existing literature in Sindhi was written in the Arabic script, and that the Khudawadi was not used as a language for literary or official work, but only for keeping *bania* accounts which were written in so abstruse a script that often the writer himself found it difficult to decipher. The adoption of the

were held. He played a leading part in calling literary conferences and eventually set up a poets' organization known as Jamait-i-Shuarai Sind. In 1929 Nizami started a monthly journal *Durra-i-Haidari*. His publications included two books of poems *Biyaz-e-Nizami* and *Riyaz-e-Nizami*. He also produced a versified Sindhi translation of *Mussadas-e-Hali*. Nizami also wrote two works of fiction *Hur-e-Damashq* and *Muhammad Namo*. A very elegant writer of Sindhi prose was Dr Gurbaxani who taught Persian at the D.J. Sindh College. His *magnum opus* was the collection of Shah Abdul Latif's poetry *Shah jo Risalo*. He also wrote a number of Sindhi books, among them *Nurjehan*—a romance about the famous Empress of India.

Dr H. Gurbaxani.

Among the personalities who led the intellectual life of Karachi were Jamshed Nusserwanji, a notable theosophist and friend of Dr Annie Besant, Ghulam Ali Chagla, Khan Bahadur Wali, Mohammed Hassanally Effendi, Seth Tayyabali Alibhai, Hoshang Nadirshaw Edulji Dinshaw, Mohammed Hashim Gazdar, Khanbahadur Ardeshir Hormusji Mama, Khanbahadur Shahryar Dadabhai Contractor, Mir Ayub Khan Aliani, Mir Maqbool Khan Aliani, Barrister Abdur Rahman, Mrs Gul Minwalla, Mrs Dinshaw Pestonji D. Dastur, G.M. Syed, and Jethmal Parsram.

The earliest poetry society was founded by Allama I.I. Kazi in Khairpur in the twenties which had a great impact through its branches in other towns, such as Larkana and Karachi. Sind Sudhar Society was set up by Hakim Fateh Mohammed and its first poetry session was held in D.J. Sindh College on 16 January 1932, under the chairmanship of Mir Ayub Khan of Lasbela, himself a poet and literary figure. Mir Ayub Khan and his brother, Mir Maqbool Khan, were poets and writers, and composed poetry in Sindhi, Persian and Urdu. Mir Ayub Khan's later poetry reflects nationalistic thinking, and at this stage he was associated with the Jamiat-i-Ulemai Sind which had its headquarters in the famous Madressah at Khadda in Karachi.

On 19 December 1933, the second *mushaira* was held under the chairmanship of Ghulam Ali Chagla, and the third on 2 March 1934 under the chairmanship of Dr Daudpota. In 1939 the *mushaira* was held under the presidentship of Hakim Sehwani. Other literary organizations in the first half of the twentieth century were Majlis Mushaira Naoabad which was established by the poet, Shaikh Abdullah 'Abd'; Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu, which held Urdu and Sindhi *mushairas* which were regularly attended by Sindhi as well as Urdu literati. Mehfil-e-Ahbab Karachi was set up by Ghulam Ahmed Nizami, Allah Baksh Uqaili and other eminent Sindhi poets in 1950, as was also Bazme Nizami by Nizami. In 1962 Bazm Sarshar, Karachi was established by Allah Baksh Uqaili, and Bazm Mushaira D.J. Sindh College which held regular *mushairas*. At the Adabi

excellence of the Sindhi language, and played a very important part in expanding the horizons of the Sindhi language in terms of subject matter for writing and research.

An important contemporary of Mirza Kalich Beg, also based in Karachi and Hyderabad, was Dayaram Gidumal Shahani who played an important part in the writing and publishing of books in Sindhi. Although not anywhere as prolific as Kalich Beg, Gidumal wrote on a number of subjects in English and Sindhi, His object was the religious and moral revival of the people, He covered mainly religious and social subjects. His important works in Sindhi were the *Jap Sahib*, *Bhagwat Gita*, and *Yoga Darshan*. Another very important work on philosophy was *Mana ja chabuka* which was regarded by him as his spiritual diary. He depicted the social problems of women in *Mau ain dheeu* (Mother and Daughter). Dayaram Gidumal did a great deal for the spread of education. He wrote a memorandum to the Government of India stressing the need for establishments of higher education in Sindh and was the moving spirit behind the establishment of D.J. Sindh College. The intellectual tradition of the family was carried on by his son, Kewalram Shahani, who published journals and translations into Sindhi, and established libraries, and an art school in Karachi, which were housed in the elegant red sandstone Sarnagati building in the square near D.J. Sindh College.

The establishment of Karachi as the capital of Sindh saw a flowering of cultural and literary activities in the city. These had an important focal point in the educational establishments of the city, such as D.J. Sindh College and the Sind Madressah, which included literary, poetic, and dramatic activities. The first four decades of the twentieth century saw the growth of the intellectual and literary life of Karachi which nourished around a number of personalities, which brought this new city into the mainstream of culture and intellectual pursuits of British India. This group consisted of scholarly personalities such as Rai Bahadur Seth Vishindas Nihalchand (d.1929), who moved from Manjhand to Karachi and who sponsored the translation of books on *tasawwuf* (Sufism) and Hindu religious teaching. He also published an anthology of poetry which included Persian, Urdu, Sindhi, and Seraiki poetry, and had translations of the Holy Quran published and distributed free of cost.

One of the most active literary figures of Karachi was Hakim Fateh Mohammed Sehwani who moved to Karachi *c.* 1910 from his ancestral town of Sehwan. Hakim Fateh Mohammed was an eminent Sindhi prose writer and a poet of Persian and Sindhi. He edited and published a weekly paper *Islah*. He wrote a series of Sindhi textbooks for different grades, based on Islamic values. He also wrote a number of literary and biographical books, notably *Abul Fazl* and *Faizi, Makhzan al Raz*, a biography of Qalandar Shahbaz, a book about the rule of the Talpurs, *Miran ji Sahibi*, and *Aftab i Adab*, a literary work. He also wrote a life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), *Hayat al Nabi* and other religious books. Another notable literary personality of Karachi was Ghulam Ahmed Nizami (1895–1951), who was born in Karachi. He set up *Bazm-i-Adab* in Shikarpuri Mohalla in 1923, under the auspices of which literary meetings and *mushairas*

after him. In 1870 Mirza Mohammed Sadiq published *Aqlil* in Persian, and in 1880 he published *Mueen al Islam* a wholly Sindhi newspaper. In 1884 Sadhu Hiranand published the twice weekly, *The Sind Times*. The Government of Sindh published the Sind Official Gazette in 1868 with a complete Sindhi translation. In 1889 a weekly Sindhi newspaper, *Muawin Majmua*, was started with the joint efforts of Hassanally Effendi and Syed Amir Ali. Associated with them in this effort were Maulvi Mohammed Usman Nauranzada, Allahbaksh Abojh, and Shamsuddin Bulbul. The latter two were to become well known names in Sindhi literature. The first Sindhi journal was *Sarsawati*, published by Sadhu Hiranand in 1890 and, in the same year, *Sarsawati Sahitia* was published by Mulchand Naromal, also from Karachi. In 1895 Seth Haji Ahmed Memon brought out *Aftab-e-Sind*, with Shamsuddin Bulbul as editor. Also in the same year Diwan Tarachand Showkiram brought out *Patra*. The next year, the fortnightly *Jaut* was brought out by Parmanand Mewaram. In the next year, 1896, Rais Ghulam Mohammed Bhurgri started his newspaper *Al Amin* from Hyderabad, which became a very influential political newspaper throughout Sindh, highlighting the problems of the Muslims of Sindh, as well as other political issues. It was edited in the first instance by the newly converted Shaikh Abdul Majid. In the same way as *Al Amin*, although published in Hyderabad was important for the intellectual life of Karachi and other towns, *Sind Zamindar* which was published by Mohammed Ayub Khuhro starting in the twenties and continuing for over three decades, was to play a very important role in championing the cause of Muslims and in raising awareness in the Muslim community well beyond Sukkur, in northern Sindh, where it was published. Other journals and newspapers, *Desh Mata, Sind Sevak, Sadai Sind*, were also published in these years and, although there is some doubt, the probability is that they were published from Karachi. In 1916 the well known writer and intellectual brought out *Sindhri*, and in 1923 Deen Mohammed Wafai brought out the monthly journal *Tauheed*. In 1901 Satan Dharam Sabha brought out *Satan Dharam Parcharak Patar* as a monthly journal under the editorship of Maharaj Sobhraj Sharma. The following year, Maulvi Allahbaksh Abojh published *Risala Madressah*. In 1905 'Mukhlis' published *Tuhfatul Ahbab*. In 1909 Mohammed Ismail Sirhindi brought out a monthly journal, *Islah*. In 1916 *Sansar Chakar* was published by Maharaj Harumal Premchand which came out without fail on the fifteenth of each month. In 1919 *Sind*

Karachi Press Club, a favourite venue for public protests.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM MOORE

Conference in 1949, concern was expressed for the future of the Sindhi language and a leading *misra* was proposed on which all the poets were to compose poems on the theme of *Quam zindah thi rahe par je zaban zindah rahe* (The Nation Lives Only if its Language Lives).

The fourth All Sind Literary Conference was held in Karachi in 1941 (*Kul Sindhi Adabi Conference*) under the auspices of Sindhi Sahat Sabha. In April 1954 the fourteenth All Sind Adabi Conference was held under the auspices of Bazme Nizami and Jamati Shuara Sind in the Sind Madressah.

The major themes in literature during the twenties and until the end of the forties were political. The militant nationalism of the early twentieth century, the appearance of Gandhi on the political scene, and the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movements had inspired writers, both Hindu and Muslim, to produce political and patriotic literature in which colonial oppression and the struggle for freedom were the subject of a large number of books. This period also saw the popularity of short stories which appeared in the numerous literary journals which flourished at this time. From the later twenties, however, the common themes shared by Hindu and Muslim writers ended in a bitter communal confrontation. The Hindu writers were accused of vilification of Muslim rulers and even of disrespectful references to the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Novels like *Rang Mahal* and *Sheesh Mahal* were scandal sheets of the Mughal and other Muslim rulers and *Satyarath Prakash*, which was virulently anti Muslim, was translated into Sindhi. Muslim writers retaliated in kind with books, extolling Muslim rulers and heroes and denigrating Hindus. The most famous and popular writer of books in this genre was Mohammed Usman Deeplai who wrote a vast number of books and developed a huge following among the young and old. Deeplai depicted the darkest corners of Indian religious practices, such as *suttee* and *devadasis* (*Somnath ji Sundri*, *Dahiri Rang Mahal* etc.) and did not spare the obscurantist aspects of the religious practices of Muslims, such as excessive devotion to *Pirs* (notably *Dada ji Sarangi*). Deeplai wrote many popular books extolling Muslim historic personalities, such as *Mustafa Kemal, Tipu, Fateh Spain, Shere Iran* etc. He played an important role in popularizing the idea of a separate Muslim state in the shape of Pakistan by explaining the idea through his widely read fiction, and thus made the task of the politicians much easier.

Most writers of the Sindhi language in the colonial period started their work in the columns of that new phenomenon on the political and literary scene—the journal and the newspaper. Most writers first came to the notice of the public through 'the press'. The earliest newspaper to be published in Karachi was *Fawaid al Akhbar* (15 May 1858), barely fifteen years after the conquest. This weekly newspaper was published in Sindhi, as well as Persian. In 1866 *Sind Sudhar* was published by Narain Jagganath Varya on behalf of the educational department of the Sindh government. Narain Jagganath Varya was a Maharashtrian educationist who devoted his life to the spread of new education in Sindh. His services are commemorated by N.J.V. School in Karachi which is named

close and go in to liquidation. *Qurbani* was published by G.M. Syed and became the voice of Sindhi nationalism. Numerous journals and weeklies were started. Unfortunately, however, the major Sindhi newspapers became victims of the political infighting of the political forces in Pakistan. Each new government would ban the newspaper belonging to the outgoing political leaders, and the result was that most of the newspapers found themselves unable to keep going. Thus by the middle of the fifties, most of the major Sindhi newspapers in Karachi had disappeared. Although the Urdu press came in with full force and produced hugely circulated popular papers, the need for a Sindhi press continued to be felt. This need was eventually filled by the appearance of a number of newspapers, some of which survived and some did not. Hyderabad became the centre of Sindhi newspapers and of Sindhi intellectual life. But gradually as time went by, Sindhis living in Karachi gained enough confidence to be able to support newspapers from the city. The number of these gradually increased so that in the nineties more than half a dozen newspapers were being published from Karachi. Thus *Hilal-e-Pakistan*, owned by the government, nevertheless found a wide readership, and so did papers which were published in the eighties, a time of political revival. These included *Awami Awaz, Barsaat*, as well as others. The Sindhi newspapers published from Karachi were acknowledged as 'quality' newspapers with a high standard of reporting and writing.

The late fifties and sixties saw a great revival of writing in the Sindhi language after the difficulties of the years immediately after partition. The impetus for the revival of writing came from the perceived anti Sindhi actions of the first martial law regime, downgrading the status of the language for education and for government purposes. Apart from public protest there was the outpouring of writing in journals and newspapers. Short stories and poetry became particularly the vehicles for the expression of protest and disillusion with the rulers. Journals proliferated, many of them published from Karachi, and gave opportunities to younger Sindhi writers and poets to hone their skills.

The post-martial law decades were seen as inimical to Sindh and its interests, and this feeling of deprivation was reflected in the writing in this period. The renaissance of Sindhi writing in the sixties has been sustained by three generations of writers which has resulted in a vast growth in the Sindhi reading public and the publications of dozens of Sindhi newspapers, with about half a dozen being published in Karachi alone.

The seventies and eighties saw some significant writing, notably that of the journalist and story teller Amar Jaleel whose '*Sard lash jo safar*' or the 'Journey of a Corpse' based on an instance of robbery and violence of a Hindu household, caused great awareness in the youth regarding the need for communal harmony. This period also saw a number of poets whose main theme was Sindhi nationalism based on the injustice meted out to the Sindhi people. Most prominent poets were Ibrahim Munshi, Sarvech Sujavali and Mohammad Khan Majidi and the senior poet Shaikh Ayaz. The poetry and the writings caused a strong nationalistic fervour among the youth which then gathered round G.M. Syed and his demand for justice and rights for Sindh and Sindhis.

Samachar was published by Pandit S. Totaram. In the community and welfare tradition of papers *Sikh Tract* was published in 1926 by K.R. Lalchand.

So far the newspapers and journals published in Karachi, and in Sindh in general, had been predominantly concerned with social and religious problems and politics were a side issue. But as constitutional reforms were brought, in and particularly after the Great War of 1914–18, politics became the primary concern of the newspapers. In 1920 the Sindhi leaders of the Khilafat movement decided that the movement needed a newspaper to propagate its point of view and started *Al Wahid*, which was to become the foremost champion of Muslim causes in Sindh. It was first started by Shaikh Abdul Aziz, an intellectual and pan Islamist who then made the *hijrat* from the *Darul Harb* of India to the *Darul Islam* of Afghanistan, in accordance with the programme of the Khilafatists. *Al Wahid* was then acquired by Seth Abdoola Haroon, Kazi Abdur Rahman, and others and started work initially under the editorship of Shaikh Abdul Majid, himself an important Khilafat leader. Deen Mohammed Wafai was also associated with the newspaper.

In the three decades till independence, the major concern of the newspapers continued to be politics and, on the whole, they were strongly partisan. Thus *Sansar Samachar*, perhaps the most popular Sindhi newspaper after *Al Wahid*, was unequivocally pro-Hindu as the latter was pro-Muslim. In 1924 Ahdul Khaliq Morai brought out *Tarraqi*, and in 1925 Khemchand Advani published *Desh Mitr* in Sindhi and English. In the same year Hakim Fateh Mohammed Sehwani published *Al Jame*, and some years later in 1936 the weekly *Islah*. In 1925 also, *Hindi Hindu* was published by the Hindu Press. An illustrated educative magazine was brought out by Kazi Abdur Razzaque in 1927. Also largely educative and non political were two weeklies, *Chaudas* and *Paigham* published in 1929 by Assudomal. The latter weekly was in the form of a booklet and was written by Abdul Karim. In 1934 Pir Ali Mohammed Rashdi, who had started out on his journalistic and writing career as editor of Khuhro's *Sind Zamindar*, published one of the many papers he would edit or publish. At this time it was *Subah Sind*. In 1931 Virumal Begraj started his newspaper *Qurbani*, which was bought by G.M. Syed after partition and would run for a few years afterwards.

In the immediate post independence era, Sindh lost many of its prominent writers and publishers who emigrated from Pakistan. With their departure Sindhi writing was in a state of stagnation for some time. The issues changed, and with the huge influx of the non-Sindhi speaking immigrants after 1947, the Sindhi reading public diminished considerably in Karachi. Only major Sindhi newspapers like *Al Wahid* could continue undiminished, as its readership was intact and its position as the major political mouthpiece of the Muslims of Sindh unchallenged. But soon other newspapers, such as Khuhro's *Nawai Sind* emerged. Khuhro also owned and published *Sind Observer*, one of the three major English newspapers of Karachi (the others were The *Daily Gazette*, and after 1947, *Dawn*). It became a victim of political vendetta however and was forced to

The arrival of television channels and especially with the Sindhi channels gaining immense popularity with their reporting of life in rural areas as well as Sindhi dramas the attention of writers switched to a great extent to writing plays as well as news stories for television. A significant revival has taken place in drama writing as well as poetry and music through the medium of television in Sindh. There is also the popularization of the cultural treasures, myths and to some extent of the history of this region through this medium—as well as of political discourse. So far books and journals have maintained their popularity and indeed there has been a proliferation of newspapers but inevitably television will be eating into the space of the printed word.

As a result of the demands of television for plays and documentary writing there has been a revival of the traditional use of language and vocabulary and words lost over the last century are being heard again. Sindhi television has helped renew interest in Sindh's history, folk literature, poetry and fiction apart from the music.

The twenty-first century portends well for the future of the Sindhi language. The popularization of the computer and the introduction of the Sindhi script on it has also helped make the language familiar to the new generation of the Sindhi diaspora. Sindhi writers in India and across the world are now able to communicate and share their work and thus create a community of Sindhi writers across the world.

The Constitution of 1973 was received with hostility by the Sindhi youth who saw it as a fraud and betrayal of the promises of autonomy a strong demand of Sindhis as well as other provinces and the denial of which had led to the separation of East Pakistan. In addition there was the issue of the official language of Sindh. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Sindhi had been the language of Courts, offices and of revenue affairs. During the martial law of Ayub Khan the Sindhi language had been discriminated against—banned from Karachi University, no longer compulsory language even in the Matric examination and the 'Final examination' which was a qualifying examination. These discriminatory steps led to a protest movement led by Sindhi students which were dealt with in a very heavy handed manner by the administration. The student movement led to a burst of protest literature, both prose and poetry. The Sindhi language issue and the protest literature simmered well into the seventies. After the debacle of the 1971 events and the consequent gloom which descended on the smaller provinces Sindhi saw a lot of pessimistic literature which saw Sindh and Sindhis under pressure and attack from inimical forces. The opposition to the 1973 constitution and the Jiye Sindh movement produced prose and treatises on politics and less of fiction although poetry, mostly pessimistic, continued to be written.

The eighties saw the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy and the consequent repression from the military regime, the rise of dacoits and the very serious law and order situation in the interior of Sindh as well as the unprecedented political violence in Karachi. The whole of Sindh was in a state of disorder and insecurity which was addressed to an extent by the political governments of the nineties so that by the end of that decade law and order had been restored to a large extent. The censorship imposed on Sindhi writing under the Zia regime led to symbolism and historical allusion in writing in this period where Mohammad bin Qasim appeared as usurper and Raja Dahir as nationalist hero. On the other side of the literary spectrum at this time there was also the literature produced by right wing religious writers who were commonly seen as being sponsored by the rulers. Sindh's literary and cultureal institutions were starved for funds at this time but the nineties saw some redress and funding was revived for such historic institutions as Sind Adabi Board which had produced an extremely valuable body of work. The work has continued but so far has been unable to revive the earlier momentum.

In the last decade the Sindhi language has made great strides in the world of journalism and visual media. At one time in the seventies and eighties, local languages such as Sindhi and Punjabi got at most an hour on national television. There has been a great deal of progress since then—Sindhi was the first local Pakistani language in which an exclusive Channel appeared. This channel got a huge viewership at home and abroad. Since then a number of other channels in Sindhi have come up and national television is giving a good chunk of its time to Sindhi as presumably it is giving to Punjabi and other regional languages.

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THIRTEEN

SADDAR OF THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES

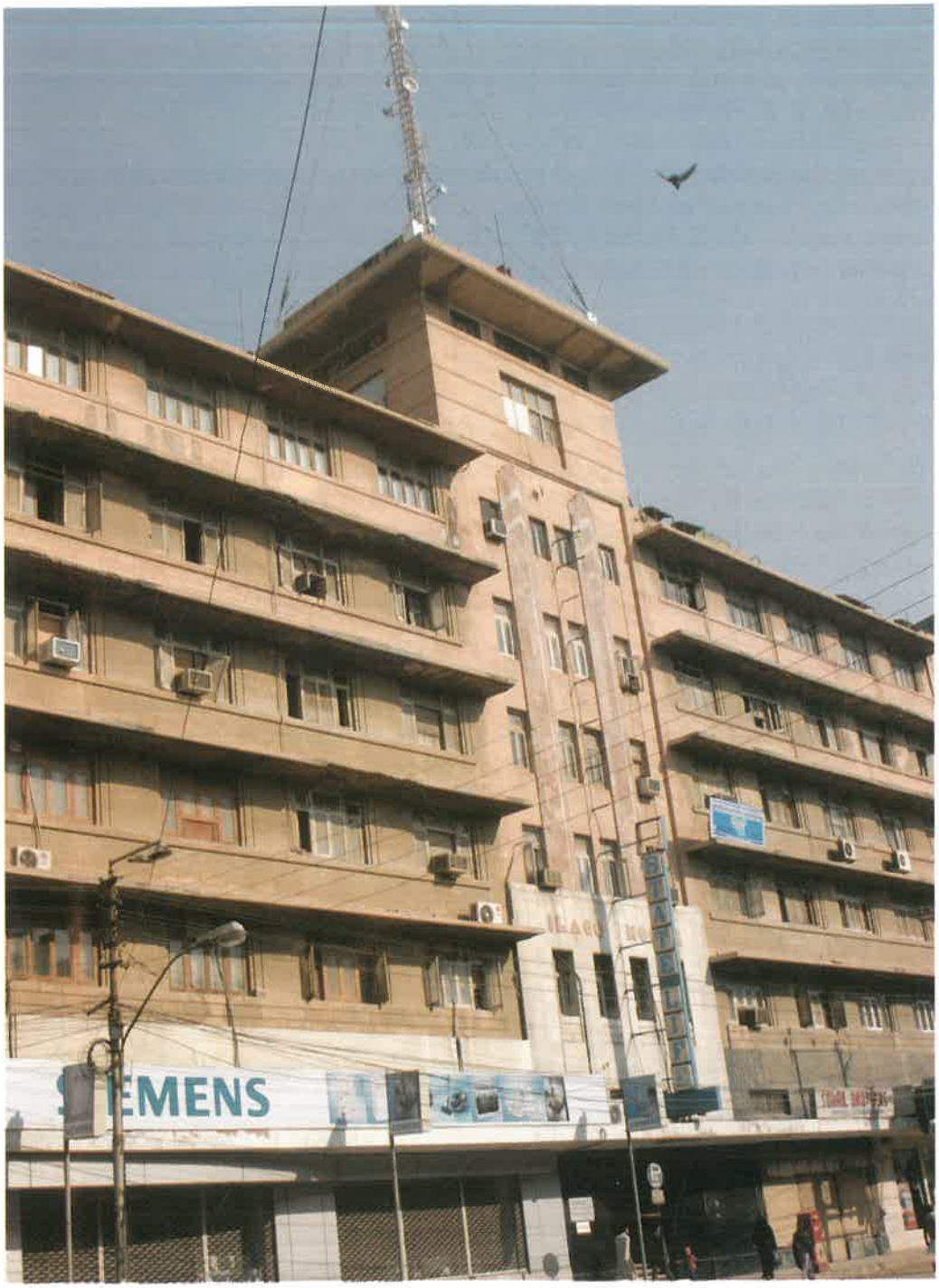
ASIF NOORANI

Saddar, which is a subcontinental term for the cantonment area, was not a part of the old town. It was built by the British when they captured Karachi way back in 1839. And in the fifties, soon after Partition, when the immigrants from India and the workforce from up north in Pakistan, came to what was then the capital of the country, they found it to be the main shopping area of a city whose population was growing in geometrical progression.

When you referred to Saddar you had certain boundaries in mind—Empress Market on one side and Masjid-e-Khizra on the other extreme. The roundabout near what used to be the Rex cinema, where they once had a musical fountain was the boundary in the north, though some people thought Hotel Metropole was the outer limit. And on the southern side was the Bunder Road-Victoria Road (now M.A. Jinnah Road and Abdullah Haroon Road) junction. Incidentally, not much is left of the Hotel Metropole building now. It is like an empty shell. The shops on the ground floor are still there. The owners of the hotel had decided to build a shopping mall on what is prime land but one learns that there is disagreement and disunity among them, which is why the only movement that you see on the premises is that of cars. In an area where parking is not allowed on roads, the land is being gainfully used as a parking lot.

For buses (there were no mini buses or coaches in the fifties or even the sixties) Saddar was an important junction. Only a few of them touching the newly developed areas of Nazimabad, PIB Colony and Liaquatabad went directly through Bunder Road to Merewether Tower. Most of them were routed through Saddar.

Saddar was also an important hub for the diesel-operated trams (all other tramway systems in the subcontinent were powered by electricity), owned by Mohammad Ali



PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Ilaco House, a fine example of Art Deco in the city, Abdullah Haroon Road.

in what is now called Mumbai ended its journey a few years earlier at the stroke of midnight, with several celebrities, disembarking the double-storied electrically operated tramcar.

Those celebrities were highly nostalgic about trams and were wistful at the end of their sentimental association with the city's cheapest form of transportation. On the other hand the tram service in Karachi ended with a whimper—'unwept, unhonoured and unsung'. Currently, the only city in the subcontinent to have trams is Calcutta (now Kolkata).

Horse-drawn *tongas* operated from the peripheries of Saddar near Empress Market and carried passengers to Abyssinia Lines charging them on seat-by-seat basis. They are no more to be seen anywhere in Karachi. But the victorias are still there, except that they are used on festive occasions or by the dwindling number of tourists.

Cycle rickshaws were forbidden to enter Victoria Road and Elphinstone Street, the two prestigious passages in Saddar. But they were withdrawn from Karachi some time in the mid-sixties. Most of them moved to Bahawalpur and the adjoining towns of Ahmedpur East and Lodhran. After sometime the rickshaw drivers belonging to Karachi sold their rickshaws to the locals and returned to the megacity. Motor rickshaws have continued to ply but some important roads are out of bounds for them. They add to the smoke and noise pollution but there are no signs of their calling it a day.

Since shopping areas in the newly emerging suburbs, such as First Chowrangi Nazimabad and Tariq Road, did not come up till the late fifties, Saddar remained the main place for making purchases. For groceries people came all the way to Empress Market. Though there were markets in the older sections of the town also, shoppers preferred Empress Market for the much wider range of wares it offered. But now not many people from the newer parts of the town go to Empress Market for they can buy everything close to their homes.

Built in 1884–9, Empress Market was designed by James Strachan of the Great Indian Peninsular and the Bombay and Baroda Railways, it remained one of his most celebrated buildings. Its name was a reference to Queen Victoria, the then Empress of India.

An elderly shopkeeper, whose sons now manage his grocery store at Empress Market, ruefully remembers the time when Empress Market had four small gardens which were converted into shops after Partition by traders who came from across the newly created borders. One of the most memorable personalities of Empress Market in the fifties was a grand old man Mr B.D. Sethna, who bought a shop from a Hindu migrating to India in 1947. In the mornings, I and my younger brother Asad, would see Mr Sethna engrossed in his copy of *Dawn*. It was customary for us to say 'Sahibji' (the Parsi style of greetings) to him and in return hear him say 'God bless you'. During the cricket season we would ask for the latest score because our copy of the morning paper was delivered at home after we had left our Nazimabad house for our school in Saddar. 'Your favourite

St. Patrick's Cathedral, austere, majestic and built when Napier was still Governor of Sindh.

Tramways. Three routes operated from Saddar, near the Empress Market. One went to the Cantt. Railway Station, while the remaining two continued on the same route up to Bunder Road, which was later renamed M.A. Jinnah Road. The trams that turned right on hitting the rechristened road didn't have much distance to travel. They terminated at Soldier Bazaar, while those that turned left trundled up to Keamari, the harbour, except for a few that ended their journey at Merewether Tower.

When Garden Road, an extension of Elphinstone Street (now Zebunnisa Street), was turned into a one-way street in 1954, the trams continued to enjoy a rare privilege, they could move both ways, but not without causing a few accidents. One of the persons to suffer was Zain Noorani, a veteran Muslim Leaguer, who later became the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the Junejo cabinet and during his tenure he signed the Geneva Accord on behalf of his country. One fateful morning he was rudely reminded by a tram that rammed into his Chevrolet that the street cars, as the Americans call them, operated from both sides on Garden Road. A smaller car wouldn't have borne the brunt of the accident. He escaped with a broken bone.

The trams were considered traffic hazards since they stopped in the middle of the road. By the end of the sixties their routes had been curtailed and they were sent packing in the early seventies, unceremoniously, unlike their counterparts in Bombay. The last tram

Duarte Mansion, Saddar.

In a city where you see very few females on the streets, Bohri Bazaar always attracted more women shoppers than men. But surprisingly enough on 5 March 1958, when fire crackers in a shop caused an inferno in the bazaar more men were burnt than women. As many as thirty-five people were burnt to death and many more were injured. At least ten people jumped to death out of panic when their buildings caught fire. The fire brigade vehicles, which were quick to come from their station next to the Empress Market, were handicapped by lack of water. A ban, now hardly effective, was imposed on the sale of fire crackers.

Colonial era facade.

The Ideal Life Assurance Company's building on Zebunnisa Street.

Colonial era facade of buildings in the process of disappearance.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AKBAR KHUSHIK

Fazal Mahmood took five wickets yesterday,' or 'Do you know Hanif has scored yet another century?' the septuagenarian would say, sporting his endearing toothless smile. He is still remembered by some of the old shopkeepers with a tinge of nostalgia.

Until the seventies this grand edifice had not suffered at the hands of the encroachers and though not as clean as it was before Partition, it still was much more presentable than it is today.

For buying consumer durables such as cloth and crockery, the market of choice remained Bohri Bazaar. Built before the country achieved independence, its narrow streets, meant only for pedestrians, criss-crossed each other. Karachi was in a way an exception in the province, because all other towns in Sindh and even in lower Punjab had long and narrow Shahi Bazaars. Bohri Bazaar substituted for a Shahi Bazaar.

other side of the road is the grand old colonial style building of BVS Parsi School, whose principal Mrs Dina Mistri retired two years ago but hasn't snapped her link with education. She serves as a consultant to a couple of private schools.

The Indian Coffee Board, which ran a chain of India Coffee House in many principal cities of the subcontinent, sold its Karachi establishment on the corner of Victoria Road and Frere Road to Zelins, who had two more coffee houses—one at the Bunder Road-Victoria Road junction and was aptly christened Zelins' Corner, and the other opposite ILACO House on Victoria Road. But Zelins didn't continue with the Victoria Road-Frere Road junction branch for too long. They sold it to an Irani, who rechristened it Eastern Coffee House. It remained the haunt of writers, poets, student leaders and small time politicians who sat there for hours. The owner wasn't making good money, but he continued to run the establishment until such time that he succumbed to a lucrative offer. When the Coffee House, as it was commonly called, closed down its clients were quite disturbed, a few of them moved to Jabees Restaurant for a short while, and some to a new small non-descript cafe next door, but a large majority were left in the lurch. They couldn't find any suitable rendezvous.

Incidentally, the Coffee House inspired writer Hameed Kashmiri to do a TV serial in the eighties. Its central character was, of course, the venue itself. Sadly, it went on air when the rendezvous for literary figures, intellectuals, small time politicians and student leaders had closed down.

KWality had two restaurants, one diagonally opposite Regal cinema and the other opposite ILACO House. While it had an impressive menu of snacks and normal meals, the piece-de-resistance of the two establishments was its wide range of ice-creams. The ones made of seasonal fruits were the best and the most popular among them was Peach Melba. In those days when tinned fruits were not so much in vogue, one had to wait for the peach season to enjoy the restaurants' speciality.

KWality was run by a man called G.M. Naz, who played the agony uncle in the columns of a popular women's magazine—*Zebunnissa*. In the evenings, he ran a clinic. He was a psychiatrist too. A middle-aged lady who happened to be my mother's close friend once visited him with a problem. Her husband of ten years was planning to marry again—a younger lady. Naz's advice proved only 50 per cent fruitful. She could not make her husband give up his obsession but she did learn to share him with the other woman.

KWality was not the only best place for Mughlai food. Café Firdous on the site of the present Mahboob Bakhsh Cloth Market and Farooq Restaurant off Elphinstone Street served mouth-watering North Indian food. Farooq had the distinction of introducing chicken *tikka* in Karachi. Cafe Firdous was the first restaurant of repute in Saddar to draw its shutters, but Farooq continues to exist on the same premises, probably because its restaurant is a part of its modest hotel. In 1963 when Captain Ihtesham, the producer

Bohri Bazaar and some other parts of Saddar were destined to see a worst calamity when a number of bombs exploded in 1988, but that's another story.

Until the eighties, the fastfood culture had not hit Karachi. Only Hanifia, a burger joint in New Town, with a branch at Nursery in PECHS, offered fast food. Now there are many international franchises and the strange part is that while in the West men and women go to fastfood joints only to have a cheap and quick meal, in our part of the world people converge there with families, particularly on weekends, using them as restaurants.

More than any other place in the city Saddar had some of the finest restaurants. The three Chinese restaurants which the early fifties saw were all in Saddar. South China Cafe, on Clarke Street (now Shahrae Iraq) near Masjid-e-Khizra, had its special clientele, unlike Cafe Canton, which always had a packed hall. The last one to close down was the ABC Restaurant, which was popular with the GIs during the Second World War. Its decor remained much the same until it dropped shutters in the late nineties. A more pricey Chinese eatery that emerged in the sixties on Victoria Road was Hong Kong Restaurant. It continued to attract Chinese food buffs until it closed down four years ago. Now quite a lot of fastfood joints run by the locals offer Pakistani versions of the Chinese cuisine.

A popular haunt for racing enthusiasts until the mid-seventies was Frederick's Cafeteria, which had a separate enclosure for families, and a small courtyard that opened only in the evenings. Cafeteria, as it was commonly called, was a rendezvous for punters, twice a week, after the races were over. The punters' enthusiastic discussion on the afternoon's proceedings didn't quite interest others who made it their meeting point on a daily basis, a large number of whom were those who assembled at other cafes in the afternoons, but preferred the cooler open air environs of the cafeteria.

Airconditioning in restaurants was not in vogue even in the seventies. There were just two airconditioned restaurants, one which sprang up later in the fifties was a part of Hotel Jabees, but the place was low brow. On the other hand, the pricey Shezan on Victoria Road served good food and tasty snacks. It was quite spacious and the hall inside and the one on the first floor were reserved for parties.

Shezan opened its first branch in the shopping area of the Service's Club, opposite Hotel Metropole, which was christened Ampis. The restaurant is still there. But Shezan is not. It yielded place to an ugly building which houses small electronic goods stores. Shezan was not the place for students for it was one restaurant where you read the menu from right to left. Next door to Shezan was a sister company, Shahnawaz which had a workshop and service station for Volkswagen cars and vans. Rechristened Modern Motors, the workshop moved to the lane behind the PIDC House. That part of Abdulla Haroon Road has now nothing but shops for cellphones and electronic goods. On the

The Ideal Life Assurance Company's building, Zebunnisa Street.

of the East Pakistani hit film *Talash* brought an entourage of the East wing's artistes (which included a bashful teenager by the name of Shabnam), they stayed at the economical Hotel Farooq. It offered just a clean sparsely furnished room with an attached bathroom, and the single room's rent was only fourteen rupees.

For those who loved the Bombay style *khichra* or the Parsi delicacy *dhansak,* the ideal place for lunch and dinner was Pioneer Coffee House, which was set up by one Mr Merchant, who started his career as a coffee-taster with the India Coffee Board in the forties. During the partition riots in Bombay, when no Hindu or Sikh was willing to work at the Mohammad Ali Road branch of India Coffee House, Merchant was sent by the management to run the branch in what is still a predominantly Muslim area. Soon after Partition, he was transferred to Karachi, where he ran the branch until the Coffee Board sold the only branch in the city to Zelins.

Merchant set up the Pioneer Coffee House on Victoria Road and ran it with distinction. He introduced several dishes, and on meatless days the one specialty which attracted a lot of gourmets was the vegetarian *thali.*

He tried to establish another branch on Allama Iqbal Road in PECHS, but had to give up soon, when his under-study and half-brother jilted him to start Alpha Coffee House on Inveriarity Road (now Sarwar Shaheed Road), which initially served more or less the same cuisine as Pioneer. But Alpha, which is still there, was never anything more than a clone of Pioneer's.

The senior Mr Merchant, who later ran the canteen at the newly set up Aga Khan Hospital and made an abortive attempt to start Pioneer Coffee House on a small premises close to the Liaquat National Library on Stadium Road, was an obliging person. He refused to charge anything from those who supported him in his earlier days, and when they insisted on paying he gave them a fat discount. Once I took a vegetarian friend of mine, Kishore Bhimani, the former Sports Editor of *The Statesman*, Kolkata, to Pioneer on Victoria Road. It wasn't a meatless day so vegetarian *thali* was not on the day's menu, but when I told Merchant about Bhimani's culinary limitations, he offered to make two *thalis* especially for us. All he asked for was an hour's notice. Returning from the shopping spree we found hot vegetable delicacies and freshly fried *puris* waiting for us. The last that one heard about Merchant was that he had migrated to Canada, where his sons had settled. A more economical restaurant serving Bombay style food was Cafe Oxford. It was known for its tea, which was pre-mixed with milk and a generous quantity of sugar. Quite a few people thought that the management added something to it which made the tea quite addictive. But the food was quite tasty. The Bombay-style *nan chanp*—a flat rounded bread served with delicious minced meat—attracted gourmets from far and wide. They felt that it was Karachi's answer to Bombay's Pydhonie *nan chanp*. On the two meatless days, Mondays and Tuesdays, one could find seats relatively

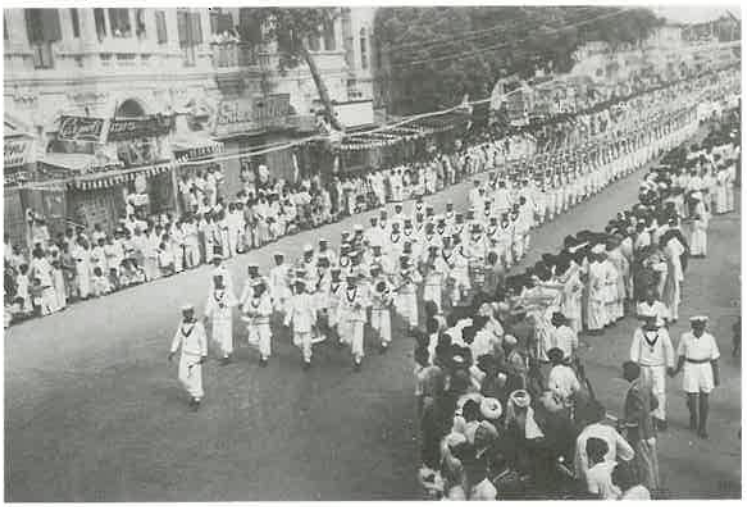
The one restaurant where you could get the best chicken patties in town was Pereira's, which was housed in the same building as Pereira's Bakery. But the piece-de-resistance of the restaurant was its Goan cuisine. What a pity you can't get spicy Goan food in any restaurant now.

A stall in Bohri Bazaar served mouth-watering *chaat*, *dahi badey* and *choley*. It was a haunt of the ladies who went there shopping. Two places, one opposite the Parsi Fire Temple and the other on the opposite footpath served Bombay style *bhelpuri*. They are both there even now but they have ceased to enjoy the kind of clientele they did until a couple of decades ago. Baloch Ice Cream in Bohri Bazaar, is one place, which has gone from strength to strength. Its *faluda* was as popular as Pioneer's, and in so far as ice creams are concerned, it was second only to KWality. Today Iceberg, a small ice cream joint not too far from Baloch, is the haunt of those who love ice cream made of seasonal fruits.

Back to the sixties and seventies, for those who could afford to pay in double figures, there was nothing to beat Shezan Surprise, which was both filling and extremely delicious.

There was also a modest Gulzar Restaurant, which was there from pre-partitioned days. Years after partition when the Indian singer C.H. Atma, visited his native town, he made it a point to go to Gulzar Restaurant for a cup of steaming *chai*. Those who frequented the teashop before August 1947 remember the crowd of intellectuals and writers who assembled there almost every evening for lively discussions accompanied with its sugary tea and *maska-bun*. Freshly baked buns, with a thick layer of butter placed between the two halves, were a specialty of almost all Irani restaurants. Very few of them are left all over Karachi, but unlike the Malbari restaurants they haven't become extinct as yet. As the clients went to the counter to make payment, the waiter yelled *'Kali qameez waley ka eik rupya'* or *'Topi waley saab kay bara aney'*. Sometimes one would hear less charitable remarks like *'Motay aadmi ka do rupya'*. I remember hearing once *'Khaya piya kuch nahin, glass toda eik rupya.'* That was for someone who broke a glass but had

The Navy march past, Saddar.



View of Elphinstone Street, note: the buildings are no longer in existence. (Middle) Bliss and Company, (Right) Haydn and Company.

easily both on the ground floor and the mezzanine floor, which was meant for families.

Cafe George, remembered for its succulent mutton patties, and Cafe Parisian were the haunts of people who had quite a lot of time at their disposal. That was well before fast food, or as one cynic calls it fast fodder, became a fad in Karachi. The food at these Irani restaurants, as also in the more economical Boman Abadan Irani, was reasonably good. The advantage of going to Boman's eatery was that you could give your pair of shoes to one of the many Pathan shoeshine boys who sat in a row on the footpath, and borrow a *chappal* from him. By the time you were through with your cup of tea and his famous saltish puff biscuits, your pair of shoes was ready—shining like a piece of mirror as each one of the shoeshine boys claimed.

On the upper storey of the nearby Capitol cinema was Flamingo Restaurant where they served the best cold coffee in town. With the demolition of Capitol cinema, the restaurant also kicked the bucket. But the one to disappear much earlier, in fact before the onset of the sixties was the chic Gaylords Restaurant.

The most popular form of entertainment during the fifties and sixties was the cinema. Movie-going used to be an outing for the family or for a group of friends which had to be planned for at least a couple of days ahead when tickets were booked in advance. Every day there were three shows, but on Sunday which was a weekly holiday, until Mr Bhutto changed it to Friday, shortly before he was removed, there was also a morning show. Some of the old hits were screened at that hour. Nawaz Sharif, in his second term as the country's prime minister, restored Sunday as a weekly holiday.

At the turn of the fifties there were four cinema houses in Saddar. Rex was the first theatre to be centrally airconditioned. Some of the finest English movies were screened there. Owned by one Mr Yousuf Mitha, Rex had the honour of being the venue of the first and the only international film festival, until the Kara Film Festival started earlier in the present decade.

The film festival at Rex, held in the sixties, attracted film buffs and serious students of cinema, who saw such classics as Andrez Wajda's Polish classic *Kanal*, the memorable French movie *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, the brilliant Russian adaptation of *Hamlet* and Satyajit Ray's *Mahanagar*. One movie was shown in all the three shows on one particular day, but in the case of *Mahanagar*, when East Pakistanis living in Karachi thronged the movie house there were two extra shows after midnight. One Mr Mahmoud Fareedon had organized the film festival and had promised to hold one every year, but we never heard of him after the festival.

Rex was also the venue of a Czech film festival which astounded the movie-goers with some of the most outstanding pieces of celluloid. *Carriage to Vienna* and *Closely Watched Trains*, which were part of the fare, were in the same league as the movies of Kursowa and De Sica. Likewise, we saw some of the masterpieces of Eastern European cinema when a Polish film festival was held at Rex.

There were four more movie houses in Saddar in 1950. These included Regal, which didn't rank too high in the list of cinemas, and the two English theatres—Paradise and Capitol. These two were owned by one Mr Mobed, a Parsi. While Paradise occasionally screened Urdu movies as well, Capitol was snobbish enough to show only English language films. Both the cinema houses yielded place to shopping centres.

More art deco on Victoria Road.

Art deco building on Abdullah Haroon Road, which housed the famous Café George.

just enough money to pay damages. The poor man didn't have even a cup of tea, which in such modest restaurants was for an anna and a half (nine paisas).

Of the many restaurants in Saddar, hardly two or three remain. The rest have yielded place to shopping centres. Running restaurants and coffee houses became a non-lucrative business. The main reason behind their disappearance was that the price of real estate became too attractive to be resisted, which was why the owners disposed of their restaurants. The Iranis and the Malbaris (from Kerala), who were very much into the restaurant business until the eighties, have almost disappeared.

Until Mr Z.A. Bhutto banned drinking during his twilight days as the country's chief executive, bars were not too uncommon a sight in Karachi. Palmgrove on Elphinstone Street-Inveriarity Road junction had a large garden which came to life in the evenings. The poor people went to toddy shops and the biggest one of them was opposite the Empress Market.

Floor shows and cabarets were a regular attraction in quite a few three-star and four-star hotels in Karachi. In Saddar the only place which offered this kind of fare was Hotel Excelsior and the cover charges until the end of the sixties were to the tune of Rs 25 per head, which was more than adequate to cover a sumptuous supper as well. The floor shows were banned in the seventies during the Martial Law regime of General Ziaul Haq.

Detail.

the shop and he specialised in Bengali books and magazines. It was referred to as Dacca Book Stall and strangely enough there was no board to announce the name of the bookstall. Haji Saheb, who was from what was then East Pakistan, was helped by one of his sons. One not so fine morning the son disappeared. He went to Lahore to become a film actor. Haji Saheb had a difficult time persuading his son to come back. The bookshop closed down when Haji Saheb quietly went away to Bangladesh in 1972.

A few steps away from Dacca Book Stall was yet another bookstall. It was adjacent to the staircase of Eastern Coffee House. Again without any board, the bookshop specialised in paperbacks. In the same row as this bookshop was Paramount Book Stall. That was quite a large bookstore and it had books on a wide variety of subjects. Books were not the only source of income for Salehbhai, the owner of Paramount Book Stall, also had the agency for *Newsweek* magazine. His elder brother Suleman, who owned the Paradise Subscription Agency near Masjid-e-Khizra was the agent for *Time, Life* and *Readers Digest.*

The man who made it really big was Hussainbhai, who started with a small bookstall in the Capitol cinema lane. His Liberty Bookshop was crammed with books and didn't leave any space for him. The man really worked hard and by the time he died in 1996, he had become one of the largest importers of books and magazines, with retail outlets in three five-star hotels. His sons now run his business.

Among the vanishing bookshops was Greenwich, which had a section on books and another on watches. There were quite a few bookshops which dealt exclusively with school and college books and the leading one was Anthony Couthino & Company on what was then Clarke Street (now Shahrah-e-Iraq), close to St. Joseph's College. Opposite Anthony Couthino & Company was Book Centre, which had a wide range of comics and storybooks. But the owner, Malik Noorani, closed the outlet to specialise in law books. He is remembered not so much for his business in law books as for pioneering the publication of literary books in Karachi. In those days there was a strong feeling that Urdu books of any standard could only be published in Lahore, but Malik Noorani made *Maktabaye Danial* his labour of love and was supported by such eminent literary figures as Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Syed Sibte Hasan and Mushtaq Ahmad Yousufi. Maktabaye Danial is still housed in the same building—Victoria Chambers, opposite Jabees Hotel.

If Thomas & Thomas was the haunt of students of English Literature, Kitab Mahal was one place where lovers of Urdu converged. Agha Zarkhusht who ran the bookshop was himself a writer and a venerable personality. There has been no bookshop in Karachi which specialises in books on Urdu literature and language ever since Kitab Mahal closed down.

Hameed Kashmiri, the noted short story writer turned playwright, ran a small bookstall on Elphinstone Street too and in the evening the place became a rendezvous for fledgling writers.

But perhaps the oldest of all cinema houses in Saddar was the open-air theatre Mayfair, where only two shows used to be held after sunset. Since it had no roof, Mayfair was exposed to the vagaries of nature and also the noise of the increasing traffic drowned the sound of the movie, which was why it was closed down by the end of the fifties.

The cinema houses to be built in the fifties included Odeon near Regal cinema and Rio on Elphinstone Street. The former showed Indian and Pakistani movies but Rio, which made its debut with the screening of Sophia Loren starrer *Attila the Hun*, catered for the viewers of English movies. However, Rio didn't have the kind of reputation that Rex and Palace or for that matter Capitol and Paradise enjoyed. Often a strip of a blue-film used to be attached to the main movie to draw extra crowd, which explains why one avoided going there with one's family.

Two new cinema houses were built on Garden Road—Lyric and Bambino in the early sixties. Only English movies were released there. Such heavy-budgeted movies as *Cleopatra* and *Lawrence of Arabia* were first released in Pakistan in Bambino, which is still there. Soon after the start of these two cinema houses, a mini cinema, Scala, was opened with the screening of a Russian classic—*I've bought myself a father.* The management announced that only masterpieces of cinema would be released in Scala, but it seemed that they could not get enough of them. But the undoing of Scala was its faulty seating system. One could hardly see the screen, because the heads and necks of people sitting ahead of you blocked the view. Since the small show house was not planned when the building was being constructed, there was no slope on the flooring.

For the lovers of Russian Cinema, Voks Library run by the Soviet Embassy used to hold shows of such Russian classics as *Ballad of a Soldier, The Cranes are Flying* and *Peace to him who Enters* were among the masterpieces screened there. But going to Voks library, which was a forerunner of Friendship House, established in the seventies, was quite a hassle because the Intelligence guys grilled you the moment you left the place.

Voks Library was bang opposite one of the most beautiful buildings Saddar had. It was called the Bliss and Company Building. It was pulled down in the eighties when there was no legislation against the demolition of good old buildings in Karachi.

Saddar was in those days also the book lovers' paradise. Of the twelve to fifteen bookshops in Saddar, only one remains—Thomas & Thomas Bookshop. The first casualty was in the late forties when the English Book House was sold by a Hindu bookseller who migrated to India. Next to English Book House was his brother's shop—English Boot House, which has gone from strength to strength, thanks to the business acumen of the senior partner Kamil Mian, a cousin of Justice Ajmal Mian. Thomas & Thomas was the haunt of the students of English Literature and Mr Nazeer who was a partner made it a point to give generous discounts to students. Not too far from Mr Nazeer's bookshop was a small kiosk just below the Eastern Coffee House. One Haji Saheb ran

building on Dundas Street, that connected Victoria Road with Elphinstone Street. Then there was the Abbas School of Ballroom Dancing, which closed down in the sixties as ballroom dancing went out of vogue.

Surprisingly enough, there was just one garden in the whole of Saddar. Jahangir Park, near the Empress Market, remains the only breathing place for people who go to Saddar, despite the congestion on all its four sides. The tall palm trees that one sees at Jahangir Park today were planted in the sixties when the place was given a facelift.

Among the endearing personalities of Saddar were the two brothers who owned Khan & Company, which specialised in shoes for males. They were sticklers for perfection and reminded one of the Gessler brothers, the two shoemakers in John Galsworthy's memorable short story *Quality*. The senior Mr Khan was a great admirer of the veteran Indian journalist, Frank Moraes. Every evening he used to get *The Times of India,* Bombay, which Moraes used to edit, and the day the accomplished journalist left his job to join the *Indian Express* as its editor, Mr Khan told his newspaper hawker to start delivering him *Indian Express* instead. The two papers used to be flown to Karachi by the afternoon flight from Bombay.

People like the Khans and Sethna are no more and Saddar too has lost much of its importance but there are still a good number of people who drift down memory lane. The Saddar of the fifties and the sixties is firmly etched in their memory.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar—'The Frontier Gandhi'—at Karachi Cantonment Station.

A Victoria carriage in front of Frere Hall, Fin de Siecle.

Like Hussainbhai and Salehbhai of Liberty and Paramount, Shams Qureishi, the doyen of booksellers closed down his retail outlet—Mackwin & Company on Inveriarity Road and concentrated on imports.

For second-hand books and magazines one visited Tit Bit Book Stall and Variety Book Stall both close to the Parsi Fire Temple. The other place where one could find second-hand books was the footpath near Thomas & Thomas. Now only on Sundays second-hand books are sold on the pavements in that part of Saddar.

Of all the ethnic races that lived in Saddar, the Goans were the ones who dominated the locality. In the evenings they frequented the KGA club near Grammar School in smart clothes and on Sundays they went to the church. But like the Parsis, which formed another strong ethnic group in Saddar, they migrated in large numbers to North America and Australia. Now very few of them are still there. The flavour they lent to Saddar is, sadly, missing today.

One place which needs to be mentioned was the music school which was run by the Gramophone Company of Pakistan (later EMI) on the first floor of a small non-descript

FOURTEEN

AN EVER EXPANDING CANVAS

MARJORIE HUSAIN

Pakistan is a nation young in years but nurtured in the soil that cradled one of the first great civilizations of the world: The Indus Valley Civilization (*c.* 2300 BC), with twin capital cities sited in Pakistan: Mohenjodaro in Sindh, and Harrapa in the Punjab. Hundreds of carved seals made of steatite are considered by historians to be the earliest art pieces found in the subcontinent. From Mohenjodaro too, emerged the earliest major metal artwork of the subcontinent, a bronze figurine, four inches high, of a female depicted in a dance pose.

Located forty miles from Karachi is the town of Bhambore, once a flourishing sea-port town known as Deebal that already boasted a long tradition of pottery and decorative arts when invaded by the young Arab warrior, Mohammad Bin Qasim in AD 711. Though these historic sites were lost to history for many years, their arts survived, emerging as motifs in diverse traditions throughout the subcontinent.

Before the partition of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, a diverse and intricate heritage of oriental and western traditions was discernable in various schools of art. From Gandhara came sculpture influenced by Greek and Italian artists. The Mughal emperors were the patrons of album painters or miniaturists who assimilated into their work art elements from Persia, China, and Europe. From Calcutta emerged the New Bengal School of Art which adapted a Japanese method of watercolour painting to a miniature school of art ethos; and a hybrid art known as 'Company Art', was initiated by the tastes of foreign rulers.

Pre-Partition art activity in Karachi was overshadowed by the city's reputation as a busy commercial sea-port. That there had been an art school in Karachi before 1947, we know from references left by the late Sughra Rababi (1921–95). While a student of St. Joseph's Convent School, Sughra won top honours in an art competition organized by the All Sindh and Bombay Art Committee. The award led to her admission in a prestigious

Atiya Rahamin, portrait by Fyzee Rahamin.

Another prominent artist of the era was the portraitist S.H. Askari, who left his home in Lucknow to settle in Karachi where he painted numerous studies of the Quaid-i-Azam. One of the few landscape painters in Karachi in the early fifties, Mohammed Husain Hanjra, was a graduate of the Mayo School and a student of Ustad Allah Bukhsh.

Initially, there were no art galleries or regular exhibition centres in Karachi. When Zubeida Agha, sponsored by the Fine Arts Society, displayed a collection of abstract paintings in 1949, the venue was the YMCA. It was the first exhibition of abstract art in the country as well as the first solo exhibition by a woman artist and it created considerable controversy. Attiya Begum wrote letters to the press decrying the young artist's work as 'addled art'. Others spoke out in Zubeida's favour. Perhaps Attiya realized that the winds of change were beginning to blow. Nothing could stop contemporary art movements from taking root in the soil of Pakistan. Academics such as Fyzee were overshadowed by a new freedom of style.

The 1950s saw a number of important art developments. A group of concerned people worked at fund raising in order to establish an art centre in Karachi, and in 1953 their ambitions were realized. The Karachi Art Council was established and the scope of cultural activities expanded. Art classes were held and exhibitions mounted. The media supported artists with considerable news space devoted to reviews of their work. In art circles the dramatic impact of Sadequain and Gulgee gave rise to excitement.

Red Flower by Zubeida Agha, 1989.

It was Sadequain's ambition to paint murals throughout Pakistan, where they could be enjoyed by the masses. He painted his first mural in 1955, and his work was seen by countless citizens at the Jinnah Hospital, the Karachi airport and the State Bank. The artist's first solo exhibition in Karachi in 1955 was held at the residence of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, then Foreign

Karachi art institute, the Sarangati Art School, affiliated to Tagore's Shantiniketan University. Yet artists such as Ajmal Hussain, who arrived in Karachi in 1947, and A.S. Nagi who came from Delhi, found no established art traditions and so initiated their own.

In Lahore, influenced by the New Bengal School, small scale soft watercolour paintings prevailed, propagated by teachers trained in the Calcutta School of Art. A.R. Chughtai and Ustad Allah Bukhsh, both of whom had enjoyed considerable acclaim and patronage from the Indian princely states, abandoned subjects linked to Hindu mythology and introduced their own unique styles. Chughtai's romantic watercolour paintings depicted Pakistan's folk stories, or languid beauties assimilating detailed architectural elements from the Mughal era. His paintings exemplified works of the great poets published in book form and he produced hundreds of exquisite etchings. Ustad Allah Bukhsh portrayed in his paintings the robust customs and traditions of rural Punjab. Miniaturists Haji Shareef and Sheikh Shujaullah reproduced the miniature paintings of a bygone era, in an effort to keep the art of miniature painting alive.

As the capital city at that time, Karachi attracted young painters from many parts of the subcontinent. Eager for fresh stimuli, they explored the exciting modern art movements of pre-war Europe. More than a decade was to pass before artists began to re-examine their own cultural traditions, and to assimilate art forms of the past in contemporary methods.

There was a shop in Saddar, which amongst other items, sold the accoutrements of art. Since this was the only art material outlet at that time, it was here the artists inevitably met. A.S. Nagi's studio, in the Saddar area behind Paradise Cinema, became the focal point of artists newly arrived in Karachi. There they gathered to talk, paint and make plans for the future. The first Fine Arts Association was formed, and at weekends artists would make excursions to Malir or Korangi to paint and sketch.

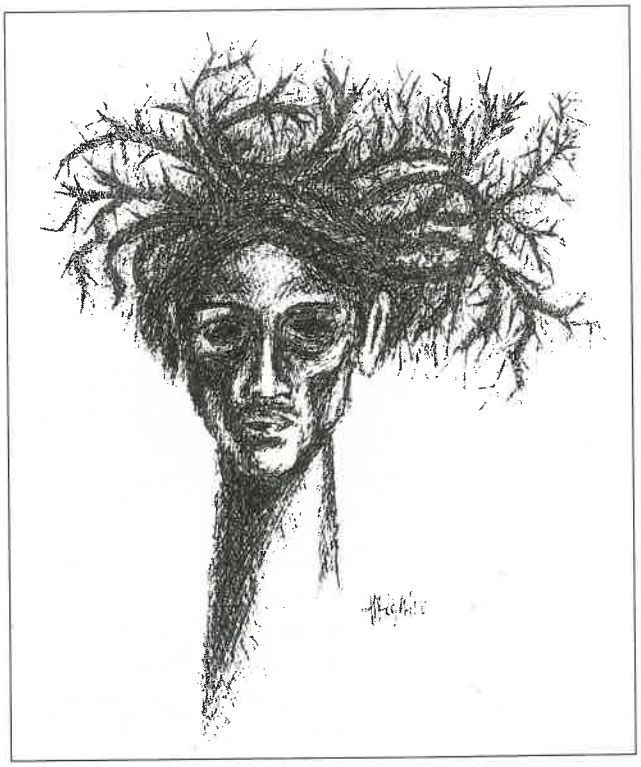
Fyzee Rahamin had studied at the Royal College of Art, and then worked with John Singer Sargent, the most admired portraitist of his day. Well versed in the classic western traditions as well as eastern art, Fyzee returned to his homeland with the aspiration of revitalizing the art of the subcontinent. Decorating the Imperial Secretariat, Delhi, in 1925, Fyzee blended aspects of Mughal miniature art into large panels. In 1947, at the behest of the Quaid-i-Azam, the artist and his wife left their home in Bombay to settle in Karachi. The Aiwan-i-Riffat, established in Karachi by Fyzee Rahamin and his wife Attiya Begum, was an important cultural centre. The distinguished portrait painter and his wife held Friday afternoon tea-parties for guests from all branches of the arts. Attiya, who had been the first young woman from India to go abroad for higher education, and Fyzee introduced to their circle many unknown young talents. Laila Shahzada exhibited her work for the first time at their residence.

Shakir Ali was committed to the analytical intent of Cubism and its geometric connections. His art background encompassed London, and Paris, where he sought out the Cubist artist André Lhote. In 1950, while attending a scholarship course at the School of Industrial Design, Prague, Shakir Ali joined a team of Peace Corps students who set out to rebuild the razed city of Lidice, destroyed with all its inhabitants as a reprisal act during the Second World War. Deeply affected, the artist witnessed tiny green shoots pushing their way tenaciously through the scorched earth, and the sound of a bird's song was a phenomenon that affected him deeply and was to have profound influence on his work.

When Shakir Ali arrived in Karachi in 1953, he looked for work in the city but there was little scope for a man of his calibre. The only job available was that of a drawing master in a children's school with a pittance of a salary. He soon left for Lahore and with Zubeida Agha and Zainul Abedin; he pioneered a modern art movement. The Mayo School of Art, in 1960, was restructured as the National College of Arts. Shakir Ali's tenure as principal of the school can be looked back upon as a golden chapter in the history of Pakistan's art.

Sadequain.

From the series Cobwebs, Sadequain.



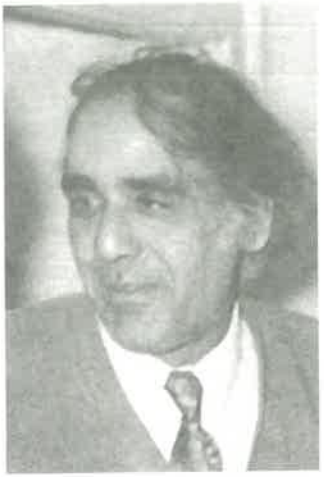
Shakir Ali's profound understanding of modern art attracted around him a group of lively young artists who were to

Minister of Pakistan. Later, during a stay near Gadani Beach where he had gone in search of solitude and peace, Sadequain underwent a revelation. He saw the moonlight reflected on tall cacti plants, which in his artist's vision appeared transformed into turreted castles, towns and figures raising their arms in supplication. Thus began the artist's renowned Cacti period, which broke new grounds in art. In 1961 Sadequain's painting: *The Last Supper* earned him an award at the Biennale de Paris. In Pakistan, he was honoured with the President's Pride of Performance Award in 1962. Sadequain was a prolific painter, one of his renowned series of paintings portrayed crows and cobwebs symbolizing an effete, uncaring society. Sadequain used his art as a medium to express ironic social comments. The artist's enormous murals are to be found in almost every city of Pakistan, the recurring theme depicting man's lifelong struggle and search for peace. In his later years, Sadequain turned to calligraphy starting a new train of thought. Coinciding with the mood of the times, calligraphy changed the direction of art for a decade. Sadequain's last work was a mural intended to cover the ceiling of Frere Hall, Karachi, in the hall renamed the Sadequain Gallery. Sadly, it remained unfinished at the time of his death in 1987.

Trained as an engineer, Gulgee was much sought after as a portraitist, but he preferred a more expressive, individual method sweeping paint filled brushes across large canvases. Gulgee's exuberant abstracts developed into gestural calligraphy and influenced by Islamic cultural traditions he incorporated mosaic and enamel work, precious stones, fragmented mirrors, gold and silver foil. Mosaic portraits in jade and lapis lazuli were admired by royalty and heads of state in many countries of the world, but it is in the divinely inspired gestural work that the essence of the artist can be discerned.

Woman and Pigeon, Jamil Naqsh, 1996.

There was also a well stocked library of art books, which artists such as Jamil Naqsh, Kohari, and Mansur Aye thoroughly appreciated.



Ahmed Parvez: affectionately referred to as the artists' artist.

In the sixties, a new generation of artists made their presence felt in Karachi. In those days the foreign missions were situated in Karachi and many of the embassies were staffed with art enthusiasts. They sought out artists in their studios, attended exhibitions and took an interest in the artists and their work. It became customary for foreign patrons to hold receptions in their homes to launch artists such as Masood Kohari and Bashir Mirza who in 1963, held his first solo exhibition in the residence of the then Nigerian ambassador. Laila Shahzada, Jamil Naqsh, Mansur Rahi, Hajra and Rabia Zuberi, Jamil Ahmed, Rumana Saeed, Naz Ikramullah and Shahid Sajjad all exhibited their work at the Arts Council or the PACC.

Advertising Agencies opening up in Karachi were to flourish and multiply, giving employment to numerous artists, including Bashir Mirza, Shahid Sajjad, Sardar, Jamil Naqsh, Maqsood Ali, Mansur Aye and many others.

Photograph taken in January 1981 at the preview of an exhibition by Abdul Wahab Jaffer, shows (from L to R) Kadir Nizamani, Anwer Mooraj, Bashir Mirza, Laila Shahzada and A. Wahab Jaffer.

Acrylic on Canvas, 2008, Rashid Arshed.

emerge as Pakistan's first generation of painters. Among them Ahmed Parvez and Ali Imam were to have a considerable influence in Karachi, Parvez as a painter and Imam as an art dealer.

Art education was the *raison d'etre* of Anna Molka Ahmed who established a Fine Arts Department at the Punjab University in 1940. After partition, she was left with only six students and had to restructure and rebuild the department. She enlisted the assistance of Khalid Iqbal, the distinguished teacher and artist who had trained with Sir William Coldstream at the Slade School of Art, London, and in 1955, when male students were admitted to the University Fine Arts Department for the first time, Khalid Iqbal was their instructor. It was Anna Molka's ambition to train teachers from all the provinces of Pakistan, in order that art be taught throughout the country. These developments affected events in Karachi, where artists from Lahore art establishments came to seek their living.

From Lahore, Sheikh Ahmed, who had in London taught at the Central School of Arts, arrived in Karachi, distancing himself from his estranged wife, Anna Molka Ahmed, and leaving his teaching post at the Mayo School of Art. He made his studio in Karachi and with a few chosen pupils worked on a series of book illustrations commissioned by American publishers. Sheikh Ahmed's most talented and devoted student, Aftab Zaffar, years later became a noted teacher, artist and illustrator in his own right.

Pakistan's first conceptual artist, Rashid Arain, discovered a discarded cycle wheel in Karachi, in 1954. Throwing the object on a fire to melt the rubber, he extracted the misshapen metal relic and created a sculpture. Rashid Arain eventually gained a reputation in Europe as the 'voice' of third world artists, and for many years published a significant art journal *The Third Text*.

A USIS sponsored sketch club was extremely popular with young artists. Classes were conducted by a Japanese American art teacher and sketching materials were provided to the artists without cost.

Fabulist, Unver Shafi Khan.

Composition by Ahmed Pervez, 1977.

Mansur Rahi, from the Dhaka School of Art. In premises more suitable for a school, Mansur restructured the curriculum and became the first Principal of the Karachi School of Art. The institute was established in a working class area and it changed attitudes towards art, training successive generations for professional careers as designers, studio artists and teachers. With competitive agencies opening up in the city, textile businesses and the advent of Pakistan Television, new avenues of employment opened up for trained artists.

War with India in 1965 deeply affected local artists who investigated the war ravaged areas of the country and expressed their horror through their art. Bashir Mirza was among the artists who visited war torn villages and exhibited haunting work filled with anguish and emphasizing the cruelty of needless violence. One year later, Anna Molka Ahmed, who rarely exhibited her work, showed a very powerful anti-war body of work at the PACC, Karachi.

The scheduled opening of Bashir Mirza's art gallery, simply known as 'The Gallery,' situated on Kutchery Road, was, because of the war, postponed until the end of 1965. When it opened, 'The Gallery,' as Pakistan's first commercial art outlet, attracted an interesting audience of art enthusiasts. A brilliant draughtsman, B.M. (as he was known) produced a set of drawings, *Portrait of Pakistan,* which were printed and enclosed in a chic, black and gold folder which sold by the hundreds to local and foreign buyers.

Woman and Flower by Bashir Mirza, 1989.

In 1966, the Central Institute of Arts and Crafts was established in the Arts Council premises, with sculptor-painter Ozzir Zuby as the first principal, and was to produce several talents of note. Another lively and popular venue for cultural programmes, art exhibitions and art classes was the Pakistan American Cultural Center, where Mr Salman presided as Director and he was an enthusiastic, committed and much respected figure in local art events.

From the Drift Moods series, Laila Shahzada.

In the early sixties, Mr Hashim, who owned the Karachi Auction Mart, held several popular receptions in which invited guests, diplomats and artists participated. The *raison d'etre* of these events was painting auctions in which brisk bidding took place.

Laila Shahzada, made news in 1964, with an exhibition of paintings she called *Drift Moods.* A beautiful woman, Laila had struggled against a male dominated art circle that labelled her as a painter of 'pretty pictures'. She came into her own, influenced by driftwood gathered on Clifton beach, pieces, twisted into unnatural shapes by the churning waters of the ocean. The artist equated the driftwood with the human condition, people forced into distorted life patterns by conventions and social obligations. With thick and rapid brush strokes, Laila painted twisted branches, vibrant with energy and anguish; far different from the early gentle paintings.

Laila was the first artist to draw upon the Indus Valley Civilization for inspiration, and a series of paintings: *Mohenjodaro,* were shown at the Runyon Winchell Gallery New York in 1975 and earned her the Bicentennial Medallion, Citation and Key to the city of New York. She continued to exhibit her work in Karachi and London. In 1994, her work was included in a major group show of Pakistan's artists at the Pacific Asia Museum, California USA. In 1996, she was posthumously awarded the President's Pride of Performance.

Art Caravan, Sculpture and painting adorn a mobile art gallery, Karachi School of Art.

The Zuberi sisters, sculptor Rabia and painter Hajra, graduated from the Lucknow College of Art in 1963, and settled in Karachi. Finding the city lacked art institutes, they began art classes in their home. The first batch of fifteen girls, which included Sumbal Nazir, filled their residence. In 1965, the Zuberi sisters were joined by the talented Bengali artist,

Salahuddin, were among the artists from Lahore who exhibited their work at The Gallery. Laila Shahzada, Hamidur Rahman, Rabia Zuberi, Hajra Zuberi, Mansur Rahi, Parvez, Lubna Agha, Shakira Hadi, Ajmal, Kohari, Gulgee, Sadequain, Maqsood Ali, Mansur Aye, Sardar and Jamil Naqsh, showed their paintings at The Gallery, in exhibitions that germinated art collectors.

The matchless artist A.R. Chughtai, sent his brother, who managed the artist's affairs, regularly to The Gallery, bringing the artist's work from Lahore. Until the Indus Gallery opened in 1971, The Gallery, was the pioneer commercial art gallery in the country.

Karachi entered a prosperous era. Multinational companies invested in Pakistan, impressive homes and offices were built and Chief Executives began to look for paintings to adorn their walls. Until that time, there had been virtually no art market, and little demand for art. Jamil Naqsh relates that in an exhibition of his work held at the Karachi Arts Council in 1960, of one hundred paintings displayed, only three were purchased for the grand sum of Rs.100 each. Even the Arts Council Committee, distinguished members of society, could not be prevailed upon to purchase art.

In the seventies the Karachi business community began to purchase works of art and expatriates contributed to the growing interest in art and artists in Karachi. In 1971 S. Ali Imam resigned as principal of the Central Institute of Arts and Crafts to begin a

Sculpture, Rabia Zuberi, Karachi School of Art.

The art circle widened as Bengali artists had settled in Karachi, fresh from the Dhaka School of Art, they included Mobinul Azim, Murtaza Bashir, Nurul Islam and Hamidur Rehman.

Sardar Mohammad had already developed the stylized 'folk art' painting that became his signature work. Ahmed Parvez and Ali Imam returned from England to settle in Karachi, Parvez as a painter, and Imam as principal of the Central Institute of Arts and Crafts. In 1968, Ali Imam was awarded the President's Pride of Performance, but Parvez was to wait another decade for official recognition.

A landmark in art happenings was the American sponsored three month long workshop in Karachi at the PACC in 1967. It was conducted by the American printmaker Michael Ponce de Leon, who introduced to etching and printmaking a group of thirty selected artists from both wings of the country. There was Ghulam Rasul, who went on to take a Master's in printmaking, in the USA. Mahmudul Haque and Alvi from the Dacca School of Art, Bashir Mirza, Ahmed Khan, Naz Ikramullah, Shahid Sajjad, and Saeed Akhter were among the artists whose prints were acquired by the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.

Sculpture by Amin Gulgee, bronze.

After Bashir Mirza left Pakistan for a two year tour of Europe, The Gallery was shifted to the Sindhi Muslim Housing Society, and continued to function under the auspices of Sultan Mahmood, an advertising magnate and one of the country's first art collectors. 1970 was the year that a significant art market first began in Karachi and artists from Lahore such as Colin David, Ahmed Khan, Saeed Akhtar, and ceramist Mian

Sadequain travelled extensively and displayed his work in many countries. For the first time, a group exhibition from Pakistan including several Karachi artists was held at the Commonwealth Institute, London.

The decade of the 1970s saw the departure of notable Bengali artists to newly created Bangladesh, including Zainul Abedin, Hamidur Rahman and Mobinul Azim. In 1972, government policies included the nationalization of Wahab Jaffer's business interests and from that time Wahab's commitment was totally to art. He developed his talent as a painter working in the studios of Ali Imam and Ahmed Parvez, and from 1983, showed his work regularly in exhibition. At that time he began the documentation and collection of art that was to make him one of the most important art collectors in the country.

Mother and Child, Nahid Raza, Oil on board, 1998.

Victims of the System, A.R. Nagori.

successful career as an art dealer. The Indus Gallery opened and Imam worked hard to guide and to encourage a new breed of art collectors. He was the link between the artist, the media, and the buyer. Because of his links with the Progressive Artist's Movement in Bombay in the forties, artists of the stature of M.F. Hussain and F.N. Souza would quite often exhibit their work at the Indus Gallery.

During the decade of the 70s, women artists had gained in prominence. Lubna Agha influenced her peers painting abstract canvases focusing on large white lozenges of paint, streaked with scarlet. Nahid Raza began to display her work, as did Punjab University trained Mussarat Mirza from Sukkur, Meher Afroz, from the Lucknow College of Art, and Qudsia Nisar from the Punjab University Fine Arts Department. They proved that in the field of fine art in Pakistan women were equal to their male counterparts.

In 1974, A.R. Nagori, Pakistan's first socio-political painter, established the Fine Art Department of Sindh University. He remained as head of the department until his retirement in 1996. Artists tutored by Shakir Ali, others returning from abroad, and vibrant local talents created an active art milieu. Jamil Naqsh stopped exhibiting his work, yet his earlier paintings were displayed by private collectors. Maqsood Ali embarked on an outstanding series of works inspired by Bhitshah. Returning from Europe in 1971, Bashir Mirza exhibited a series called *The Lonely Girl* and made art history. Kohari became involved with ceramics and created unusual and beautiful pieces before moving to France for further study.

Old Thatta, watercolour, Zaheen Ahmed.

The emergence of Islamabad as the new capital city created hardly a ripple in the Karachi art market where local collectors were indulging seriously in art buying. The art centre of Karachi was the Indus Gallery, where lavish receptions preceded art displays. There was a great deal of amusement as well as serious discussion. Ahmed Parvez, brilliant and eccentric, kept art circles buzzing with his antics.

a need to examine their own cultural roots. Some artists adopted their styles to suit the art market. Among the genuine Calligraphers, Shakeel Ismail, who graduated from the Central Institute of Art in 1983, produced interesting work with antique metal objects embossed with script. Shakeel went on to win a national award for his fine art pieces.

For a period of time during the military rule, almost every art exhibition in Karachi appeared to display a number of artist's efforts to portray calligraphy. Artists dealt with popular trends in various individual ways. Many, such as Jamil Naqsh, Mansur Aye, Najmi Sura and Shahid Sajjad, continued to struggle with their own aesthetic problems.

In the 1980s women dominated the art scene, and the feminist point of view emerged as a strong force in art. Nahid Raza, a graduate of the Central School of Arts and Crafts, was the first Pakistani artist to portray the viewpoint of women in a male oriented society. The 1980s were on one hand aesthetically oppressive, yet on the other, showed a number of positive developments. In 1983, an outstanding CIAC art graduate, Saleem Mansur, piled his work on a donkey cart and took it to the interior of Sindh where he set up installations. It was the first venture of its kind in the country. That same year Ghalib Baqar held his first solo exhibition in BM's Gallery 2. Athar Jamal graduated from the Karachi School of Art and began to teach as well as begin his career as a practicing painter.

The interest in printmaking increased as artists experimented with mono printmaking, a form of art that does not require expensive materials. Printmaking became a subject added to the curriculum of local art schools. Mohammed Kazim evolved his own method

Transitions, Naz Ikramullah.

Sculptures, Shahid Sajjad.

Artists in Karachi painted to the dictates of their own taste. Abstract, semi figurative, Cubism and realistic art methods were practiced. In the 1970s, the Karachi School of Art produced an impressive flowering of artists such as Zaheen Ahmed, Anjum Ayaz, Riffat Alvi, Tariq Javed, Pirzhada Najmal Hasan and Mohammad Kazim. Mashkoor Raza began to exhibit his colourful abstracts. Abdul Hayee, Zaheen Ahmed, and Ghalib Baqar reinforced the school's distinguished record of producing outstanding water colourists. A graduate of the Central Institute of Art, Shakeel Siddiqui mastered completely the *trompe-l'oeil* effect, amazing viewers at exhibitions of his work. Meher Afroz held her first ever exhibition of mixed media prints in Karachi in 1974. She was accorded first prize in the graphics section of Pakistan's National Art Exhibition in 1977, and rekindled an interest in printmaking in Karachi that spread to other regions.

In the seventies Najmi Sura exhibited her paintings for the first time ever in a group exhibition, combining traditional eastern elements into a classic style. Najmi's work, in which she enlarged miniature subjects and themes, were finely painted with rich detail, and they created an instant impact among art enthusiasts. In 1978, Ahmed Parvez was awarded the President's Pride of Performance medal—too little, too late. In 1979, he died of the effects of a stroke, still in his early fifties. A sadly troubled human being, his work, vibrant with colour and lyrical movement, belied his mental turbulence.

Traditionally, the status of the written word, integrated textually with pictorial representation, is a fine art form that goes back thousands of years. A number of artists showed renewed interest in the relationship between image and language, promoted by

conscious statement. The emotions of the artist exploded across canvas after canvas with turbulent strokes. Crimes against women and children, bonded labour, deforestation and the hypocrisy of those in high places were recorded and narrated on paintings that became aesthetic banners.

Athar Jamal exhibited watercolour portraits and studies, and rapidly became a favourite with local galleries and collectors. Wandering around Karachi's environs, Athar encapsulated the world of the *katchi abadies* and portrayed the nomadic people and their culture with empathy and dignity. Later he was renowned for a body of work focused on the people of Thar.

Jamil Naqsh, had continued to work in his Karachi studio. Seldom venturing out, he had been honoured in absentia with the Shakir Ali Award in 1980, and in 1989 was awarded the President's Pride of Performance.

In 1985, Laila Shahzada was instrumental in setting up a workshop for truck painters, in which the artists painted on large canvas panels. It was the first attempt made to raise the stature of truck painting to gallery level. The work was exhibited at the Pakistan American Cultural Center, Karachi, and initiated a new awareness of the bright, naïve art form.

Military rule ended and a new decade began, but it was to herald a troubled, bloody time for Karachi. Political differences and ethnic violence became a fact of life in the troubled city. In spite of the constant strikes and fears, exhibitions continued and there was a formidable flowering of a new crop of artists.

Another chapter of art opened in 1989, when the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture opened in Clifton, overlooking the Arabian Sea. It was established by a board of governors and founding member Noorjehan Bilgrami became the first principal. A faculty consisting of distinguished artists initiated successive groups of students into modern art and design methods with a thriving department of architecture.

The work of Roohi Ahmed, a faculty member of IVSAA, raised thought provoking issues by way of 'maps' exhibited in exhibition. Carving on wall based wood surfaces, during Karachi's troubled era, the artist documented her daily journey traversed through disturbed areas from North Nazimabad, to the Indus Valley School in Clifton, and back.

Another expression of the times was the Crotin series of Mehtab Amar Jamal, paintings, in which she used the hardy, tenacious and bright coloured wild plants that grow throughout Karachi, as an allegory for the resilient people of Karachi.

The Alliance Française continued a programme of events including a memorable exhibition of sculpture by local art students. During that time, Qudsia Nisar's veiled

of embossed printmaking which earned him a national award and recognition in foreign countries.

In 1985, the Chawkandi Gallery opened in Clifton and rapidly became a popular outlet. Two years later, the Rangoonwala Centre invited artist Riffat Alvi to become the director of the V.M. Gallery. Run by a trust, the non-profit making gallery offered younger artists, students, and unknown painters the opportunity to exhibit their work. Riffat, whose first solo exhibition was held at Gallery 2 in 1987, built up the V.M. Gallery to become one of the most prestigious galleries in the city.

Shahid Sajjad had already created a powerful body of sculpture carved in wood, when he was asked to sculpt a metal relief depicting the history of the Armoured Corps. His labour of two years resulted in a monumental sculpture in bronze that now takes pride of place in Nowshera. In this work Sajjad transformed a militant subject into a work of art. In 1988, Shahid represented Pakistan at the Seoul Olympics art exhibition and there exhibited a six feet tall carved figure. Bashir Mirza also attended the Seoul Olympics exhibition and presented a painting dedicated to Benazir Bhutto: *The New Mood of the Lonely Girl*, to the Seoul Museum.

During the period of military rule Bashir Mirza, emotionally laid down his brushes for eleven years, refusing to exhibit his work until Martial Law was lifted. When that happened he underwent a painting frenzy, producing portraits of his heroes portrayed on panels ten feet tall. The work was exhibited in a landmark exhibition at the Karachi Arts Council in 1989, titled 'The Dawn of Democracy.' Influenced by his friend F.N. Souza, Bashir Mirza experimented with acrylics for the first time and he was soon making up for the lost years.

From the Thar Series, Athar Jamal.

Professor Nagori, outraged by the wrongs he witnessed in Sindh, began to portray the plight of the people, using oil on small, brilliant hued canvases. Trained as a muralist, Nagori painted his cameos without thought of the art market, hence economics dictated the scale. In 1986, the Indus Gallery cocked a snook at prevailing mores and exhibited his *Alphabet* series in which each letter initiated a socially

Returning from years of study in England, Naiza Khan held her first solo exhibition in Karachi in 1993, and events in Pakistan and foreign countries established her as a National Award winning artist. Her work manifested significant awareness of the possibilities of mass media technique and concepts, challenging perceptions and analyzing the standard interpretations that represent female identity and form in art tradition. Naiza went on to join the faculty of the Indus Valley School, and to become one of the founders of the Triangle Arts Trust known in Pakistan as VASL, uniting artists from foreign countries to work with Pakistan's artists in Karachi. Two of the workshops were held in Gadani, close to the sea, 40 miles from Karachi.

In 1995, the movement to establish the Mohatta Palace Museum was initiated and since 1999, with the cooperation of generous collectors, a number of prestigious exhibitions have taken place. Included among them were *Visions of Divinity: the Art of Gandhara*, an exhibition of modern miniature paintings, and the work of British print artists in the Indus Valley from 1830–1930. An outstanding event that drew a record crowd was the retrospective of Pakistan's iconic artist Sadequain, with an extensive commemorative catalogue. *Sadequain: The Holy Sinner 1954–1987*, was a major exposition of the work and life of the great artist.

In 1997, assisted by students, David and Durriya installed the 'Arz-e-Maood' project on the grass lawns surrounding Galleria Sadequain, Frere Hall. It was a large tented structure fronted by a brightly lit Shadi Gate. There visitors were invited to jot down their dreams and aspirations and pin them to the interior of the installation. Alesworth and Kazi, followed up by installing the 'Heart Mahal' in the Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan, in 1999.

Several mega art events were organized to commemorate Pakistan's Golden Anniversary, in 1997. Among them was an exhibition of contemporary sculpture brought to Karachi by the British Council and displayed at the Hindu Gymkhana. The collection of about 40 artworks titled: A Changed World, included sculpture by Anthony Caro, Tony Cragg, Barry Flanagan, Damien Hirst, Rachel Whiteread, Richard Long, and Richard Wentworth. It was an extraordinary exhibition that delighted Karachi's artists.

Modern Composition by Gulgee.

In 1997, the first museum housing a significant permanent collection

Composition by Qudsia Nisar.

abstracts, Nahid Raza's threatened women, Nagori's brilliant and ironic observations and Wahab Jaffer's androgynous faces of despair, were ways in which these artists expressed their views of the world around them.

A new generation of watercolourists emerged from the Karachi School of Art. Among them was Hanif Shahzad who went on to document the cities streets and architecture. Art activities and development in Karachi have been extremely individual, initiated by artists themselves.

Foreign cultural centres continued to encourage art in the city, and art workshops made news. The Goethe Institute sponsored a number of cultural events offering artists the opportunity to work with their German counterparts.

In the nineties sculptors David Alesworth and Durriya Kazi initiated exciting art happenings. In 1994, they worked with students and teachers of the Karachi School of Art on a mobile art display, a painted truck that was driven throughout Pakistan from Karachi to Islamabad. Two years later, assisted by Iftikar and Elizabeth Dadi, they participated in the 'Containers '96 Display,' in Copenhagen, where the colourful folk aspect of their design won accolades from many countries.

Artists Samina Mansuri, Mona Naqsh and Unver Shafi Khan, Munnawar Ali, and NCA's R.M. Naeem were among the younger artists who exhibited outstanding work in local exhibitions. Young artists and veterans alike expressed socially conscious themes. Students showed an astute awareness of the developments in their city in the subjects they chose for their thesis work.

Cross-cultural activity increased as Pakistan's artists and exhibitions travelled abroad. Foreign artists from Sri Lanka, China, and Nepal showed their work in Karachi. Riffat Alvi travelled to Zimbabwe and there studied a method of painting in which earth pigments were incorporated as media. Her success led to a solo display of her work in the Commonwealth Institute, Leeds, and praise from the legendary British artist, Alan Davie. Further displays followed, including a three month exhibition at the Mermaid Theatre Gallery, London.

Karachi at the Indus Gallery. It was eerily exciting work in which he ridiculed figures of authority, introduced nudes as symbols of innocence, and animals as the heroes of his painted tales. From initially hanging his work on the railings of Hyde Park, he became a sought after artist, represented by a London gallery and appearing in TV interviews. In Karachi, Sohail worked on his memoirs and continued to paint.

Mr Jalaluddin Ahmed, who had for many years been associated with the Art Asia Publication based in London, had returned to Karachi to re-establish FOMMA (Foundation for Museum of Modern Art) in Karachi and re-activate AICA, Art International Critics Association. He became actively involved in art activities in the country and in 2006, was the recipient of a national award.

In 2000, Oxford University Press published the first textbook for art students in the country: *Aspects of Art*, illustrated by Athar Jamal. An initial English version was followed by an Urdu Version in 2003. Several books were published by FOMMA, the first being a monograph of S. Ali Imam following Imam's death in 2002.

In 2003 Rabia Zuberi was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pakistan National Council of the Arts. The same year Rabia sculpted and exhibited a monumental work at the Karachi Arts Council, a monument to peace worked in bronze fibre and steel, standing 7 feet high and 10 feet diameter. The work is now in the collection of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts.

Shahid Sajjad contributed a montage of photographs showing his work in progress, an awe-inspiring collection of colossal wood carvings, to the 8th National Art Exhibition held in Lahore. The most encouraging change in art attitudes in Karachi of recent years has been the interest shown in the previously neglected discipline of sculpture. In Karachi this is largely attributed to the efforts of Canvas gallery, a venue opened in 1999, by Sameera Raja who is an NCA trained architect. Abdul Jabber Gull, and Jamil Baloch were introduced to Karachi art enthusiasts from Canvas gallery and both these sculptors were acknowledged in 2003 by way of National Awards. Tariq Usman Luni is also among the vanguard of young sculptors who exhibited their work in Karachi, and are rapidly gaining the interest of art collectors.

Surprising friends and family alike, Naqsh accompanied by Najmi Sura, celebrated the millennium by leaving the cloistered studio for London and Paris to view the work of the masters in renowned museums and galleries. The extensive retrospective exhibition of Naqsh's work at the Mohatta Palace Museum in 2003, covering five decades of creativity offered an opportunity to view hitherto unseen works of the artist.

In Mirpurkhas, the veteran artist and teacher Lal Mohammad Pathan, continued to paint and prepare students for exhibitions held in Karachi.

of art was established in Karachi as the Maritime Museum, a very important landmark in Karachi's art development. In an old building restructured by Misbah Najmi, the spacious museum is surrounded by grounds containing a lighthouse, sculpture, water and boats. The founder curator of the museum, Commodore Tajuddin Najmi assisted by an able team, procured the work of some of the country's finest artists to enhance the visual narration of the various events of naval history. Included in the collection one finds a magnificent, large bronze mural: *Guardian of the Seas*, by Shahid Sajjad; there is the largest ceramic and glass mural in the country worked in gradient shades of blue by Masood Kohari; oil paintings depicting sea battles by Athar Jamal and a mural depicting maritime history by Noorjehan Bilgrami, as well as striking contributions by other artists. Standing dominant in the grounds of the museum, one finds a marvellous metal sculpture by Zahoorul Akhlaq.

After over three decades of non-participation, in the latter half of 1996, Jamil Naqsh was persuaded to show his work in a series of events at the Momart gallery, including exhibitions of the Modern Manuscripts series in which Naqsh wove illusion and actuality with overlapping trajectories. He conceived contemporary linear works simulating ancient manuscripts collectively titled: Beyond Words. The Mother and Child series was exhibited and a sequence of 'Angels'. In 1998, the Chinese Year of the Horse, Naqsh introduced the image of the horse juxtaposed with the female form, dedicating his work as homage to the sculptor Marino Marini.

A group of art collectors and friends formed an association known as: The Friends of Jamil Naqsh, a Board of Trustees whose aims were to preserve the artist's work for posterity. In February 1999, a gallery adjacent to Momart was dedicated to Naqsh, and looked upon as a first step in establishing a Jamil Naqsh Museum of Art.

In 1999 a tragedy that shocked the art world occurred in Lahore, when Zahoorul Akhlaq and his classical dance artiste daughter were killed by a crazed gunman. The artist's widow, Sheherezade Alam, initiated a fundraising memoriam in the form of an exhibition that took place in Karachi in 2001. Over one hundred artists contributed to the display incorporating the traditional wooden Takhti. The event held at the Sadequain Gallery was preceded by a book launch: *Zahoorul Akhlaq*, by Roger Connah.

The year 2000 began with the demise of Bashir Mirza on 5 January. In years to come his life and art would be commemorated in books written in English and Urdu.

The veteran artist Gulgee, established a museum of his art at Clifton, with a spacious gallery area and an adjacent gallery and studio for Amin Gulgee.

The new millennium found Tassaduq Sohail, who had lived in London since 1964, settled in Karachi. He was initially an Urdu short story writer who had attended art courses at St. Martins School of Art, and made a successful career as a painter. During the London years he visited Karachi often and exhibited his miniature scale, Gothic fairytales in

art activities in the Zamzama Park. The current Director is Nighat Mir and numerous art events and exhibitions are in the pipeline. Increasing in popularity is: The Commune, a spacious converted warehouse particularly effective for exhibitions of sculpture initiated by Yousaf Bashir and Raania Durrani. Other active art venues are found throughout Karachi.

Always popular in exhibition in Karachi galleries is the work of the modern miniaturists, originating from the National College of Art, Lahore, where Bashir Ahmed and Imran Qureshi guide the direction of artists. There is a constant emergence of exciting new contemporary miniaturists often combining the skills of the old masters with contemporary innovations and views.

City Scape, A.R. Arif.

The work of Pakistan's modern artists today is acknowledged internationally. Their work is exhibited in prestigious art venues throughout the world. For art activists and artists these factors have been hugely encouraging though the price of art has now risen considerably, reflecting the growing appreciation. Increasingly artists examine their own aesthetic traditions that are often referenced in contemporary expression. Art in every region of the country is moulded by the vitality and variety of the continuum of artists, and of diverse disciplines open to a revaluation of art and aesthetics, linking past and present viewpoints.

In 2004, AICA, chaired by Niilofur Farrukh, organized a two day Art Critics Seminar in Karachi, attended by writers from several countries.

In 2005, Karachi School of Art celebrated a fortieth anniversary with great style with hundreds of past and present students in attendance.

A retrospective exhibition of Ahmed Parvez's work from the collection of Wahab Jaffer was mounted in 2005, the display, supported by a publication covering the artist's life and work through essays and a compilation of reviews, was held at the V.M. Gallery.

The devastating earthquake that shocked the country witnessed the wholehearted support of the art community who donated exhibitions of beautiful artworks sold at auctions in support of their fellow countrymen. Artists shaken by this disaster expressed strong emotions in their work noted by viewers at exhibitions.

Among the diverse developments in recent years has been the 'Emerging Artists' exhibition, established by the V.M. Gallery that became an annual event. Every year the best work of graduating art students from throughout the country was exhibited, and potential talents including sculptor Tariq Luni, and a painter of extraordinary qualities, Ali Kazim, who rapidly rose to international appreciation were introduced.

Other promising artists whose work has been seen in Karachi in recent times include Mohammad Ali Talpur and his brother Asad Ali, Nazir Ahmed Burgheri, Junaid, A.Q. Arif and G.N. Kazi, Sadik Qureshi, Asif Abrar and the miniaturist trained by Karachi University, who made a great impact in a VASL exhibition at the V.M. Gallery, Naveed.

Driving towards Clifton, one passes a wonderfully colourful glass rooftop assemblage that, when the sun is shining on it, lifts your spirits. This installation signposts the studio of sculptor Amin Gulgee, who held his first solo exhibition in Karachi in 1988, and since then has shown his work in many countries of the world. Moving between innovative, contemporary perceptions and contemplative spirituality in the form of calligraphy, the cerebral input of Amin's work is as apparent as the strong aesthetic inclination. Amin has curated and exhibited in his gallery several exciting exhibitions by local and foreign artists. In 2006, he was the recipient of the President's Pride of Performance Award.

The Kara Film Festival has been established as a popular cultural event in the city, and in 2006, Adil Salahuddin who was a 1986 President's Pride of Performance winner, paid homage to Pakistan's late art masters with a series of ten commemorative stamps imaging the artists and their work.

There is a vibrant interaction with artists from all regions of the country, as well as from other parts of the world seen in local galleries. FOMMA established a gallery for further

FIFTEEN

COMEDY, TRAGEDY AND REALISM

HAMEED ZAMAN

The history of theatre in Karachi started some time before the partition of the subcontinent, on the rickety platform of the nascent Parsi theatre. Like anywhere else, in pioneering work, theatre activity began with crude attempts, which with the passage of time underwent great improvement though they were still not mature enough to be called sophisticated. The highs and lows in the graph depict a story of commercial, as well as artistic struggle in the face of social attitudes, perceptions of morality, taboos and creative possibilities. Theatre in Karachi has seen good and bad days. Its earlier phase was sustained by the Parsi theatre where lampooning and horseplay was the main fare.

Parsi theatre drew its inspiration from the growth and well being of the Bombay stage where financial prospects were much brighter. Talent was easily available and the size of audiences was steadily growing. Side by side, the foreign residents of Karachi had formed their own 'Little Theatres'. And the Parsi theatre which patronized the Gujarati language switched to Urdu because of its wide range of acceptance and easy communication.

The record of Urdu and Gujarati plays that were staged is preserved in the pages of the Zoroastrian Club's golden jubilee souvenir published in 1932. The information here is rather sketchy but, nevertheless, reliable. It is a pity that the Parsi community in Karachi has not shown much enthusiasm in conducting research on this remarkable chapter in its cultural history.

Despite being an urban megapolis, Karachi has a short artistic past except, of course, in the presence of the Parsi theatre. The city is so cut off from its hinterland that it can hardly claim to be an heir to Sindh's romantic folklore, music, and cultural heritage. The city has not fostered an indigenous culture, and during these fifty years, has not been able to crystallize its soul. Karachi is not yet a whole and its characteristic ethos is still

The late Yasmin Ismail, a renowned artiste.

play, a tragedy entitled *Bekar Balidan* (Futile Sacrifice). It was performed in aid of the relief fund for Pakistan war victims. The Zoroastrian Art Circle presented *Ek Naar trun Bimar*, an adaptation of an English comedy, *All for Mary*, in 1971. The Art Circle staged another comedy *Laay Mahri Mashook* (Hand over My Sweetheart). Another English play *The Seekers* was also adapted into Gujarati. Within a span of twenty years the Art Circle staged ten full length plays. Though dormant for so many years, the Zoroastrian Art Circle is sure to revive itself and breathe again. Sarosh Irani's last play *Dhaniyaia ne Dhakhara* was based on *The Wife's Whim*.

At the time of independence, Parsi theatre was alive but somehow it started to shrink and contained itself within the ambit of its ready made Parsi audience, thus losing its cosmopolitan character. It refused to come out of its shell to assist the nascent Urdu theatre when it was in the best position to do so.

English theatre was dominated by the British. They created their own 'Little Theatres', on the pattern of the one that existed in Simla, and were creating substandard versions of the English plays which swamped Drury Lane in London. The Clifton players and the British Council were active and presented plays like *The Lady's Not for Burning, Ring Round the Moon and Our Town. The Lady's Not for Burning* was staged by the British Council in Sarnagati Building in Pakistan Chowk in their main hall through a makeshift arrangement. Two other plays were presented at the Theosophical Hall which had recently thrown itself open for such performances.

Urdu theatre in Karachi was struggling to be born and its activities were confined to some kind of variety shows, comprising one-act skits with dance and music items thrown in, for tempting the audience to stay on. It was a mixed bag which was neither here nor there. The handling was slipshod and there was more horseplay than performance. Not an unusual beginning in the annals of theatre, though in Karachi the situation remained static without showing any promise for quite some time.

The only theatre auditorium which existed in Karachi in the early days was an evacuee property known as the Elite Theatre, once owned by a Hindu entrepreneur. It did not enjoy a high reputation and the so called plays, or variety shows to be more precise, could best be categorized as cheap and vulgar. It was against this background that some theatre enthusiasts got together and presented two plays which are still remembered. One was *Jhansi Ki Rani* and the other *Sohrab aur Rustam*. Some of the actors who were once associated with Agha Hashr Kashmiri, or were working with the well known Alfred Theatrical Company of Bombay, voluntarily appeared in these plays, including the late Abdur Rehman Kabuli, and the late Mughal Bashar. Both of them at that time were employed by Radio Pakistan.

These plays followed the pattern set by Agha Hashr, who was a brilliant literary personality of Lahore with a knack for direction and writing plays. Here dialogues used

blurred. It has absorbed millions of refugees and is sheltering millions of fortune seekers who arrive here daily. Yet it has no patience for theatre which sprouts and grows in the fertile soil of sensibility, creativity, and intellectual maturity. And the stage which once flourished here, died an unnatural death. After partition, a number of Parsis migrated to Bombay, leaving an obvious vacuum which no one dared to fill. But it took a very long time till the final curtain was drawn on the Parsi theatre.

According to the golden jubilee souvenir of the Zoroastrian Club, the first play of the Parsi Theatre was *Jugar* (gambling) which was written in Gujarati by a well known Parsi playwright, Bomanji K. Kebraji of Bombay. It was performed for three nights at the Mavolee Parsi Theatre, located on Bunder Road (now M.A. Jinnah Road). The theatre was owned by Navroji Dhanjibhai. The Club's next presentation was an Urdu play: *Bulbul-e-Bimar* in 1894 at the same theatre. To celebrate a Parsi festival, the club staged another Urdu play *Pak Daman* on 15 March 1903. Another Urdu play *Insaf-e-Nadir Shah* was staged in 1911.

It is apparent that the female parts were played by male actors as in the Shakespearean tradition. Those were the days when women dared not appear on the stage. In 1920, Karachi was lucky to have a hall. Katrak Hall was donated for public use by Khan Bahadur the late Sir Kavasji Hormusji Katrak. After partition, the Hall was used by the Clifton players. However, much earlier in 1933 Homi Minwalla used the Hall for his play *Charley's Aunt*.

The plots of the plays were generally taken from *Dastans*, *Shahnama*, mythology, novels and European plays. They were mostly tearjerkers, sentimental farces, or simply based on absurd characters. The good characters were angels, while the bad ones, devils. The innocent suffered in some tragic way. Oppressed women expressed their feelings through many a touching song. The villain also had his songs which he sang with great gusto. If Greek drama made use of catharsis, so did Parsi theatre which kept the audience tense from beginning to end, watching the hero heading towards his destined doom.

The acting was rhetorical, melodramatic, and oversized. The high pitched dialogues, full of sound and fury, were sure signs of a thumping success. The comedy script had much local colour and exploited many allusions to current events and personalities. Thus the characters were more or less identifiable. The situations were couched in local happenings. It was a living theatre of the people, for the people. The response of the audience was immense. It enjoyed the fun and greeted the actors with warm applause.

The Parsi theatre, after many ups and downs, managed to survive till 1978, when under the auspices of the Zoroastrian Art it Circle it staged on an average, one play every two years. The Art Circle's last play was *Dhool Ma Phool* (Blossoms in the Dust), a three act play by Sarosh Irani, performed in 1972. In 1966, Sarosh Irani came up with a three-act

the production of *Rukmani Devi* in India. And, of course, there was Mrs Sigrid Kahle, a Swedish lady married to a diplomat who was stationed at Karachi. She belonged to a family steeped in Orientalism. It was an opportunity for Mrs Kahle who wholeheartedly coordinated, supervised, and extended the fullest cooperation. She was willing to put the efforts of Khwaja Moinuddin to real use. Zia Mohyeddin and Alex Elmore (who later joined UNESCO) completed the production with a touch of professionalism. Mrs Kahle, herself a theatre enthusiast had earlier staged Sophocles's *Antigone*, herself playing the lead and worked with Alex Elmore. They all joined hands to make their new venture a huge success.

However, the main hurdle again was the use of microphones which were to be discarded at any cost, but it required an intensive course of vocal training for the actors. They required sufficient time to train. The play was too unwieldy, its running time was more than four hours, which had to be edited and the script drastically curtailed. The conventional heavy stage settings were to be redesigned. It was to be the first professionally produced play to be mounted in Pakistan. The new version was a resounding success. It was a turning point, for Zia Mohyeddin with his training in a prestigious drama school and substantial experience of the professional theatre of London was attempting to put method into the prevailing madness; and he triumphed. The play also discovered some brilliant talents for the Karachi stage including S.M. Saleem, Ibrahim Nafees, Mohammad Yousuf, Subhani-ba-Yunus, Mahmood Ali, and others playing minor roles. They proved their worth as they matured.

In 1957 Khwaja Moinuddin formed a group of his own, under the title of the Drama Guild. Its first production was *Mirza Ghalib Bunder Road Per*, a hilarious assessment of the changing times and values, with a generation gap theme which was being discussed all over the world. Ghalib, a man of the nineteenth century, arrives in the middle of the twentieth in Karachi, a city which was going through a huge transition, coping and failing in the face of cultural chaos. Ghalib, with his literary finesse and old world values, is shocked to see this bewildering mess which a sea of change has brought, and is lost in the exploding situation. This encounter provided a lot of satirical and comic situations and became yet another hit. Most of the plots of Khwaja Sahib were woven around actualities and happenings of the day and managed to establish an instant rapport with the audience. His themes sprouted from the problems and lifestyles of the current milieu, hence the intense involvement of the spectators.

In the meantime another veteran, a dedicated playwright, migrated to Pakistan. Ali Ahmed was associated with the UP branch of the Indian People's Theatre. On his arrival in Lahore, he tried to establish a children's theatre but failed and decided to come to Karachi in 1955. He had his basic training in Calcutta and Bombay and was associated with actors and directors like Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Bimal Roy, Balraj Sahni, and Zia Sarhadi. In Karachi, Ali Ahmed founded an Avant Garde Arts Theatre (AGAT) in 1974, when he was still struggling to establish a People's Theatre in Pakistan. He had already

to be delivered at a high-pitched volume, because the use of microphones on the stage was as yet not known. The dialogues were written in versified prose, maintaining poetic cadence and rhymed scale. Curtains used to be painted elaborately to avoid over use of furniture and props on the stage. However, the only facility available, the Elite Theatre, was taken over by estate developers and the building was pulled down in 1953.

There were certain groups which were devoted exclusively to English plays, but their effort turned out to be futile as their impact was minimal on the local run of the mill theatre, first because of the language barrier and, second, because of class stratification. Here the twain did not meet and there was no love lost between them. The groups were status conscious, moving within prescribed social circles. Some of the plays which these so called elitist groups attempted included: *A Long Day's Journey into Night, They Knew What They Wanted* and *Julius Caesar*. All these efforts lacked seriousness of purpose and were not intended to promote local theatre in any way.

The late Khwaja Moinuddin arrived in Karachi in 1950 and practically changed the theatre scene. He was a catalyst who sought possibilities out of stagnation. A purposeful theatre was about to be born. His play *Naya Nishan* based on the annexation of Kashmir by India, drew sharp criticism from diplomatic circles and protests from India. That was the beginning of the new genre, and theatre became a vehicle for political and social expression, though it was still stylized and looked too theatrical on the stage. His second play *Zawal-e-Hyderabad* was again a success, hitting India which had already taken over the Muslim State of Hyderabad: Khwaja Sahib who belonged to Hyderabad was very bitter about this political *coup d'etat*. It was a very powerful play, though full of political slogans and with a slanted bias, but then the playwright was waging a war against political injustice. His *pièce de résistance* was *Lal Qiley sey Laloo Khait Tak* which presented the dilemma of the immigrants and refugees who were struggling to adjust to their new predicaments.

The play became an instant success as Karachi was a refugee city and refugees were still pouring in. The theme was so near to their heart, as were the events, both local and contemporary. And their involvement was so direct. The play was drawing an audience of approximately ten thousand every day and had to be staged at the KMC Stadium. It ran for 140 nights without a break. Later it moved to Lahore and parts of Sindh. Still, the production was crude and unbalanced. Microphones were staging a comeback as the audience multiplied into thousands. The microphones had a disruptive presence on the stage. They hampered the view, beside forcing the actors to stay in their vicinity. This damaged the movement plan, placing and compositional structure.

Zia Mohyeddin, a well trained and experienced actor from the London stage, came to Lahore because of personal reasons, read the script of *Lal Qila*...found it interesting and accepted the offer from the Karachi Arts Council, which wanted to stage the play. And there was Alex Elmore, an orientalist who was also in the city. He had earlier designed

Sigrid Kahle and Hannelore Brunher brought August Strindberg to Karachi in 1954.

After the death of Ali Ahmed, there were no crusaders in the field in Karachi, except for stray efforts by a few enthusiasts every now and then. Pursuing a quick buck, the society had little time for creative endeavours. Karachi has not yet been able to establish a viable theatre foundation. With the advent of television it became much easier for theatre hands to put in less labour and earn substantial remuneration. Thus TV succeeded in attracting most of the talent, leaving theatrewallas high and dry. A casual survey revealed that there was no dearth of talent. They were too eager to show their worth, but somehow the consolidating factor was always missing and theatre leadership was lacking. Scarcity of funds could be another factor. It resulted in damaging the cause of theatre which almost fell into disarray, unhonoured and unsung.

In this hopeless situation Kamal Ahmed Rizvi, a one-man institution, remains the only shining star. He has already established his brilliant credentials as a playwright, actor, director and producer. In fact, he is a one-man phenomenon who manages all the departments of his projects. His TV serial *Alif Noon*, with his partner Rafi Khawar, catapulted him to the highest pinnacles of popularity. Every time this odd couple appeared on TV they brought the house down, so to say, and became the darlings of the

Zia Mohyeddin.

forty theatre productions to his credit and had written more than twenty-five plays—ten originals and fifteen adaptations. In 1970, Ali Ahmed and some of his colleagues decided to form an Academy of Theatre Arts in Karachi. Thus, finally, NATAK (National Academy of Theatre Arts) was established.

Ali Ahmed was soon regarded and accepted as a progressive force with obvious leftist leanings. His themes were bold and revolutionary. He worked with symbolic sets and an uncluttered stage, using the simplest language of daily conversation. He did not indulge in the philosophy of dialectics, nor did he talk about Marxist postulates. Instead, he spoke in the language of the street and discussed problems faced by the denizens of the lower depths, highlighting the basic conflicts which existed in the woven fabric of the social order.

The other feature of his plays was the selection of locality where the play was to be staged—a new approach for Karachi audiences. It was the nearest thing to Street Theatre, though it was not quite that. He never used a big cast and tried to keep his premise clear and simple. The idea was to put the message across in the simplest possible terms. His significant plays and productions included *Zaat-e-Sharief; Subh Honey Tak, Sheshey Ka Admi, Quisa Jagtey Sotey Ka, Chaodhween Manzil* and *Safaid Posh*. His plays were frontal attacks on capitalist exploitation and satires on hypocrisy and sham.

Kamal Ahmed Rizvi and Rafi Khawar as Allan and Nanna, the 'Odd Couple' of Pakistan theatre.

with the performances of Parsi theatre. His political association brought him into the fold of the Muslim League, and as such he became involved in the Non-cooperation Movement. A warrant of arrest was issued in his name, and when he was to be arrested, he decided to leave for London for his law degree. There he came under the magic spell of London theatre. His new interest angered his family, and his allowance was first curtailed, then stopped. Finally, he decided to go to Germany and started working with the German theatre icon, Max Reinhardt who was then the most renowned theatre personality of the era. After about a fifteen year stay and theatre involvement, he returned to Lahore where he worked and trained such actors as Prithviraj Kapoor, Ashok Kumar, Om Prakash and Mubarak. He also wrote some dramas for All India Radio. Later, in 1975, in collaboration with the well known Urdu short story writer Chetan Anand, he made his first film *Nicha Nagar* which dealt with the theme of non-violence. The film bagged three Grand Prix awards at the 1948 Cannes Film Festival. After his death, his son Usman Peerzada, himself an actor of merit, founded the Rafi Peer Theatre workshop in memory of his father.

While talking about Rafi Peer, whose impact was tremendous in terms of theatre production, all over the subcontinent, we have yet another theatre personality who is

nation. Later Kamal Ahmed Rizvi wrote full-length plays for the stage. All his writings show undercurrents of social satire, a subtle exposure of social or official evil behaviour, patterns of exploitation or corruption. The audience laughed at their own follies, and at the sweet and sour attacks. His plays like *Khoy Hua Admi* is a satire on city life where a man is lost in the concrete jungle. Similarly his adaptation, *Lafangey Ki Diary* is a hard hitting play which had a corrective purpose. The treatment was polished and acting was up to the mark as he was using mostly TV actors, who maintained a balanced performance despite some hilarious patches. In that sense, I would say Urdu theatre was coming of age though it was still working in fits and starts, for theatre had not yet acquired any permanent footing. It was still a matter of individual enterprise.

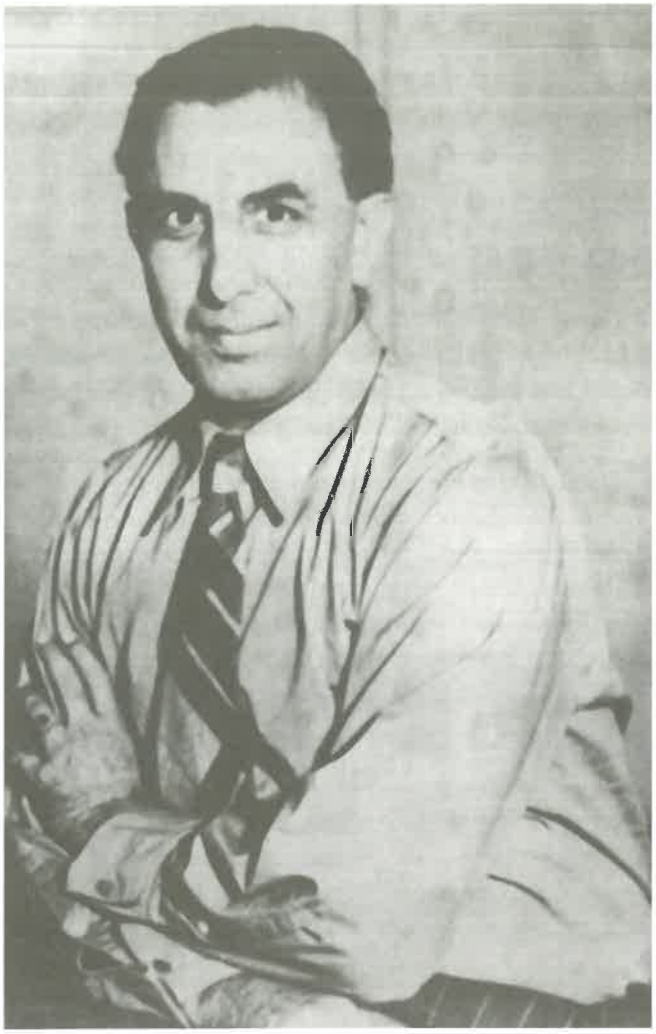
In Karachi, a husband and wife team, Khalid Ahmed and Sheema Kirmani, made a mark through their deep involvement in theatre and dance. In a way, they are lucky to have the sponsorship of the Goethe Institute, which somehow or the other, took it upon itself to patronize cultural activities in Pakistan, not only by encouraging and financing local talent but also at times by inviting German artists to Pakistan, and by holding seminars and workshops.

Khalid Ahmed and Sheema Kirmani presented an exciting play *Yahan Say Shehr Ko Dekho*. They were lucky that a celebrated Indian painter M.F. Hussain happened to be here and agreed to paint a special backdrop for the play, which when completed was both imaginative and evocative. It was done in very bold strokes in black and white interpreting the theme of daily killings in Karachi, so rampant in those days when existence had become a burden and life was so cheap. The play took the city by storm. It depicted the cruelty and horror in human life and questioned the very equation of human relationships. The Goethe Institut imported a huge odd-sized canvas for the backdrop and provided large tins of paint and other facilities to M.F. Hussain. The couple also appeared in Rafi Peer's well known play *Raz-o-Niaz* and staged a Greek tragedy *Antigone*.

Ali Ahmed in 1984, one of the landmarks in the theatre of the subcontinent.

That brings us to a famous personality of Pakistani theatre, Rafi Peer, a brilliant young man who was greatly impressed

Indian theatre and dance, Zohra Saigal who came to Pakistan to see her younger sister, Uzra Butt, after forty-seven years. Naturally, it was a sentimental journey and Ajoka made the best use of her presence and persuaded her to participate in the play, which was especially written for the sisters. In a way history was being made on the Alliance stage.



Rafi Peer.

Both sisters belonged to Rampur in India. Zohra Saigal was the prima donna of the Uday Shankar Ballet and married her Hindu dance partner and stayed in Delhi, while Uzra Butt was a lead actress in The Prithviraj Kapoor Theatre till she got married and came to Pakistan. Both sisters appeared on the stage in *Ek Thi Nani* under the direction of Madiha Gauhar. The material was judiciously used by the playwright and director. Zohra (82) and Uzra (77), looked like characters from a children's story book. They appeared without any makeup and carried the play in hushed silence. Their histrionic prowess was simply overwhelming. Uzra found her elder sister marrying a Hindu and living in a permissive society in India, quite shocking, whereas Zohra wondered how her younger sister could survive in the conservative atmosphere of Pakistan and wrap up her stage career for the sake of her husband. In between there was a granddaughter. The play was about her dilemma. An India-Pakistan cultural encounter was expressed through the creative example of good acting and a sound script.

holding the fort, giving a boost to contemporary theatre in Pakistan, and is a constant factor in the current journey of growth. Madiha Gauhar who was trained in London on a British Council scholarship, has given a new direction to Pakistani theatre and has brought it into the mainstream theatre of the sub-continent. She is the life and soul of Ajoka, an institute dedicated to the promotion of theatre in this country within its social context, taking up problems and issues on the platform for open discussion and debate, touching almost every subject under the sun, and creating awareness among the audience.

Ajoka being innovative and experimental has shown courage and boldness, and hence has always been under a cloud. Credit must however, be given to Ajoka for strengthening the concept of Street Theatre which has given a new direction and dimension to theatre in Pakistan by bringing it closer to the common man. The Goethe Institut in Karachi, and Tehrik-e-Niswan, took Street Theatre to the slums of Lyari where it was hugely welcomed. It was a grass root theatre for the masses with no props. It was a highly motivated theatre which had a mission to fulfil. The short plays which it staged were socially relevant to the audience. A new spirit was infused in the people to stand up and fight for their own cause. It was dynamic and explosive theatre.

Sheema Kirmani.

During the regime of the late General Ziaul Haq, discriminatory laws were passed against women. Tehrik-e-Niswan (founded in 1980) adopted Street Theatre as its own way of expression and protest. In December 1981, a play was performed for an all women audience in one of the depressed neighbourhoods of Karachi. Over the years Street Theatre has become the mouthpiece of Tehrik-e-Niswan. It has already presented over a hundred short plays, dealing with the problems of women, which they face in this conservative society of ours. The best thing about the Tehrik is that a performance can be arranged at short notice. It is a problem oriented theatre, an alternative to formal education, meant primarily for the illiterate audience.

The Alliance Francaise in Karachi played host to Ajoka when Madiha Gauhar brought a memorable play *Ek Thi Nani* to honour one of the remarkable figures of

by Reinlid Blaschke, also from Berlin, and as the end result presented *Raushni Key Darechey*, an Urdu adaptation of a German play, *Nathan der Werse* (Nathan the Wise) by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81). The translation was done by Khalid Ahmed. The play was set in Jerusalem at the time of the Crusades in the twelfth century on the day of armistice which stops the war for a short while. It was a war of Christians against Muslims. In this historical situation religious intolerance, prejudices against those who held different views, power calculations and violence, dominated daily life. Lessing has made intolerance and bigotry his theme. The cast included Sheema Kirmani, Khalid Ahmed, and Akbar Subhani.

The Goethe Institut also took the lead when it brought GRIPS, a worldwide children's theatre movement to Karachi, and made it really popular among children and adults. GRIPS, described by *Newsweek* as 'a mixture of gritty realism with a dash of utopia' sprouted from the Radical Students' Movement in Germany. It views children as political and social beings and tries to make sense out of a sometimes hostile world. A small child's fear of the dark is treated with the same seriousness as his or her fear of war. In this context of GRIPS, the contribution of Imran Aslam and Yasmin Ismail cannot be

Uzra Butt.

In the same context I would like to mention here two experimental plays. The first is Sohail Malik's *Zabardastan*, the first musical in Urdu, and the second is Talat Hussain's *Said-e-Hawas*, staged in typical Agha Hashr style. Both were fairly successful in their mannerisms and style suggesting that Karachi audiences were not averse to experimentation.

Sohail Malik is essentially associated with English plays and created a stir when he produced *Zabardastan*. He took up a Broadway success *Fantasticks* and rendered it into Urdu (1992). Its revival at the Rex Auditorium ran for three weeks, a record in Karachi. It provided two hours of sumptuous entertainment combining, as it did, a simple story refreshingly told with a especially composed musical score. There were seven songs in Act I, and six in Act II. The Theatre Circle of Karachi headed by Sohail Malik, certainly deserves kudos for their experimental offering.

In 1991, Talat Hussain presented Agha Hashr's *Said-e-Hawas* as part of UNESCO's Theatre Workshop which he was conducting at the Karachi Arts Council. It was a difficult assignment for the trainee students, doing a period play with versified text and dialogues, which were to be delivered with rhythmic cadence, an accepted format and style in the late twenties. The play displayed the obvious influence of Parsi theatre, which in its turn borrowed from the Shakespearean stage as being played in London. Agha Hashr's plays have, by now, attained the status of classics. Set to folk music in the idiom of *Dadra* and *Thumri*, the play had all the ingredients to make it successful.

Yet another group led by Anjum Ayaz, a sculptor by profession, presented a dramatic version of Manto's two short stories. *Rahat Jan* (*Hatak*) and *Suraj* under the joint title of *Aao Manto Karain*. Yasmin Ismail, a sensitive actress, and Sajid Hasan a brilliant performer, both acquitted themselves well, while Akbar Subhani acted as the late Manto and maintained the continuity or, at times acted as chorus. Anjum's other presentation was *The Glass Menagerie* with an Urdu title: *Khaboon ke Kirchain*. It was well rehearsed and flawless.

It would be unfair if we did not acknowledge the role of some of the foreign cultural centres, which have extended all out support to some of the genuine and active creative groups to make their projects possible. Such assistance was forthcoming right from the very beginning—from *Lal Qilay Say Lalokhait Tak*, and since then it's a story of continuous help and encouragement. For example the PACC, along with the British Council, are the oldest centres in Karachi and both have been helping, encouraging, and even financing such creative ventures.

In the recent past, the Goethe Institut sponsored *Yahan Sey Shehr Ko Dekho*. Its earlier presentation, Brecht's *Galileo*, was directed by Aslam Azhar. It was a great success and is well remembered by theatregoers. Recently, the Goethe Institut arranged a theatre workshop under the expert guidance of Jurgen Zielinski from Berlin, who was assisted

Liaquat Soldier and Akhtar Chanchan in a comedy production staged in Karachi.

minimized, particularly in scripting and recasting the entire plays in terms of Pakistani situations. An old hand from the Dramatic Society of Government College Lahore, Imran Aslam was once part of Aaj Pa Theatre which later became Ajoka. He was also associated with Theatrewalley. GRIPS presented such plays as *Sazish Ki Wajah Say Khail Multavi, Chati Moti, Tota and S.M. Hamid, Langra Aam Kas Hota Hae, Unfit Ball Dunya Mere Hai*. All these plays dealt with subjects of social importance.

GRIPS has a philosophy of its own as expounded by its founder Vokert Ludwig, a noted socialist and Marxist, who challenged the theory of 'suspension of disbelief' and claimed that drama was not a form of catharsis as the Greeks interpreted it. And the argument was that if the audience goes through a process of catharsis, the motivation to act lapses. The audience must know that what they are watching is just a play, not reality. It is a process of alienation he is pleading. The audience must not immerse itself in the art form, and there must always be a kind of detachment between the audience and the play. Songs and discussions are deliberately introduced during the play to break the spell of identification. In fact, we have seen such a tradition in the play of Agha Hashr Kashmiri, where progress of the plot is interrupted and a song or dance item is introduced. It is there even in our cinema, though unconsciously. It is accepted as a part of the plot.

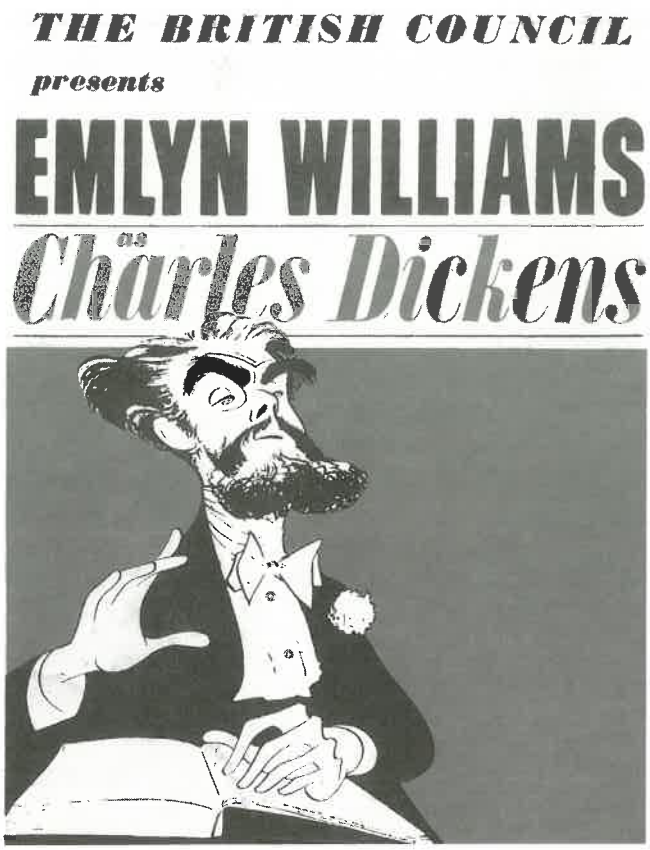
The Alliance Française, too, has its honourable place in promoting our theatre, by offering and sponsoring some of the plays which were progressive in content and rich in their artistic worth. The play *Razia Sultan* under the direction of Imran Sherwanee was conceived against the traditional function of theatre, which amused and diverted the attention of the audience from the serious issues that were involved. *Razia Sultan* disturbed the audience by raising unsettled questions and attempting answers in order to find a final solution to human relationships.

The other play at the Alliance was *Sultan ka Faisala*, written by an Egyptian playwright, Tawfiq-e-Hakim and was translated by Asif Aslam Farrukhi. Set in the times of the slave kings of medieval Arabia, the play was about the dilemma of a king who faces the problem of legitimacy, because of his origin as a slave. The play highlights the supremacy of law over the sword. It was directed by Khalid Ahmed.

In terms of popularity, some foreign plays drew huge 'literate' crowds who were, in one way or the other, not foreign to these plays and eagerly awaited them on stage. They must have read the text already through various publications, or seen or heard them on the TV, or radio.

For example, Brecht is extremely popular in this subcontinent and repeat performances are held in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Becket's *Waiting for Godot* is yet another favourite with the audience here. Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (*Lahoo Suhag* in Urdu) proved a sensation in Lahore. The play was first staged in Madrid in 1930. Some portions of the play resembled *Mirza Sahiban* and matched life in Punjabi rural areas. *Khabon Ki*

somewhat coarse. The early Urdu plays in this genre were written by Furqan Hyder. The plays staged at present do not depend entirely on a script but the actors interact and exchange repartee with the audience. The disappearance of Rex Auditorium and the general scarcity of theatres in the city has dealt a blow to this popular theatre. The facilitation of this type of theatre would surely develop public taste for live theatre and nurture audiences for serious theatre.



The cover of a programme from an early British Council production.

The financial prospects of being in theatre are risky at best, and those who choose to contribute, may well have some of the religious fervour for the mystic roots of the theatre. The work is hard and the glamour perhaps overstated. The playwright, the actor, the director, and the set designer, all blend their efforts together only to conjure the reality of a moment.

Travelling troupes of *natak* or *nautanki*, casting the magic of their performance on the rural audience, enacting under *shamianas* or hardtop tents on the banks of the River Ravi, or the River Indus, the grassroot theatre which entertains fatigued and tired farmers far from the neon lights, has survived but in Karachi, it is only the urban theatre for the elite which really matters. It is studded with the big names of American, European and British playwrights, either in the form of adaptation or using text in the original. Parsi theatre is Karachi's past, *Is Shehr Ko Yahan Sey Dekho* is its present while *Dark Room* is its future; a mime theatre in kabuki dress, written by Sarmad Sehbai and directed by Shoaib Hashmi, where avant garde and symbolism combine to take a step forward. Art form develops through a process of evaluation. Karachi is conscious of its growth in the medium of theatre, though it may be facing a lot of disappointment on many counts.

Kirchain an Urdu adaptation of *The Glass Menagerie* was staged at the PACC and drew huge crowds. Besides *Charley's Aunt* has been on the stage in Karachi in its Urdu version many times.

One may debate the efficacy of the visits of the foreign theatrical companies, but who can deny their educative value? They bring with them fresh techniques, new ideas and acting patterns and, above all, initiate dialogues on the international wavelength. In fact such visits gave birth to the English theatre in Karachi, an idiom which kept itself alive despite not so conducive an atmosphere.

To many, the theatre has magic, to a few it is still a wanton and wasteful pastime. However, the measure of success is still how many tickets it can sell or how many audiences are likely to buy tickets in the days to come, for all said and done, the theatre has always been, and will continue to be, a commercial venture.

A very encouraging phenomenon is the spontaneous growth of a vernacular, as well as Urdu, popular theatre in Karachi. Unver Shahryar introduced *memani* dramas in the early seventies. These were played at the Adamjee Auditorium and later at the Rex (Hashoo) Auditorium as well as other auditoriums in the city. These plays were largely slapstick comedies and were very popular among the traders and shopkeepers. The price of tickets was low, audiences were almost exclusively male and the humour therefore

Rita, Shahzad Raza and Farouk Shahzad in the 1995 stage play 'International Fakir', written and directed by Mahmood Usman Khan.

Fahim Wyne and fellow actors.

Karachi is full of such mad people who have cast their dice in favour of theatre. They are our only hope.

Jugnu Salahuddin and Saniya Saeed in a one-act play 'Balcony'.

The presence of creative abundance is there, otherwise how could Karachi produce sixty-two plays within a period of ten years. Imran Aslam is a witness of that process of growth as he himself was associated with them in various capacities, as a playwright, actor, director, or producer. Various critics of newspapers in the country are witnessing this silent growth, experiencing Brecht and Beckett on one side and *Fantastick*, and *The Threepenny Opera*, on the other. In between grew *Rahat Jan* (*Hatak* by Manto) and *Lehaf* by Ismat Chughtai, one staged by Anjum Ayaz while the other was choreographed by Ms Mitha. A short story converted into a ballet.

The new generation of playwrights, actors, directors, and producers who do not carry the creative burden full time are to subsist through faith in this art form. Charles Dickens who himself was a great enthusiast and made his own cast 'nearly worked to death' wrote, 'It makes me wonder why one does things for nothing'. The answer to this enigma, perhaps is as complex as it is meaningless. Call it a compulsion, a madness of some sort, an inner urge which goes without rhyme and reason, or some heady excitement, the smell of the grease and paint, the throb and thrill highlighted by footlights, or simply the roar of the audience. Or, a commitment to a particular way of life to flourish, or perish, for the calling they have chosen to follow.

SIXTEEN

A CLOSE-UP OF CINEMA, RADIO AND TELEVISION

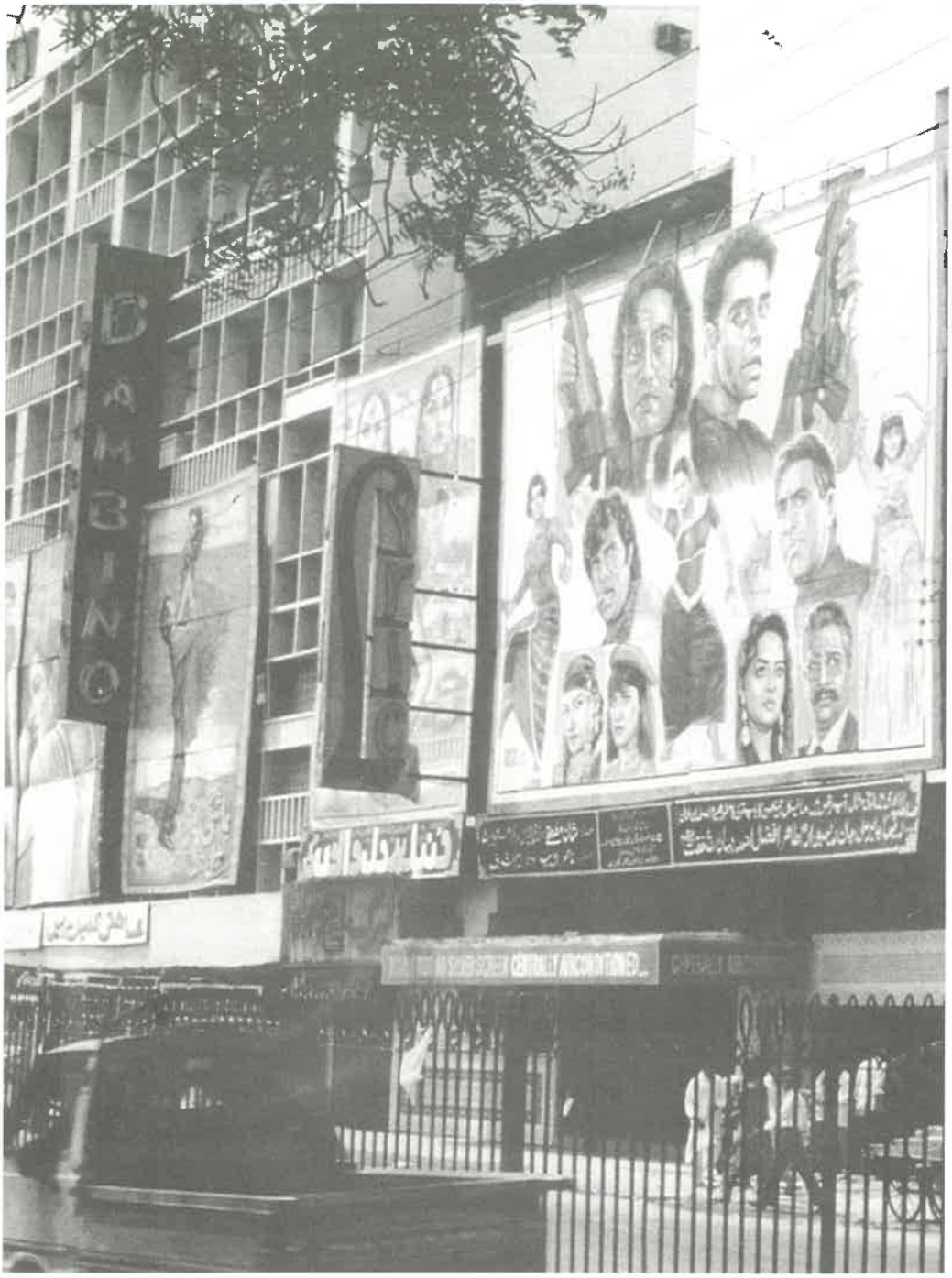
ASIF NOORANI

The present generation, weaned on VCDs and DVDs, not to speak of satellite channels, can hardly imagine the immense popularity which cinema enjoyed in Karachi, as it did in most parts of the subcontinent. The golden period of cinema ran from the forties to the early eighties, when it was dethroned, so to speak, by television, with and without the help of video cassettes as video cassette rental shops mushroomed all over Karachi when VCPs and VCRs became affordable.

Post-partition Karachi inherited a large number of cinema houses—Majestic, Picture House, Plaza, Roxy (which was Rama before it was declared an evacuee property). Taj Mahal and Light House on Bunder Road and Regal and Mayfair, the open-air theatre (cinemas were initially called theatres or talkies) in Saddar. Then there were many others: Kumar, Nagina, Nigar (which was Prabhat until partition) and Super, quite close to what is now M.A. Jinnah Road.

Many more show houses, built in not just the old localities but also the suburbs after partition, boasted a good number of cinema houses. Nazimabad alone had four, and Liaquatabad two. It was a question of supply meeting demand. Today only one exists in these two localities. Many closed down in Saddar, where Rex, the first to offer airconditioning in Karachi, Rio, Mayfair, Capital, Paradise, Regal, Odeon, and quite recently Lyric and Star dropped their shutters. They yielded place to ugly and unimaginatively planned buildings, crammed with shops and offices.

Naz-o-Nishat, as the bus stop near the Seventh Day Adventist hospital was known, is still referred to by the same name, though Naz Cinema is no more. It was demolished after a long legal battle and a non-descript building was constructed. Ironically enough, the building continues to retain the name—Naz, in much the same way as Paradise,



Cinema hoardings.

The front benchers in the literal and metaphoric sense were confined to the six annas or nine annas class. They were looked down upon (pun intended) by cine-goers sitting in the balcony and even those who went to the dress circle. In Karachi, only Khayyam cinema had boxes, but the management saw to it that the tickets for those cubicles were sold only to families.

Cinemas also served as a rendezvous for callow romantics where they held hands during the show. The only time I invited a young lady to a movie was at Khayyam Cinema. I was hoping that the company would be more exciting than the movie. Imagine my utter disappointment, therefore, when the young lady came with a spoil-sport aunt, who approved of the rendezvous but made it a point to sit between us. Alas, my one chance of holding the young lady's hand was lost. And so was my hard-earned money for I had to pay for the aunt's ticket too and the bottles of Coke. I didn't have one on the pretext that I had a sore throat. Had I succumbed to the temptation, I wouldn't have been left with the bus fare to Nazimabad.

While talking of movies one cannot ignore the fact that Karachi gave the country some of the finest performers, both on and off the screen. Among the actors were Waheed Murad, Mohammed Ali, Kamal, Shamim Ara, Nayyar Sultana and Lehri, to name just a few. Nadeem, who started his career as a playback singer, when he recorded a song for a movie in Karachi, made it big when he went to Dacca (which was how the East Pakistan capital was spelt in those days). He was to record a song there but the leading man of the movie *Chakori*, an actor named Azeem, could not report for shooting. Producer-director Captain Ihtesham asked a nervous Nazeer Beg (which is Nadeem's real name) to put on makeup and play the hero in the movie. The rest, as they say, is history. On his return from East Pakistan, he tried to settle in Karachi before moving to Lahore. Likewise, Shabnam and her composer husband Robin Ghosh, when they came to what was then West Pakistan, bought a house initially in Karachi.

Shabnam and Waheed Murad: matinee idols.

Among the behind-the-screen performers who made their debut in Karachi and left the city reluctantly for greener pastures in Lahore were director Pervez Malik, composers Sohail Rana and Khaleel Ahmad, singers Ahmad Rushdi and Mehdi Hasan, script writer Masroor Anwar,

Naz Cinema—now demolished.

Capitol, Odeon and Rio markets do in Saddar. Nishat Cinema is fighting a lone, and what seems a losing, battle to survive. When the management released the colour version of the classic of 1960—K. Asif's *Mughal-e-Azam*, starring the delectable couple Dilip Kumar and Madhubala, in 2006 they spent a fortune refurbishing and redesigning the cinema in the hope that the movie would draw large crowds. It would have been so had the movie been released in the sixties or even in the seventies. Now practically every film buff has seen the film on the small screen and what is no less important the generation which appreciated a mixture of tender romance and fictionalized history is no more.

Gone are the days when friends and families used to plan a visit to a movie house a few days before the actual outing. There were separate counters for advance booking. Sundays used to have one extra show, and in the case of cinema houses, reserved for English movies, the Sunday morning shows usually screened old hits for viewers who had missed them in their early screenings as also to those who were fond of repeat viewing.

The pop-corn munching generation, as the young men and women of the fifties and the sixties were called by their elders with some bit of disdain, made a beeline for restaurants after matinee shows to listen to their favourite songs on jukeboxes, while gorging snacks. Children looked forward to being taken to such eateries as Pioneer Coffee House and Bundu Khan's famous *kabab-paratha* joint for dinner after the first show, which ended around 9 p.m. Fast food eateries didn't appear on the scene still the mid-eighties.

A smaller and not very well-equipped studio Modern Studios was built next door in the latter half of the sixties, but it could not run for many years because the film production activities moved entirely to Lahore.

Agha Khaleeli, a well known industrialist, had set up the country's first colour processing laboratory in Karachi, which came as a boon for the advertising film producers. But with the loss of the country's East Wing and the waning of film production in Karachi, Lahore was the only film production centre and film producers preferred to get their films processed and printed in the colour film labs in Lahore.

International Film Studios, which was built in the seventies, catered mainly to ad film makers and producers of TV plays. Sadly, now no feature films are being produced in a Karachi studio.

Since the bar on screaming Indian films has been relaxed, people have started going to screaming the cinema again. The new Multiplexus in Karachi are proving to be a success.

However, the one exciting development that has taken place in recent years is the inception of the Kara Film Festival. Starting in 2001 as what could be called an Indo-Pak affair with only 35 entries, in six years it has grown into a major film festival in the region. In 2006 as many as 175 entries, which included short films, documentaries and feature films, were enjoyed by a growing number of film enthusiasts, who wait anxiously for the awards to be announced on the final evening. In 2001 the festival ran for three days but since 2003 the festival has been a ten-day affair. Seminars and discussions with film makers have, for one thing, developed a deeper understanding of film craft among the film buffs and, for another, inspired a whole lot of youngsters to make short films and documentaries. One is hearing of talented young men and women such as Saquib Malik, Mehreen Jabbar and Hasan Zaidi, director, Kara Film Festival, making feature films. Since 2005 selected films from the festival are also shown in Lahore and Islamabad.

Ten years ago when the first edition of this book was published, FM radio channels had made their debut, but no one would have thought that they would be able to attract a lot of listeners on the wheels, who used to be glued to audio cassettes while driving. By the end of 2006 the number of FM radio channels has entered double figures. There are now more than ten of them. However, the one channel, which merits a special mention, is FM 89, which devotes something like 70 per cent of its time to Western music.

Radio Pakistan stopped playing Indian film songs since 1965 when the neighbouring countries went to war, but FM channels have quietly begun to provide their listeners with the songs that they love.

Deeba: heart-throb of millions.

editor-director Iqbal Akhtar, cameraman Ayub and sound recordist C.G.C. Mandody. There were scores of others who started their careers in Karachi but after their first taste of success moved to the film capital of the country. Many film people who came from India, such as Nisar Bazmi, Nashad (not to be confused with the ace Indian composer Naushad) and Nakhshab made Karachi their home.

Even the burgeoning film industry in Lahore had to depend on Karachi for finance and three major distributors cum financiers—J.C. Anand, Nisar Murad and Mukhtar Ahmad—had their main offices in the megacity. Anand's Eveready Pictures was the biggest film distribution house in Pakistan and his services to the country's film industry, particularly during its early stages, were second to none. Today his son Satish keeps the Eveready flag flying, though there is hardly any film business left now. He is more into TV production. The other two distribution houses have closed down.

It would be interesting to recall that the first film studio to be built in Karachi was run by Deewan Sardarilal and the first movie to be produced in the city was *Mandi*, which featured the old time singing star Khursheed. But, as bad luck would have it, the movie flopped and the studio had to close down. A disheartened Deewan Sardarilal, who had the distinction of producing the first Pakistani film *Teri Yad*, moved to Bombay, where his son Ram Deyal turned into a major film producer. Deyal used to pay regular visits to Karachi until he died in early 2007.

Eastern Film Studios, initially managed by A.G. Mirza and later by Saeed Haroon, was the first full-fledged film production venue. Many box-office hits were shot in this studio. Apart from Urdu and Sindhi films, the first Pushto film *Yusuf Khan-Sherbano* and the only Gujarati film (I can't recall its name) to be produced in this country were made in Eastern Film Studios. Currently, its production floors are hired by producers of TV serials.

with equal stress on theory and practice. There are no degree courses as yet anywhere in the country.

Another interesting development has been the formation of the National Academy of Performing Arts, which is currently holding classes in music, vocal and instrumental, and in three aspects of drama—playwriting, direction and acting. It is housed in the fascinating Hindu Gymkhana and headed by the veteran stage actor Zia Mohyeddin.

Stage plays were quite popular in the early years after partition, there used to be a hall close to Rivoli and Eros cinemas. It was known as Elite Theatre. The management catered to the lowest common denominator who came in good numbers. By the end of the sixties, Elite Theatre closed down.

Amateur theatre groups, who staged well known English and Urdu plays, from time to time became dormant. Gripps Theatre, which came in like a whiff of fresh air and staged adaptations of German plays, did a wonderful job. Their plays, written by Imran Aslam and directed by Yasmeen Ismail, appealed to kids and grown ups alike for they had different layers of meaning. But with the untimely death of Yasmeen Ismail, who was the driving force behind Gripps Theatre in Pakistan, her team broke up.

A drama being recorded at Radio Pakistan.

Radio Pakistan.

The number of listeners in cars is small but growing. And yet one can't expect that the radio will once again have the bulk of listenership which it enjoyed before television made its impact in the late sixties.

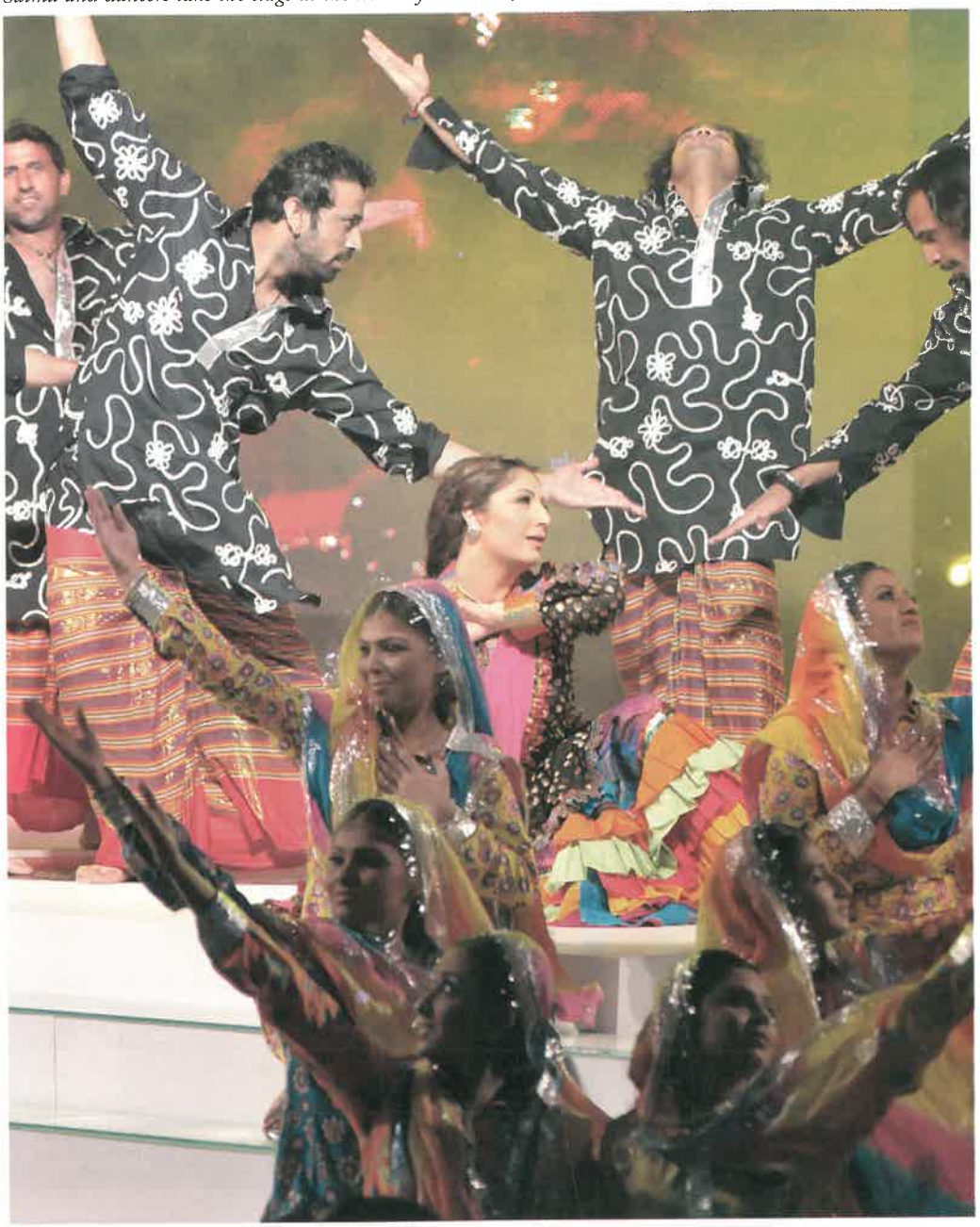
The Karachi Chapter of the All Pakistan Music Conference, which started with a three day annual concert in 2003, has gone from strength to strength. It attracts singers and musicians from both sides of the Wagah border.

For lovers of film music there is now a new forum. Every month Amateur Melodies, a group of serious amateur singers and ardent listeners of film music, hold a concert. Their standard has improved considerably and now Hum TV, a popular entertainment channel, has started airing the concert. Mooseqar, Saaz aur Awaaz and Sampoorna are three groups that are promoting classical music by holding concerts regularly.

With the opening of so many TV channels in the country, almost all of them based in Karachi, and at least two more from leading newspaper publishing houses in the offing, there is a great demand for youngsters with training in audio-visual media. Alive to the situation, the Department of Visual Studies in Karachi University, Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Iqra University and SZABIST hold regular audio-visual classes

All said, the last ten years have seen a sea change in the field of infotainment. What would be the scene at the end of the next ten years is something no one can predict safely.

Saima and dancers take the stage at the Lux Style Awards, 2008.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CATWALK. PRODUCTIONS

Theatre enthusiasts used to lament that the city does not have a proper stage but, ironically enough, by the time a proper hall, designed for staging plays, was completed on the premises of the Arts Council, theatre activities had come to a halt. Now the auditorium is being used for occasional film shows or seminars.

The fate of classical dance is not much better than the theatre in the megacity. Dance recitals are rare. However, two accomplished performers, Sheema Kirmani, the exponent of Odissi and Bharat Natyam, and Nighat Choudhry, who specialises in Kathak, continue to teach classical dance to children and young men and women but most students don't pursue the art seriously for a long time.

People's interest in classical dance withered when Gen Ziaul Haq's government banned the coverage of dance on TV. His government was the worst thing to have happened to performing arts in Pakistan, even fine art suffered. The only art form that he encouraged was calligraphy of Quranic verses.

It was after his departure from the scene that Pop music prospered in the country and some of the groups, all Karachi-based, won applause and recognition both at home and abroad.

Stars of Sitara and Mehrunissa: a popular TV serial.

SEVENTEEN

KARACHI BEFORE PROHIBITION

ANWER MOORAJ

Entertainment in Karachi in the 'western' sense of the word, from the time the British hoisted the Union Jack until well after they pulled anchor in 1947 reflected in large measure the tastes and styles of the imperial power. At the outbreak of the First World War, when the sun had not yet set on the empire and Britannia still ruled the waves, Karachi was very much a British city.

> The English population of the Station was made up almost entirely of officials; either civil or military. There were only ten business houses in Karachi then. Social life was based on the life of society in England. Calling, which was between the hours of 12 noon and 1 p.m., was *de rigueur* and strictly observed; unfortunate men having to wear frock coats and top hats. Ladies costumes consisted of voluminous skirts covering the feet with fold upon fold of garments underneath, and steel ribbed corsets enclosed and compressed their waists. All parties were strictly formal and for dinners, even in the hot weather, full evening tail suits, with stiff skirts, were worn.[1]

It is an interesting observation that out of the fifteen gentlemen who attended a meeting in Frere Hall on 25 May 1871 to discuss the possibility of starting a club in 'Kurrachee for the whole of Scinde' nine wore military uniforms, two were doctors and the other four civil servants.

It was possibly the Sind Club (when it was located in a bungalow on Elphinstone Street) to which the famous traveller and orientalist, Sir Richard Frances Burton, was referring when he wrote in 1876.

> There is, I may tell you, a neat little club, but it lacks chambers. Karachi cannot yet boast of an hotel; nor will she before she belongs to the Panjab....[2]

While soirees were held on a regular basis at the homes of British officers, it wasn't until August 1873 that mention was first made of some sort of social activities in the prestigious

U. Hla Maung leading in the winner.

important, it gave the young men, who could not afford expensive dinner parties, the opportunity of returning hospitality and of entertaining their lady friends. Altogether the move was a most popular one, even among those members of the Club who were not invited to the tea parties; for they sat on the Billiard Room Chabootra enjoying their drinks, surveying the galaxy of beauty and fashion and unquestioningly delighting in the facetious remarks that passed among them. It was a fashion parade of Karachi's highest order, even to the extent of those who had been taken for a ride (and sometimes those who had not), changing from their dirty riding kit into immaculately clean breeches, top boots and intensely horsey riding coats.[5]

Advertisements for Nishat and Palace cinemas.

Social activities took place at two other clubs. One was the Karachi Boat Club, a tall timbered building overlooking the Chinna Creek, constructed in 1885, whose interesting feature is a combination of black woodwork and white plaster, and the other was the Karachi Gymkhana.

> Earlier known as the Ladies Club, it began as a small structure at the edge of the racecourse, but acquired a large Tudor-style building in 1886 when it moved to its present location on Scandal Point (now Club) Road.[6]

According to an ornamental plaque placed inside the entrance to the Gymkhana Lt.-Col. G.B. Simpson was the first president. This was in 1886. W.W. Smart (ICS), the second on the list, was elected president in 1923. The plaque is silent on the period in between the two dates.

The dance bands that performed regularly at these three clubs during the second world war, often attired in black tie and cummerbund, played ballroom music in strict tempo and usually took their cue from their guru—Ken Mac of the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay.

Advertisement for the Beach Luxury Hotel.

Sind Club. A special meeting was called to decide whether the Club should hold a ball. The proposal put before the meeting was

> That a Ball be given by such Members of the Sind Club as wish to subscribe and that it be called the Sind Club Ball; such Ball to be held only if thirty shares be subscribed for by Members within the next seven days.[3]

The requisite number of subscribers was apparently forthcoming, and a fancy dress ball was held in Frere Hall. It wasn't until 15 October 1885 that the second Sind Club Ball was given. Ball number three took place in October 1888

> But it was not until 1892 that the Ball became an annual affair. From then onwards it was taken very seriously and several pages of the minute book were filled each year with the arrangements authorized for it, and the duties of the members who were appointed to superintend it, and to look after the comfort of the Club guests. All Officers of Regiments stationed in Sind and Quetta were invited, as was also the Agent to the Governor General at Quetta. Also all married couples belonging to the Gymkhana, except when the husband was a member of the Sind Club, received invitations.... On all occasions full dress and decorations were worn.[4]

The quality of the food served was consistently good. Turbaned and uniformed native bearers, used to the shenanigans of the military and civil types, and trained to ignore the minor indiscretions of members who couldn't hold their liquor, were always in attendance.

A further advance in social life was the introduction in 1896 of band guest nights for men only. These were held every Saturday night and were apparently most popular, though in 1902 they were restricted to fortnightly events. The entry of ladies into the social life of the Club was still further encouraged in 1903 by the introduction of pre-dinner band evenings on the lawns of the Club. The band played on the lawn opposite the dining room and the other lawn was given up to tea parties.

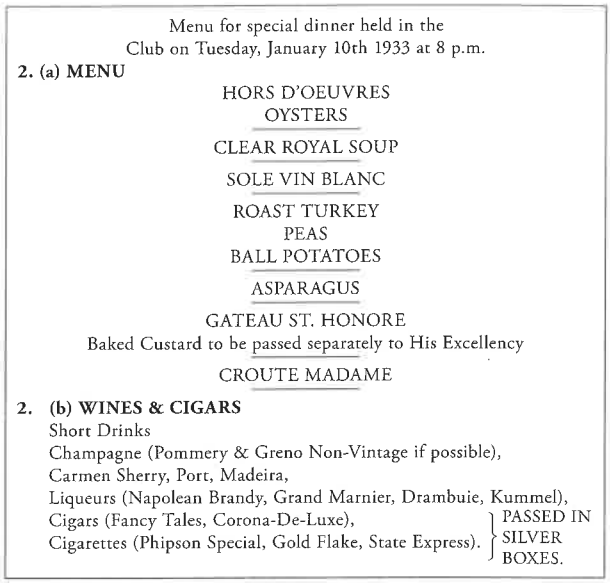
> This institution served a very useful purpose for it enabled the 'burra Memsahibs' to entertain the younger men who had not yet reached the status of dinner invitation, and, what is more

machines. In fact, no gambling ever took place on the premises. The Casino was essentially a restaurant where a guest was served an excellent meal on clean, crisp tablecloths of the pink chequered design favoured in France, and all the alcoholic beverages he could consume. Great attention was paid to detail. Sparkling cutlery and expensive crockery which carried the Casino logo and freshly cut flowers were in evidence every day.

Virginia cigarettes advertisement.

The place had an atmosphere which the dapper, balding manager, a white Russian émigré known as Arty, tried to perpetuate. Arty was rather like one of those Ruritanian counts that one read about. He occasionally sported a monocle, smoked Turkish cigarettes stuck in a long ivory holder, and was full of anecdotes about intrigues in high places. He had that look of splendid imperturbability which is the hallmark of the *maîtres d'hôtel* in the more fashionable eating establishments of Europe. But though the food was outstanding, the clientele that poured in night after night, dropping names, and flashing banknotes in an effort to secure a table, came chiefly for the booze and the music. There was no shortage of the former and the latter was provided by a pianist named Stefan Eros, and his Hungarian Serenaders. It was a band the likes of which the city had never seen or heard before, and was not likely to see or hear again.

Night after night as champagne corks popped and waiters tripped over inebriated revellers who had slid under their tables, Eros and his Serenaders recreated the romance of pre-war central Europe. This was the era of ballroom music, of accordions and violins, and Spanish steel guitars, of Mantovani, Geraldo, Cugat, and the Lecuona Cuban Boys. It was an era of romance and elegance and taste when dances were intimate and like the tango, sensual. One moment Eros took his guests on a musical tour of Vienna and Berlin in the finest tradition of Marek Weber, and the next the thump of conga drums, the



Menu for special dinner held in the
Club on Tuesday, January 10th 1933 at 8 p.m.

2. (a) MENU

HORS D'OEUVRES
OYSTERS
CLEAR ROYAL SOUP
SOLE VIN BLANC
ROAST TURKEY
PEAS
BALL POTATOES
ASPARAGUS
GATEAU ST. HONORE
Baked Custard to be passed separately to His Excellency
CROUTE MADAME

2. (b) WINES & CIGARS

Short Drinks
Champagne (Pommery & Greno Non-Vintage if possible),
Carmen Sherry, Port, Madeira,
Liqueurs (Napolean Brandy, Grand Marnier, Drambuie, Kummel),
Cigars (Fancy Tales, Corona-De-Luxe),
Cigarettes (Phipson Special, Gold Flake, State Express). } PASSED IN SILVER BOXES.

Colonial era menu from the Sind Club.

While the British had their Lindy Hops and scavenger hunts, bridge parties and tennis courts, well-to-do Indian residents of Karachi, who had developed a taste for club life but were still denied membership to the three established British clubs, decided it was time they had a place of their own. After considerable effort on the part of a handful of city elders, The Karachi Club was established in its present location on Dr Ziauddin Ahmed Road. Ballroom dances were a regular feature at the Club and a smooth wooden floor had been constructed for this purpose. On Sundays members could listen to concerts by a salon orchestra, as they sat on the shady lawn in rattan chairs and sipped their gin pahits.

By the year 1930 goods produced in the United Kingdom were very much in evidence in the few shops that existed. Pear's soap, Sanatogen wine, Cadbury's chocolate, Sloan's liniment, and Craven A cigarettes had become household words. Of the few cars that could be seen on the streets, the Austin and the Morris were the most prominent. And in the European restaurant at the railway station, the menu consisted of the inevitable clear soup, roast mutton with mint sauce, and fried potatoes, followed by the ubiquitous cream caramel, referred to by the native cook as *puteen*. Baked custard, a close cousin of the popular cream caramel, was apparently a standard item at the Sind Club. In a menu printed for a special occasion, it was 'passed separately to the Chief Guest' in preference to Gateau St. Honore!

> Some Indian cooks never graduated much beyond caramel custard, which was easy to make and convenient because there were always plenty of eggs and milk. However, it became so overworked it was nicknamed '365'—served every day of the year. Lady Hay recalls that they refused to have custard at home, since it was served in dak bungalows and railway stations *ad nauseum*.[7]

In the early 1950s, once the sea had swallowed a big red sun at evening, and revellers started getting ready for a night on the town, all roads led to the celebrated watering hole on the first floor of the Central Hotel known as The Casino. Nobody knew why the place had been given this particular name. There were no roulette tables or slot

Panna, star attraction at the Gourmet (Palace Hotel).

Karachi had come of age. The big spenders, fuelled by a boom in the textile and jute industries, suddenly descended on the city. They wanted action of the kind they had seen in the night clubs of Bombay and Calcutta. And this is just what Le Gourmet promised to do. Situated on the ground floor of the Palace Hotel, a solid structure with an old world charm which later belonged to the Ramchandani family, the Gourmet was the closest thing to a French restaurant the city had seen. The manager, Narinder Bakhshi, promptly set about introducing dishes like Chateaubriand and Chicken a la Kiev. Having a steak cooked on a stove at one's elbow was quite a novelty for the Karachi of the 1950s. And as there was an unlimited supply of whisky, and the wine list contained the best that Bordeaux, Burgundy and the valley of the Loire had to offer, the more cosmopolitan guest knew the evening was going to be special.

swish of maraccas and the click of claves would transport them to the open air dance halls of Havana. On one occasion, a clutch of dancers had just finished negotiating a tricky Argentine tango when the Casino was invaded by a group of noisy American sailors in uniform. Eros suddenly unleashed a tornado of stomps and rags of King Oliver vintage that made the boys in white so happy that they bought everybody several rounds of drinks.

Most evenings the band packed up around two o'clock in the morning, but on weekends the musical instruments were finally put away when a rising sun decanted burgundy through the high windows, and bleary-eyed revellers were served a hearty breakfast, courtesy of Arty. But after a while the novelty wore off. And in spite of the Russian's efforts things began to slide. Eros didn't renew his contract and fights broke out frequently between inebriated guests, and at times, between the guests and the staff. The police were often called in to cart off the more exuberant of the riotously festive guests some of whom had started to wade deep in the underworld. The time had come for a change. The nightbirds wanted something better, something more exclusive and sophisticated.

The Palace Hotel, where the Sheraton stands today.

hottest spot in town. Way past the happy hour, after the tenor had wrung from the last Neapolitan serenade every drop of its emotional juices, the audience waited with bated breath as the orchestra struck the opening bars of the all time favourite from the grasslands of the Argentine—'Adios Pampa Mia'. It was the duo's *pièce de résistance*, a truly shattering climax to an evening of great entertainment. The rhythmic buoyancy, the tension of the beat, the range of instrumental colour, and the increasingly intense and confident ecstasy with which the duo countered the crisp instrumental attack, made the tango truly compelling.

There was always a number of encores, for the audience just didn't think it had ever had enough. Marlene's crowd winner was a catchy Venezuelan number called 'Alma Llanera' which Lina Romay, singing with Xavier Cugat and his orchestra, had immortalized in the 1944 film *Bathing Beauty*. Marlene had a wonderful smoky voice and her sharp edged phrasing was most effective. Tino, not to be outdone, would then plunge into the ever popular 'Malaguena'. Emitting a fearsome flamethrower energy, he would stretch the long, sustained melody, hanging on to a single high note for a full two minutes before unfurling long lines of lyrics with spontaneous melody-spinning of great originality.

By the time Avari inaugurated his 007 nightclub in 1964, Tino and Marlene had already set sail for the Bay of Naples. But they left behind a void which has never really been filled. They were the last musical ambassadors of an age of elegance and good taste.

The management of the Inter Continental Hotel, anxious to cash in on the growing interest in night life, diverted some of the traffic to the Nasreen Room, a late night restaurant which appealed to the *nouveau riche*. But in spite of the band, good food, and a well stocked cellar, the place never had quite the ambiance of the Gourmet, or the exuberance of the Casino.

Meanwhile, as the booze flowed and the locals developed a preference for fading continental blondes, a number of seedy establishments cropped up in different parts of the city. The Excelsior, located off Elphinstone Street, was a pioneer of the sleazy joints where cabaret meant strip tease. Posters and advertisements regularly billed the performers as stars of the Folies Bergere, but the girls, slightly mawkish, occasionally maudlin, whimsically shaking their partially unclad bodies with exhausting twinkles, invariably turned out to be old campaigners from the bawdy nightclubs of Istanbul and Beirut. The client who had already tucked away a quart of the distilled essence of grain never knew the difference. Nor did he particularly care, as long as the girls were white, voluptuous and available.

There were other places that offered a different musical fare. A Filipino, Francisco, and his Serenaders appeared every night at the Marina Hotel after an initial stint at the

The Gourmet had the usual ingredients which made for a successful night club—good food, a well stocked cellar, wonderful music and a congenial atmosphere. Everybody who was somebody wanted to be seen in the place. The Gourmet, however, introduced a new element—cabaret. Besides the usual assortment of heavily rouged Can Can girls, who threw their long gaitered legs into the air while the Italian orchestra played a selection from 'Orpheus in the Underworld', there were also sophisticated magic shows, experiments in levitation and solo performances by a sensational local classical dancer, Panna.

Dinshaw B. Avari owner of the Beach Luxury Hotel, located off Queens Road, was certainly aware of the competition. He had a wonderful orchestra led by a dashing young band leader, Julian Young. But this was just not enough. What he desperately needed was a singer to serenade the wayfarers who used to collect in the creek in the evening to cool off in the sea breeze, and down a bottle or two of Chianti. Tino, who hailed from sunny Italy, arrived in 1958 accompanied by his German girlfriend Marlene, and a large repertoire of Neapolitan folk songs. The duo took Karachi by storm. Within a few weeks the porch in the Beach Luxury Hotel, fringed by date and coconut palms, became the

Beach Luxury Hotel.

There were other smaller groups that gravitated around a pianist or a drummer who performed for a fee. One of the most notable of these, who was too implacably talented to just fade away, was F.X. Fernandes, a piano teacher by day and leader of a combo by night. One of the great exponents of strict tempo dance music, he was at his best when ploughing through a rumba. His piano was always full of storming base lines, explosive chords and slashing runs.

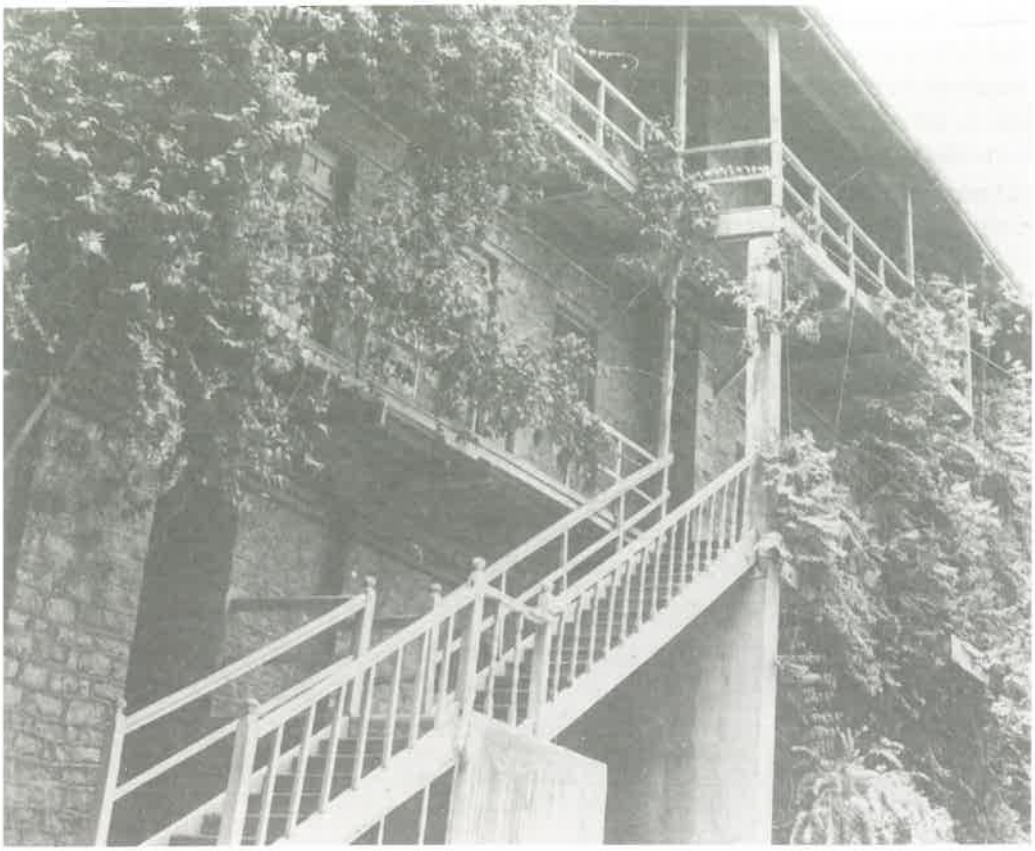
Those who just wanted a little background music, a drink and a plate of nuts without any sexual frills, frequented one of the many bars that could be found in Saddar. Mondi's in Frere Street and the Ritz Bar opposite the Paradise Cinema in Clarke Street, with their swing doors, were the market leaders. But the Paris bar on Preedy Street, the U-Bar on Garden Road, the Empress Bar and Toddy shop near Empress Market, and the Hirjina Bar on Frere Street also had their loyal and regular customers, as did the Cecil Bar, the Marina Bar and Nusserwanji's. Almost every alcoholic beverage from rum and vodka, brandy and gin to the locally brewed toddy was available.

A number of places served excellent meals over the years, and the foreign tourist would be taken to restaurants with exotic names like the Four Seasons (in the Metropole Hotel), the Chandni Lounge (in the Inter Continental Hotel) and Shezan. But the local gourmet in search of a good grill would invariably select Agha's Tavern in the North Western Hotel—one of the city's classiest licensed restaurants.

In Karachi around the time of partition, native musical entertainment was limited to occasional presentations by Sindhi Hindu musicians and dancers, and to what was available in the bawdy houses in Napier Road within the confines of the red light area. With the establishment of Radio Pakistan in Karachi, the foundation of a distinct Pakistani tradition was laid. Radio Pakistan was, in fact, a kind of institutional fulcrum which tried not only to evolve a separate tradition by absorbing many of the folk cultures that existed in the country, but also by encouraging and nourishing a host of local singers and musicians, some of whom subsequently achieved fame and popularity.

When compiling a history of native style entertainment it is fashionable to start with the stars who carved out a name for themselves at home and abroad—singers like the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, whose appeal lay in the personal, idiosyncratic spontaneous transformation of songs and the recognition of the subtle, expressive and unique qualities of the human voice. And the late Ghulam Farid Sabri whose lustrous baritone and pulsating vibrato won him many admirers. Both *qawwals* were in constant demand in Karachi at a variety of functions.

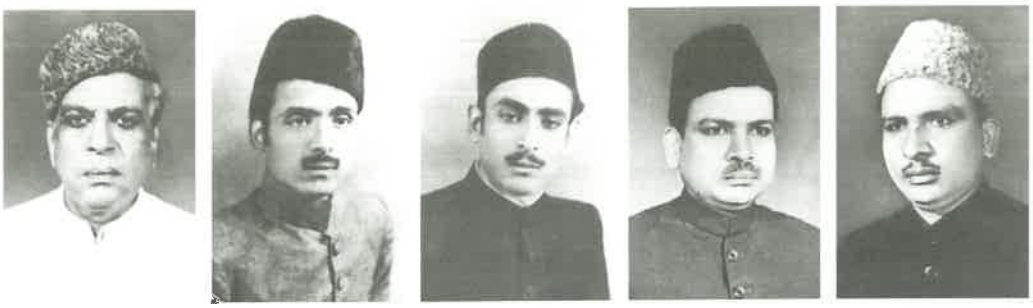
But no appreciation of the great musical fabric that unfolded in Karachi during the last fifty years would be complete without mentioning some of the pioneers, and there was a whole raft of older singers that the historian would cast in the 'classical' mould.[9]



A side view of North Western Hotel, which served the best cuisine that money could buy.

Excelsior. A softly scampering muted guitar, seething with Hawaiian references, churned out gleaming classics like 'Sweet Leilani' and 'Sing me a song of the islands.' For a few rupees a guest got a long, cool drink made from fermented coconut water, and a glimpse of Francisco's daughter, Conchita, a grass skirt clinging to her slim waist, a lei of hibiscus around her neck, and a gardenia in her long black hair as she swayed to a hula. This was the only place in Karachi that played the kind of music that Felix Mendelssohn and Lani MacIntyre had popularized in Britain during the war years.

For lovers of Jazz and Swing who lived in the fast lane, the place to go to on Sunday mornings in 1950 and 1951 was the Marina Hotel opposite Electric House, where trumpeter Pat Blake held court. This was Jazz at its best. Blake was an artist in whom an organizational intelligence and an appetite for improvising were in creative balance. He hit notes as if sculpting in marble, and his rough, hard-driving style was the invigorating antithesis of classical grace. For sheer swing and energy his band swept the board.[8]



From L to R, Farooq Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Ahmed Khan, Mahmood Ahmed Khan, Raees Ahmed Khan and Khaleeq Ahmed Khan.

An important area of musical entertainment which, while extremely popular in Karachi, also came to the notice of impresarios and promoters abroad, is the *qawwali*. Ghulam Farid Sabri and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan have already been mentioned. Both *qawwals* received considerable exposure in the west, where the hypnotic beat has an instant appeal. The former introduced the saxophone into his collection of instruments which produced a ripe, eloquent lyricism. He also enlarged his range of percussion by throwing in a pair of bongos which did not go down too well with the purists. And the latter, influenced by the highly articulate Englishman, Peter Gabriel, who introduced him to the modern disco beat which enlarged his palette of sound effects, ended up producing a more meditative trance-like music. One of his most trenchant recordings which became an instant hit in Pakistan and abroad and triggered a cult is *Mast Qalander*.

Before the arrival of these two musical giants of entertainment, a number of *qawwals* had transmitted their beautiful sounds over the ether. By far the most outstanding was Manzoor Ahmed Khan who later adopted the surname Niazi. He frequently sounded as if he was on a knife edge of strength and poignant vulnerability. He was greatly in demand at functions and his popularity spread like bushfire. *Qawwals* are usually classified according to their style: *sufiana* (devotional) and *awami* (popular). Certain *qawwals* such as Azeem Prem Ragi, Ghulam Fareed Sabri and his brother Ghulam Maqbool, Kalwa Banney, and Zaki Taji sang both types of *qawwalis*. Manzoor. Hussain Niazi, Bahauddin, Naseer Khan, Jaffer Nizami, Farooq Mian, and Ghulam Khusro specialized in *sufiana*, whereas Baray and Chote Saleh Mohammad, Sami Azad, Roshan Sitara, Ata Mohammad and Ahmed Azad sang the popular or *awami* type of *qawwalis*.

Some connoisseurs of indigenous music spent endless hours listening to their favourite instrumental soloist. Instruments (*vadya*), according to B.C. Deva, are considered to be of four basic types

> *tata vadya* (stringed), *sushira vadya* (wind), *avanaddha vadya* (drums), and *ghana vadya* (bells, plates and rods). Among the *tata vadya* are the *veena*, the *sitar* the *tamboora* (plucked) the *sarangi*, the *dilruba* (bowed); the wind instruments are the flutes, the *shehnai*, the *naferi* and

From L to R, Amir Mohammad, Ghulam Ghaus, Mansoor Ahmed, Manzoor Ahmed Khan Niazi, Mahood Ahmed and Abdullah.

A word of explanation is necessary at this stage. The music that a listener heard on Radio Pakistan at the time of partition and the music that he still hears today (which could be perhaps described as the result of 'stylistic cross-pollenization') is essentially melodic. This is in sharp contrast to the European tradition where early melodic music changed into current harmonic music. Though efforts have been made to ensure that serious Pakistani music evolves a distinct and separate cultural identity, for the origins of the classic style one has to turn to the roots of the subcontinental tradition, which is not only one of the oldest in the world but also a major system of music. The music of India, according to the learned music historian, B.C. Deva

> is one of the most highly developed and sophisticated musical systems of human society. Particularly its micro-tonal pitch differences (sruti-s as they are called), its melodic schema (*ragas*) and the rhythmic subtleties of its *tala* are amongst the most cherished artistic contribution's of India to world culture.[10]

Many female Pakistani singers distinguished themselves in either, or both the classical and light-classical tradition.[11]

Parveen Qasim: in the execution of the Kathak she was unsurpassed.

Amy Minwalla: a superb dancer who was greatly in demand.

the *nagasvaram* (Indian oboes); the drums comprise the *tabla*, the *pakhawaj*, the *mraidang*, and so on; bells, rods, etc., are common though not generally used in concert music.[12]

The *sarangi nawaz* who performed for Radio Pakistan during the last fifty years were Baba-e-Moseeqi Ustad Bundoo Khan, Ustads Zahuri Khan, Nathoo Khan, Hamid Hussain, Wahid Hussain, Zahid Hussain, and Nawab Ali Khan. One heard also Ghulam Mohiyuddin, Noor Mohammad Khan, Faiz Khan, Hussain Bakhsh, Niazu Khan, Ibrahim Khan, Ghafoor Khan, Waheed Muradabadi, Khan Mehboob Khan and Sajid Noor Khan.

When one mentions the sitar the five names that immediately spring to mind are Sharif Khan Poonchwalla, Ustad Kabir Khan, Ustad Machchoo Khan, Ustad Imdad Hussain, and the irrepressible Ustad Raees Khan—the most important living sitar player in the country. There were also *beenkar* such as Ustad Habib Ali Khan and A. Rashid Khan, and Ustad Rafique Ghaznavi who was a virtuoso on the *vicheetra veena*. The *sarod* in the hands of Ustad Nazar Hussain became an instrument capable of producing the most divine metallic sound which was often spine tingling in its intensity. Lal Mohammad and Ustad Salamat Hussain produced some of the most soulful wails in recorded music when they played the flute, capturing a flowing and contemplative sound in the company of ideally flexible, responsive partners.

The banjo is normally associated with the southern and south-eastern United States. There was, however, a couple of banjo players in Karachi, Ustad Bilawal Belgium and Khaliq Dad who achieved a high degree of professionalism. Bilawal, who was a tough musician who had endured numerous hardships, apparently adopted the surname 'Belgium' after being told that in spite of being overrun by hostile forces in both world wars the country had survived with honour!

No orchestra is complete without the violin, generally regarded as a European instrument and an integral part of both the symphony orchestra as well as the chamber music ensemble, even though the bow, according to Curt Sachs, is first mentioned in Persia and China in the ninth century AD. The inclusion of the violin in the Radio Pakistan orchestra is possibly due to the pre-partition influence of the various orchestras that performed over All India Radio, whose music directors recognized the great brilliance of tone and the highly dramatic and virtuoso qualities of the instrument. The infinite variety of its technical capacities, ranging from all manner of bowing, to plucking and percussive effect were not lost on the Radio Pakistan violinists, though the use of pizzicato was rare. Quite a few violinists who were known for their excellent finger work exploited their skills to luxuriate in the contrasting textures of sensual pleasure and poignancy.[13]

The *avanaddha vadya* element in the classical music of the subcontinent is of supreme importance. As in New Orleans Jazz where musicians traded riffs as part of the call-and-response tradition, the *tabla* player engages in a similar *sawal-jawab* dialogue with a *sitar*

The fisherman's dance, a bit of kitsch for the tourists.

A number of cultural groups like the Ramesh ensemble sprung up over the years, the most prominent of which was the Azad Art Circle, established by Qamar Azad and Anwer Baloch. After the death of the former, Anwer Baloch set up the Paradise Club which did quite well. A number of clubs subsequently mushroomed of which Mahmood Light Music, Bazm-e-Sangeet, the Jubilee Art Circle, Pak Modern Art, and the Rim Jhim Art Circle had their clientele. These musical groups also had their patrons, and provided performers a springboard for future engagements. Comedians such as Moin Akhtar and Aslam Chabela, dancers like Salomi and Reshma, singers such as Farida Tabassum and Parveen Akhter, and musicians of the calibre of Javed Alla Ditta and Ghulam Ali, in a sense, served their apprenticeship in these art circles and clubs. In this connection Nawaz Ghulam Hussain Qadir needs special mention. He was not only a distinctive compère who was associated with Radio Pakistan, but also the founder of the Qadri Art Circle through which a number of stage shows were organized and promoted.

At the time of the Second World War there was an ethnic minority in Karachi of a fairly substantial size. This was the Anglo-Indian community which provided the middle management in the railways, customs, dockyards and police. Under the British the

Raffi Anwar, Nahid Siddiqui, Sahira Shahjehan and Nazir Ahmed, starts of the PIA Arts Academy and cultural ambassadors of Pakistan.

or *sarangi* player. The celebrated Indian sitar virtuoso, Ravi Shankar, frequently engaged in light hearted *jugal bandi* with his highly accomplished *tabla* player, Allah Rakha to the amusement and enjoyment of an appreciative audience. Karachi had a round dozen of highly gifted *tabla nawaz* who performed in a variety of concerts and other musical functions.[14]

No description of native entertainment is complete without mentioning dance, of which Karachi has always reaped a rich harvest. One has to only mention the words 'classical dancing' in an enlightened group of older citizens and the names of Amy Minwalla, Panna, Parveen Qasim and Nahid Siddiqui leap up like a highland fling. Amy Minwalla has always been something of a legend in Karachi, and Parveen Qasim is the finest *kathak* dancer this city has had the good fortune to watch. Ustad Shafiullah Khan, senior music teacher at the PACC, fondly recalls that occasion in 1961 at the Sikandar Hall in Dhaka when a fierce, three-way competition took place between Amy Minwalla, Parveen Qasim, and the actress-dancer Rani. Each girl gave everything she had in a programme calculated in both content and performance to leave an ineradicable impression on its audience. At the conclusion of the session a highly appreciative General Umrao Khan presented each girl with a shining guinea.

When cultural delegations were sent abroad by the Pakistan government, the dances that were chosen were usually those that were supposed to represent the folk cultures of the four provinces. A number of talented young men and women were trained at what used to be the PIA Arts Academy. Some of the folk dances like the *khattak* and the *bhangra* had an authentic touch, but direct borrowing from a variety of sources resulted in a wide range of kitsch.[15]

In 1964, R.K. Ramesh initiated the Ramesh Arts Circle—a cultural group which bivouacked off the streets of Karachi and entertained bystanders with a selection of songs and dances and the odd clowning routine. Ramesh performed with his three daughters and son. Today, his grandchildren are doing the same sort of thing, a thread of performance tradition having been passed down by some process of cultural osmosis.

'Anglos', as they were frequently referred to, enjoyed certain privileges. After partition, however, they tried to come to grips with a changing political environment and discovered their status had been redefined. The more adventurous migrated to the United Kingdom and Australia. Those that remained tried to adjust, however unsuccessfully. Though the 'Anglos' practiced the Christian faith, and though many of them could have passed for Europeans, they found themselves occupying a relatively low rung on the social ladder and were discouraged from joining the three exclusive gentlemen's clubs, deeply steeped in tradition where British brahmins carried on the caste system which controlled membership and attendance.

Ian Stephens put it rather nicely in a passage written in the 1940s entitled 'The British Caste System', which appeared in Laura Sykes' eminently readable book about British mores and folkways in India. Though the observations refer essentially to British attitudes in Calcutta they were true of other parts of India as well. Stephens writes

> British society in India, over the decades, had evolved peculiar...snobberies of its own, borrowing (no doubt subconsciously) from the Hindu caste system, and creating distinctions undreamed of 'at home'. Civilians, in the covenanted Government services, especially the ICS, became in effect Brahmins, calmly conscious of superiority over all the others. And Army officers assumed a stand-offish Kshatriya mien. These two constituted the topmost British castes.... Oddest probably, however, was the caste cleavage within the business community itself. You'd find it in most of the big cities, but specially evident in Calcutta. There, to be in 'commerce', gave vastly more status than 'trade'. The latter was thought degrading. It made a really low level Vaisya out of you.... Luckily a newspaperman, anyway if on *The Statesman's* staff and a friendly sort, could wiggle through most of the indigenous British caste-structure without much annoying anyone....[16]

The 'Anglos' had their own meeting place located next to the race course in the cantonment area. This was the Railway Hall Institute, named after A.G. Hall, director general of Pakistan Railways after partition, affectionately referred to as the Loco. On week days a member could enjoy a dish of curry and rice, washed down by a bottle or two of beer, supplied by the Murree Brewery for about eight rupees. And on Saturdays around eight in the evening, a stream of young men in slacks and shirts, their short sleeves tucked up an extra inch to reveal rippling biceps, their hair carefully combed and brilliantined, turned up with their young ladies at the Loco. They came by tram, bicycle, motor-cycle and *gharry*. And they certainly knew how to enjoy themselves. The bands that performed were made up of local boys who were as talented as they were enthusiastic. They played all sorts of dance music, from hot jazz of Jelly Roll Morton vintage to the fiery Latin beat of the undisputed king of the Cuban son, Don Azpiazu. Romantic interludes were provided by budding young tenors who emulated the style of Bing Crosby, the high priest of the crooners.

No description of a night out at the Loco would be complete without mentioning the inevitable jam session. It was in this department that the dancers excelled. The way the

Vital and Rozina: carrying on the tradition.

A section of the building seen through the arch in the portico.

One of the original pillars now covered by plaster.

Two bricks stored in the manager's office carry the legend ' 'Basel Mission Tile Works'.

The enchanted garden where time seems to stand still.

The entrance of the Railway Hall Institute. Inset: a section of the tiled roof.

The crest of the pillar.

young studs threw their partners over their shoulders, under their arms and between their legs, working up a lather of sweat, while a highly charged audience clapped in unison to the hypnotic beat, whipping up a crescendo of applause as the couples finally sank to their knees, exhausted but exhilarated, was the high point of the evening's entertainment. The Loco retained its appeal for a decade after partition, but as it lost its ground root support it gradually faded into the mists of memory.

Karachi's other significant Christian minority is the Goan community, which traces its origin to a former Portuguese colony on the west coast of India. Local Goans, whose members are almost exclusively Roman Catholic, are loyal and patriotic citizens of Pakistan who have always risen to the call of duty. Profoundly religious they have been able to keep up many of their traditions, and the local parish in certain localities continues to form a focal point for community activity. The more affluent members of this community are widely travelled and many have made the

The Karachi Goan Association Building, which hosted Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

The values of kinship and community are still cherished in Karachi, whether the Goan is at worship or at play. This is a community that has produced cardinals (like His Eminence the late Joseph Cordeiro), bishops, several priests and nuns. Karachi Goans have held high ranking and responsible posts in the Pakistan armed forces, government departments (like Cyril D'Cruz, chairman of the Peshawar Electricity Board), judiciary (such as Mr Justice C.M. Lobo and Mr Justice H.T. Raymond), customs, railways (like Frank D'Souza, member of the Railway Board before partition), posts and telegraphs and the Karachi Port Trust. Of the gentlemen mentioned in this paragraph, the last four served as president of the Karachi Goan Association.

There is, however, one area in which the Goan community has always excelled—and that is in the field of music and dance. On 15 February 1886 when the first Penny Reading was held at the residence of one of its members, a highly responsive audience heard recitals and orchestral overtures which included Haydn's Second Symphony and Schubert's Sonata No. 2. On 16 February 1887, the day the Golden Jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria was celebrated, the foundation stone of the Portuguese Goa Association was laid amidst great pomp and ceremony. The building was finally completed at a cost

pilgrimage to the Vatican. But it is a rare Goan who, while planning his international itinerary, has not wanted to or thought about slipping in a fortnight's visit to the land of his forefathers, for there are few places on earth that are lovelier than the 53-mile long strip of coastline on the Malabar coast of India, 235 miles south of Bombay. Copywriters churning out travel folders have tried to outdo one another when describing the place, but few writers have captured the sights and sounds and flavours of Goa better than Frank Simoes in his brief preface to Thomas Vaz's portfolio of photographs on the land of his birth

> Goa's children have long sought to celebrate the many-splendid joys of their land in verse, word, song and image. Nature aids and abets. Virgin dawns reveal a land of lush green valleys and serendipitous beaches where your's are likely to be the only footprints, highlands of burnt amber, sparkling rivers, springs and fountains, groves of mango, casuarina, palm and endless horizons of emerald paddy, newly minted towns burnished with laughter and good fellowship: all one and at peace with a richly tapestried past, a cultural heritage that spans thousands of years and pays handsome tribute to the rich legacies of Dravidian, Hindu, Muslim and Portuguese empires. Legions of conquerors have passed this way, yet there are no scars. The people are essentially happy and generous of spirit. The values of kinship and community are held sacred. The ancient blessings are still given, each dusk, parent to child, grandparent to parent, until the very oldest blesses the youngest by the charismatic laying on of hands. It is impossible to tell where a village ends and the fields begin because the symbiosis is whole and complete: man and his environment are in seamless communion. A small but singular miracle.[17]

The swimming pool with its blue tiled floor, cool and inviting.

Carol singing and dancing at KGA Hall.

of Rs14,013 (which included the price of the land) and the opening ceremony which was held on 24 May 1888 was celebrated by holding a grand ball.

The building, however, though it contained a library proved to be grossly inadequate for the growing needs of the community. And so, on 22 February 1903 at a special general meeting it was decided to purchase a plot on Depot Lines and to construct, among other things, a spacious hall. Two years later on Easter Sunday, the opening ceremony of the new PGA hall was performed by R.P. Barrow, ICS, collector and district magistrate of Karachi. As expected there was considerable festivity and a fifty-piece orchestra, conducted by Arthur James Fernandes, enchanted the large gathering of the representatives of the city.

The KGA continued the British musical traditional and regularly performed the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, especially The Mikado and The Gondoliers. Programme of The Mikado, August 1916.

Programme.

The Mikado; or the Town of Titipu.

ACT I—Courtyard of Koko's Official Residence.
ACT II—Ko-ko's Garden.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE MIKADO OF JAPAN	...	Mr. A. M. Pinto.
NANKI-POO ...	*(His son disguised as a wandering minstrel and in love with Yum-Yum.*	Mr. P. A. de Sousa.
KO-KO ...	*(Lord High Executioner of Titipu)*	Mr. C. de Sousa.
POOH-BAH ...	*(Lord High Everything Else)* ...	Mr. A. Rodrigues.
PISH-TUSH ...	*(A Noble Lord)*	Mr. L. Raymond.
YUM-YUM ...	... ...	Miss Sophie Vas.
PITTI-SING ...	*(Three Sisters. Wards of Koko.)*	Miss Annie Machado.
PEEP-BO ...	... ...	Miss Isabella Dias.
KATISHA ...	*(An elderly lady in love with Nanki-poo.)*	Miss Mattie Gomes.

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

Misses Alice Pinto, Cissie de Sousa, Bessie Raymond, Annie Sequeira, Arthemesia D'Silva, Marie de Sousa, Maxie de Sousa, Sybil D'Abreo, Aileen Nazareth, Effie Menezes, Mary Lobo.

CHORUS OF MEN.

Messrs. J. Gomes, M. Lazarus, J. J. D'Costa, P. Fernandes, F. Sylveira, P. Menezes, D. Britto, J. Monteiro, E. Braganza, E. Rodrigues.

GUARDS.

Messrs. C. Fonseca, F. Fernandes, M. Fernandes, A. de Sousa, J. Lobo, and C. Fernandes.

ORCHESTRA.

Messrs. J. A. Mascarenhas, A. S. de Sousa, P. S. Fernandes, P. Mascarenhas, J. Soares, A. Fernandes, J. C. Mendonca.

Ladies and Gentlemen's costumes designed and executed by ...	MRS. C. C. FERNANDES.
Dances and Wigs by	... „ C. C. FERNANDES.
Scenery from	... THE K. A. D. C.
Lighting by	... THE EMPEROR CINEMA.

MISS AMY LOBO, *Pianist.* MR. M. S. GOMES, *Musical Director.* MR. P. J. ATHAIDE, *Prompter.* MR. R. A. M. D'SILVA, *Stage Manager.*

7th, 9th & 12th Augt. 1916.

The imposing new hall, designed by Moses Somake, has a large upper storey which is used as a concert hall as well as a ballroom. In 1929 Cincinnatus F. D'Abreo, one of the most outstanding members of the Goan community, died. A marble bust erected in his memory still stands in the lounge.

1936 was in many ways an important year for the community. Not only was the name of the Association changed to the KGA (Karachi Goan Association), the year also marked its Golden Jubilee. What better way to celebrate this important anniversary than by staging one of the most delightful of the Gilbert and Sullivan Savoy Operas—*The Gondoliers*! A distinguished audience which included the governor of Sindh, Sir Lancelot Graham and Lady

an opportunity for a stimulating discussion. In the early fifties the philosophers Sartre and Hegel were still the high priests of the temple, and it was quite fashionable to be an existentialist or a dialectical materialist.

Meanwhile, a revolution in music and dance had taken place in the United States, Europe and parts of the Far East. Ballroom dancing was limited to a few exclusive establishments and was gradually being supplemented by 'modern dancing' where couples are united by the vague consciousness of a shared activity. Nightclubs which featured orchestras and bands cut their overheads and replaced them with a disc jockey, a selection of cassettes and a sophisticated amplification system, or small groups which used a synthesizer, the inevitable acoustic guitars and percussion.

The idea soon took root in Karachi and discos proliferated in the city in the early eighties. They popped up in five star hotels and in a number of highly unlikely places. One of the more successful discos was *Juliana* in the Holiday Inn, with its neon fluorescence and its glitzy revolving crystal ball which hung from the ceiling, dispensing light and casting a nervous vigilance over the merry makers. 'Juliana' also closed down as did many of the others.

What the future western entertainment scene will be only time can tell. Perhaps a new kind of disco will emerge with more impersonal equipment. Perhaps it will disappear altogether as the younger generation makes a renewed effort to discover its roots.

No account of entertainment in Karachi before prohibition would be complete without including a piece on the popular sport of horse racing. The faithful would turn up dutifully every Sunday afternoon at the turf club in the hope of bagging a winner, and the diehards also made an additional mid-week appearance in what were referred to as Gymkhana Meetings. The big punters invariably placed their bets with the bookies, but the majority of race goers stuck to the totalizer which was managed by the club. The tote which accepted bets of smaller denominations, offered, among other combinations, forecasts, a double tote and a treble tote.

A question which punters have often asked is: which were the finest horses and mares that galloped down the straight at the Karachi turf club, in the years before prohibition? It is a difficult question, but if one was pressed for an answer it would probably be: Montreaux, (owned by Miss Abida Hussain), Son Altesse, Nectarine, Nero and Ripple. Each animal had a cult following.

A number of prominent people were involved in the sport and had a stable of horses tended by able trainers. Top of the list was the late Sardar M.A.K. Leghari who named his horses after classical and biblical antiquity—Zeus, Samson, Hercules and Nero. Ridden by Faiz Mohammed, Nero won the Quaid-i-Azam Gold Cup in December 1963.

Graham, attended. In 1941, after nine months of gruelling practice, the members staged another Gilbert and Sullivan opera—*The Pirates of Penzance.* On opening night the governor of Sindh Sir Hugh Dow and Lady Dow attended along with the entire Sind cabinet. There was a standing ovation when the final curtain came down. Goan elders reflect with a certain pride that during the interval, Sir Hugh visited the cast in the green rooms, complimented the director on the gorgeous costumes and performance and remarked that the production would have brought envy to the Doyly Carte Opera Company.[18]

Though the Goans were quite expert in staging all manner of theatrical productions, it is in the field of western music and dance that they are unsurpassed. Like the Filipinos they appear to be born with some special gift for appreciating melody, harmony and rhythm, and for passing on this gift to the next generation.

The bands that performed in the KGA Hall through both world wars tackled every kind of music score that came down the publisher's pike. Couples danced to the Charleston, the Lindy Hop, the Lancers, the one-step, the Paso Doble, the Gay Gordons, the Valeta, and the Lambeth Walk. These were followed by bouts of boogie-woogie and later, rock 'n' roll. The hard core of dancers, however, preferred ballroom dancing (or what British bandleader Victor Sylvester referred to as 'strict tempo'). This was something the Goan musical groups played with equal facility.

Some of the bands that made a mark, and are fondly remembered by members of the older generation, are the Correas—(Alex and Micky with Tex O'Shea), jitterbug Joe, The Keynotes (with Janu Vaz), and the Soares Brothers. The Correas were brimming with all the old pre-Bop virtues of relaxed, loping rhythms, conversational solos, accessible themes and lots of Blues. Jitterbug Joe had some awesome percussion. When he played Jazz one heard the idiom's pungent tonalities, switch-back rhythms and ensemble sounds. The Keynotes will be remembered for their swinging elegance, their superb vocal improvisation, and the uninhibited simplicity with which they developed a flowing, even, inexorable rhythmic momentum. And the Soares Brothers had a little bit of everything: oblique, muted trumpet style, fragile alto sound and velvety baritone, sparky cross rhythms and a rich tapestry of percussion. With the coming of prohibition, and the ban on gambling in the late seventies, the character and nature of entertainment in Karachi, in the 'western' sense of the term, underwent a transformation. The serving of alcohol became a strictly clandestine affair in some clubs, but the bars all disappeared. So did the cabarets and strip joints. Regrettably the coffee houses, where long-haired intellectuals of various persuasions spent endless hours dawdling over a cup of espresso or cappuccino, the worries of the world draped across their beanpole shoulders, are no more. Customers fondly remember Zelin's Coffee House, situated on the corner of Victoria Road and Bunder Road which was established at the time of the Korean War, and could be described as the market leader. The place was hugely successful. For a few *annas*, a customer was offered a steaming cup of coffee brewed from Brazilian coffee beans and

An overview of the Karachi Race Course before prohibition. The members' enclosure can be seen in the foreground.

Sweet Willow and Reaper and the sprinters Louella and Marango. The late Mr Fakhruddin Tawawalla was the proud owner of Balam Bhai and Bridal Songster. Rusi Dinshaw's choice of names was both topical and imaginative, and every morning Europa, Sieg Heil, Fortuna, Come Prima and Danger Man trotted out of their stable for their morning exercise. It was a great day for the Grammarian when Europa, ridden by Keith Marshall won the Aga Khan Gold Cup in 1964. Marshall had never ridden a finer race.

The late Haji Dossa called two of his horses Haji Baba and Haji Bibi, and in a fit of philosophical melancholy named a third C'est La Vie. It was the last named mare that pitted her speed against Sea Shore, one of Kassim Bhatti's more enigmatic horses, in one of the most exciting races ever to be run in the Karachi Race Club. Here is an extract from the chapter entitled *The Pride of the Machiwallas* from my book *Wild Strawberries* (1992) that describes the race:

> ...There was a time when C'est La Vie was a street corner tip. The morning papers couldn't possibly see any other horse that came anywhere near this wonderful mare that had created a myth about her infallibility. Every race book seller whispered the magic name on the day of the race as a sort of special favour to his customers, and it was rumoured that the bookies, led by Noor Ali and Nawab and Co were actually considering not offering any odds on the filly and ended up offering ten rupees on every hundred. What reinforced the myth was that the owner Haji Dossa had imported an English jockey, Vic Gardner, to ride C'est La Vie.

The late Kassim Bhatti was another owner with a fleet of horses. Perhaps because his livelihood depended on it, he had a preference for names which had something to do with the sea. That's how punters came into contact with Black Sea, Red Sea, Sea Raider, Sea Shore, Star of Bhit and Flag of Bhit. He also had a strong preference for the number seven, and named two of his horses Seven Stars and Seven Seven. In Red Sea's very first outing, a six furlong race, the horse won by 24 lengths. Sea Raider didn't take a start in his very first outing and in his second won by 20 lengths. These were the kind of horses that Kasim Bhatti had—fast, furious and unpredictable.

The late Mr Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola, Pakistan's first high commissioner to the United Kingdom, was another title-holder who owned the fabulous Son Altesse which won the St Leger with Tony Shrive on her back. He also had a string of horses which included Suprema, Sukiyaki, Yakitiyak and Gay Time. His son Farouk, not to be outdone, had his own clutch of horses which included among others, Romantica, Satisfaction, Gypsy, Love Affair and First Born. Farouk's father-in-law, the late Mr Said Saigol named his horses after the ornaments women wear on their wrists and fingers and around their necks and ended up with Precious Stones, Blue Diamond and Sapphire.

Then there was the late Mr Iqbal Shoaib, son of the finance minister, the late Mr Mohammed Shoaib, who owned the sprightly duet of La Coquette and Contessa. The late Mr A.E. Bham had 26 horses the most outstanding of which were the great stayers

Miss Fatima Jinnah, is seen here with Sardar M.A.K. Leghari (4th from the left), Mr Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola (5th from the left), and Mr Faiz Mohammed (2nd from the left). The occasion was the prize distribution ceremony held after Sardar Leghari's horse Nero won the Quaid-i-Azam Gold Cup, in the winter of 1963.

My father used to own a string of horses which ranged from the great stayer Seemab who placed in both the St Leger and the Quaid-i-Azam Gold Cup.—to Isabella who would either not take a start, or when she did, always managed to finish last. Her trainer 'Tiny' Tymon had suggested on more than one occasion that Isabella should be sent to the glue factory. But his attempts were frustrated by a wily stable boy who we believed used to moonlight as a tonga driver.

But long before the arrival of Seemab and some of the other bays and chestnuts, my father had acquired a plucky little filly named Sun Angel, who was one of the fastest things on four legs in five furlongs. On a good day, with a young pro like Arif Rashid, she could outpace her rivals in six. But that was the absolute limit of this sprinter. Unknown to her, my father had other plans and decided to enter her in a mile.

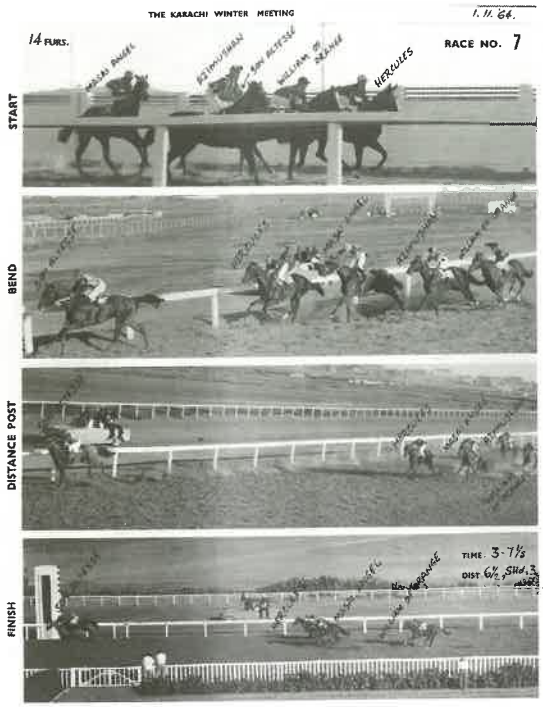
And so it came to pass we were sitting in our flat on Victoria Road and Dasrat Singh, the wily Maratha jockey, sat on a low stool, flicking imaginary specks of dust off his satin duck breeches. After partaking of some refreshment, which took the form of two bottles of Riesling, Dasrat Singh launched into speech.

By a series of complicated gestures which, from where I was sitting, looked like he was washing a pair of woollen socks, he unfolded his crafty plan. Occasional suggestions from my father were dismissed with absent waves of the hand, and were left floating on the ether. Dasrat Singh was in the driving seat.

I couldn't understand a word of what Dasrat Singh was saying, because he spoke in a strange vernacular which evolved on the Mahalaxmi race course, interspersed with grunts and glisses, produced no doubt by the juice of the serine grape. My father nevertheless got the drift and approved the master plan.

Next day, the air was charged with electricity as the horses lined up under the starter's orders. In those days there was no starting gate; and horses were known to have taken a false start, cantered right round the course and rejoined the group as the gun went off. Fortunately in Sun Angel's race there were no untoward incidents and the horses lined up obediently like officers at a Sandhurst parade.

Miss Rabia Mooraj with her father's filly, Sun Angel.



Son Altesse's progress in the race, reproduced graphically.

Vic Gardner had started the day badly by winning the first race on Ribbat and having himself disqualified by the stewards for rough riding He was therefore all the more determined to win on C'est La Vie. Punters at the tote treated their investment on this animal like money on a fixed deposit, just as punters did on the Mahalaxmi race course in Bombay when Her Majesty used to take part in a race.

It was a mile race, and after the starter gave the signal, one horse shot into the lead, and led by eight lengths from the rest of the pack, huddled together in a bunch. Vic Gardner was having an armchair ride. When he passed the six furlong post he cast a sly glance over his left shoulder and saw that his lead had increased by another two lengths.

C'est La Vie was setting her own pace and punters in the members' enclosure nodded their heads sagely and commented that 'It was a one-horse race.' When C'est La Vie rounded the bend, the bunch had advanced a couple of lengths. But the filly was still leading by eight lengths. And when she was approaching the totalizer board, an incredible thing happened.

The fishermen gang in the members' enclosure stood up and shouted in unison, and the voice of their leader, Kassim Bhatti, could be heard above the clamour as he bellowed those two magic words 'SEA SHORE'. As if by cue, one animal left the anonymous bunch and shot forward like a bolt of lightening, in hot pursuit of C'est La Vie. Gardner must have sensed trouble, for he gave his filly a crack with the whip. But it was too late. Nasir Dar urged his mount forward and Sea Shore responded magnificently. C'est La Vie fought desperately to stay in the lead, and with 30 yards to go put in a terrific spurt. But Sea Shore had a lot of sprint in him too. And with the battle cry of the Machiwallas ringing in his ears, Nasir Dar kept up the relentless pressure. Sea Shore drew level with C'est La Vie, and when they were two yards from the finishing post, passed her...

This writer would be committing an indiscretion if he didn't mention one more horse owner—his own father, the late Dr Vali Mooraj S.K., who invariably employed Dasrat Singh or Arif Rashid to ride his horses. Here is an extract from *The Day of the Maratha* which appeared in my book *Wild Strawberries*. It describes a race which is etched in my memory.

The second jockey that my father frequently used for his horses was Arif Rashid. Here is another excerpt from the chapter entitled 'The Return of Arif Rashid' from *Wild Strawberries* which is a tribute to a very modest human being.

> 'Arif Rashid is back,' a friend suddenly said, in a tone which suggested that henceforth the two of us could spend the winter in Juan Les Pins sipping Pernods under a cloudless Riviera sky. Behind us an over made-up medusa who had entrenched her incipient wrinkles with thick paint was listening with rapt attention.
>
> 'Arif Rashid is back,' the friend repeated, this time in a tone which suggested that he had just heard that the Chetniks were about to rescue their leader Draza Mihailovitch from the clutches of Tito's Partisans...
>
> ...The 'sixties had not only great horses...but also superb jockeys, the likes of which Karachi is likely never to see again. The fierce rivalry between Dasrat Singh and Faiz Mohammed, Tony Shrive and Bill Alford, Ken Bornstein and Old Man Russell, Keith Marshall and Nasir Dar—and the lot of them against Arif Rashid—produced some truly great racing.
>
> Russell on Viva, Dasrat on Sun Angel, Dar on Black Sea, Marshall on My Hope, Alford on Nero, Shrive on Luniere, Faiz on Balam Bhai and Bornstein on Tez Gam—all had their moments of glory. But on a one to-one basis, I think the greatest jockey that kicked up the turf at the KRC, was Arif Rashid.
>
> He won hundreds of closely contested races, but the many victories he achieved on Great Saladin and pint-sized Glorinna, were some of the great classics of the Karachi Race Course. He was always one step ahead of the others, foxing jockeys and riding boys, stupefying bookies and punters—and sometimes even the horses. Under his *reins* stayers became sprinters and sprinters stayers. And when an animal wasn't sure what to do Arif Rashid coaxed it into making the right decision...
>
> ...He was educated, always correct, polite and dignified, soft spoken, modest and friendly, and as far as I was concerned—honest. He hardly ever gave me a tip, but when he did, the gang ate Chinese at the ABC, threw in a nine-thirty movie and had midnight coffee at Old Clifton

After prohibition races were held at another location, and a new crop of owners, trainers and riders emerged. The old timers faded away. All they left was a lot of memories—memories of a more tolerant, cultured and civilized society, the likes of which this city is unlikely to see again.

> Dasrat Singh looked smartly about him. To his left was his old bete noire Faiz Mohammed, who had trounced him quite convincingly in the preceding season. And to his right were some of the other stars in the firmament—Russell, Bornstein, Dar and Alford—the last named with the insouciance of a sixth former who was about to be caned for smoking. It was a mile race, and when the flag was down signifying that the animals were off, Dasrat Singh's plan was put into action.
>
> Faiz Mohammed on Magician II and Ken Bornstein on Oliver II had been given strict instructions by their respective trainers to stick to Sun Angel, who was expected to crack a very fast pace for about six furlongs and then blow up. Under no circumstances were they to overtake her in the early part of the race. There would be plenty of time in the straight.
>
> Dasrat Singh knew this and deliberately set a very slow pace, perhaps to give Sun Angel the impression that she had been taken out for her morning canter. For the first six furlongs Faiz and Ken indulged in a little amateur meteorology and looked heavenward at wisps of white cloud and at stray vultures that were probably waiting for one of the bays to fall and break a leg...
>
> ...Suddenly Sun Angel, who was a little ahead of the others, left the bunch, and Dasrat Singh rode hell for leather. Faiz realized what was happening. He urged his mound forward and the challenger charged round the bend and down the straight in hot pursuit of the leader. The whips were out and the old battle was being fought once again, experience against innovation, bay against chestnut, Mughal against Maratha. Only this time the Maratha was in the winning seat, and was grinning all the way to the paddock.

The most exciting races were not necessarily the classics which were invariably tame, predictable affairs. Some of the greatest races were those run in a lower division where a ten-to-one outsider came from the back to beat an odds-on favourite in a photo finish. Some of the greatest victories in this category belonged to horses like Adventuress, Win Win (which won only during the monsoon) and Rough Deal (who never had it so good—winning 14 races in a row.)

Racing lore is full of stories of owners and trainers asking jockeys to pull horses in order to lower the handicap in subsequent races, and bookies asking jockeys to do the needful to avoid making payments on a favourite. This happens all over the world, and Karachi had its share of this unsportsmanlike behaviour. At times the practice backfired and a red faced owner ended up getting the stake money and losing his bet. The stewards who were well aware of what was going on invariably hauled up a jockey for pulling his mount, and fined him—a fine that was inevitably reimbursed by the owner. On one occasion rumour has it that a steward who had secretly placed a bet on a horse, leaned out of the car which accompanied a race, and warned a jockey that if he pulled his horse he would not only confiscate his license, but would send his family to the salt mines.

EIGHTEEN

BEING YOUNG IN THE FIFTIES

ANWER MOORAJ

As I sat on the deck of the cargo steamer that bright and sunny March morning in the early fifties, watching the hungry bows bite open another horizon I thought of the city that I was leaving behind, perhaps forever. And as the ship gyrated to the piston throb that was bringing me that much closer to Genoa and Antwerp, I knew that a chapter of my life was closing, permanently and irrevocably. Those days of carefree youth, of tuck shops and midnight feasts, of pranks and practical jokes, and schoolboy romances where one talked and wrote a great deal of high falutin, were finally over. Once I got to London I would be accosted by a world of budgets and targets, and people programmed for competition. That winter, after I had successfully toured the towering landscape of landladyland, which had painted on its portcullis 'bed and breakfast' and the birds had died or flown their green and silent attics, my city came back to me in bits and pieces, forming a mosaic of people and places and events....

How well I remember the Karachi of the fifties. Everything was so safe and peaceful. On the economic front the scheming trawlers had not yet started to plough the sea's upset meadow. And on the political front there was a great deal of rhetoric without any real achievement. Ethnic violence was unheard of, and public enemy number one was the bicycle thief, a close relative of the nocturnal burglar. The urban armed dacoit, mercifully, had not yet appeared on the horizon. What a contrast to the roaring nineties where first information reports at police stations are simply littered with details of armed robbers forcibly taking away cars and motor-cycles at gunpoint, or robbing householders while holding women and children hostage. In the fifties there was considerable respect for the law. Stopping at the red light was absolutely mandatory, and offenders were duly punished. Examples of policemen offering an errant motorist a highly irregular, but less expensive option in settling a traffic violation fine, were extremely rare, and in the instances where it did occur the policeman was instantly dismissed.

Cover of Mirror magazine, dated April 1958.

B.V.S. School.

sherbet stalls of Bohri Bazaar, the dances at the Loco, the cinema, the *nihari* shops on Burns Road, the Kothari parade at Clifton, maths tuition in Saddar, the Manhattan soda fountain where the ice cream carried exotic names like Green Goddess, Purple Prince, and Hangman's Blood, Irani restaurants that served delicious trotters, Napier Road, to gawk at the dancing girls, the Karachi Club Annexe for the early morning swim across the Chinna Creek, the zoo, roof-top jiving sessions on Victoria Road, Nishtar Park with its air of rude eloquence, and Cincinnatus Town where young guitar-wielding Goan men still serenaded their sweethearts under balconies while a tide of green lapped up to the' window boxes.

There was a popular picnic spot that the bicycle couldn't reach unless, of course, it had an amphibian attachment. The place was called Sandspit. To get to this stretch of beach we had to take a tram which trundled along its metal veins from Empress Market to Keamari, from where we hopped into a bunderboat. Picnics with the boys and girls from the Grammar School took place during the day. We swam, flirted, played volleyball, or just sat on the beach munching sandwiches and got roasted in the summer sun. It was great fun. But the next three days were sheer agony, once the skin started to peel. It was almost impossible to cover the upper part of our body which smarted at the slightest touch. After a few such heroic experiences one of the Grammarians suggested a moonlight picnic in the harbour. I remember that outing as if it took place yesterday. It was the beginning of the monsoon. The breeze was cool and agreeably damp. There were fifteen of us in the bunderboat

Karachi Grammar School.

The middle management of the Karachi police was occupied by a number of Anglo-Pakistanis who looked quite resplendent in their smart khaki shirts and shorts, caps, gloves, and boots. They rode powerful four-stroke Norton or BSA motor-cycles that were a match for the eight-cylinder sports cars that the scions of two powerful local families used when they raced all over town, and their very presence inspired a sense of awe and respect for the law. The police was, after all, very particular about the speed limit in the fifties. The most lionized officer of his generation was an inspector of English stock who went by the name of Edward Thaddeus. He had a rich, fruity voice and a pendulous lugubrious dignity. On Sundays when the bell above the neighbourhood chapel tolled six o'clock with dismal finality, he and the members of his large family dutifully attended the evening service. The rest of the week he held open house at his modest residence near the race course. People from all walks of life turned up at these drinking sessions. Regular guests who had all the trappings of middle class respectability ensured that the Thaddeus cellar remained well stocked, for they knew that an honest policeman could not possibly entertain in the style that he did on his small salary. I have a vivid recollection of one of those sessions. This started innocently enough, with a new entrant to the club displaying a stifling intellectual smugness over a statement made by one of the senior citizens. This was eroded by the time he had gotten through his fourth peg. And it eventually disappeared altogether when he found himself fiercely attacking the very proposition he was so vigorously defending at the beginning. A few rounds of *risqué* stories followed, embellished by remarks from those purveyors of gossip who fed off the carcass of other people's reputations and eventually, around eleven o'clock, one of the guests announced what was evidently a most implacable intention to be sick.

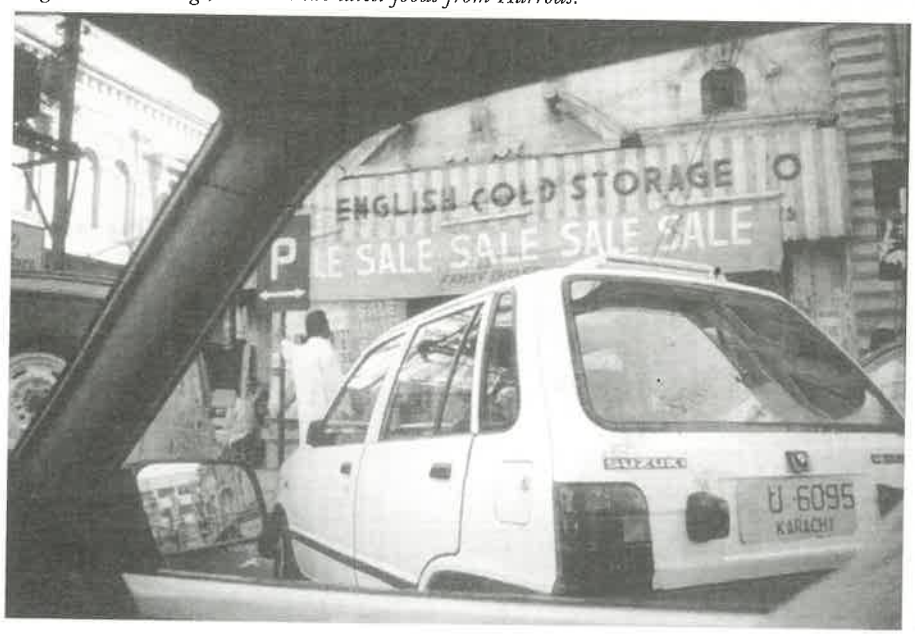
St. Joseph's Convent.

There weren't many cars in the city in 1950. One did see lots of *gharries* and *tongas*. But for the student who seemed never to be in any kind of hurry, and for whom events contrived to suggest a life of unruffled serenity, there was always the good old bicycle. This ever-reliable two-wheeler took me literally everywhere—to school, to the

Ghulam Mohammad & Sons was the closest thing Karachi had to a department store. And if one wanted cold cuts or Swiss liqueur chocolates, the English Cold Storage was the place to visit. This store sold also smelly Danish and Dutch cheeses that often made an uninitiated customer sniff his armpits, or inspect the soles of his shoes the moment he entered the shop. If one had a leaky pen which produced a stripe in one's shirt, not intended by the fabric manufacturer, he took it to the Fountain Pen Corner where the Gaya Brothers ran a nursing home for the tired and exhausted Parker or Waterman veterans, and regularly performed surgery on the less expensive Blackbird whose torso had been damaged in a fall.

Young men who couldn't make a mark with members of the opposite sex at the twice-weekly Gymkhana dances, because they displayed a special talent for stepping on their partners toes in the tango, flocked to the Abbas School of Ballroom Dancing, where it was rumoured in six weeks a complete yahoo could be turned into one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. When word got around that a new Mozart violin concerto had made an appearance in the city, the western classical music buff headed for Haydn & Co. where records were neatly arranged in racks. And if one wanted a first class Chinese meal, there was no place like the ABC Restaurant, started during the Second World War and named after America, Britain and China. For under five rupees one was served a plate of egg fried rice and sweet and sour chicken, while a stern Chang-kai-Shek looked down from a portrait on the wall. Though cigarettes were sold at every street corner, the connoisseur of Havana cigars knew he could always rely on Rodrigues & Co.,

English Cold Storage, with all the latest foods from Harrods.



Karachi Tramway, which would run from Soldier Bazaar to Keamari and a branch to Cantonment Station.

and one of the boys had taken the precaution of bringing along his guitar. We glided past an oil tanker moored in the flat-calm of the harbour and headed for the twinkling lights which signified that ships were anchored in the distance. A full round moon was given speed by flying scarves of white cloud and cut a jagged silver path on the sea. Starting with *Lovely Hula Hands*, we went through the whole gamut of Hawaiian songs. Then came the cowboy melodies and songs from the shows, and it wasn't until the first rays of the sun lit up the eastern sky, that we headed back to the wharf.

Of all the thoroughfares through which I pedalled my Hercules bicycle, the one which had the most distractions also happened to be the main artery of Saddar. In 1951, Elphinstone Street was the centre of the universe. Traffic moved both ways and cyclists often rode six abreast. As it was their firm conviction that stopping at the zebra crossing applied strictly to motorists, cyclists frequently knocked down with great panache pedestrians who came in their way.

tobacconists to the elite, to produce a box of 'Partagas' or 'Romeo y Julietas.' On one occasion, when my father sent me to pick up a carton of Navy Cut, I came across a survivor from the Battle of the Somme. He bought a Burma cheroot, lit the reefer with the exasperating deliberation of his age, and described what it was like in the rain soaked trenches with shells exploding all around and lighting up the sky with a special incandescence.

An area that I frequented was the second-hand furniture shops in Somerset Street and Frere Street, two of the most important arteries of Little Portugal. One of these establishments, Philip & Co., appeared to have an inexhaustible supply of gramophone records which had been left behind by the Hindus fleeing to India. Many happy hours were spent every week rummaging through the dusty stacks. The best recordings carried the bright orange-red HMV label, where for a month's pocket money Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra performed in my drawing room and introduced me to the nine immortal symphonies of Beethoven. Parlaphone and Odeon played host to the celebrated Italian tenors who gave the world the Neapolitan serenades of Cordillo, Di Capua and De Curtis. Another locality where one could pick up ten-inch and twelve-inch gramophone records, in fairly good condition, was the cluster of second-hand furniture shops in Arambagh. It was here that I discovered a small treasure trove of memorabilia on Ireland, and came across Irish ballads sung by John McCormack, Joseph Locke, and Richard Crooks. I had always been interested in Ireland and these records were to provide endless hours of listening pleasure in the years to come. One afternoon I met two Edwardian ladies dated by their wardrobe who belonged to an album world of Bible, lace and gramophone. They were collectors of Chinoiserie and Victoriana. One of them presented me a book on the

An advertisement for Tibet Snow.

Old City, Karachi.

ABC Chinese restaurant, a favourite of Prime Minister Suhrawardy.

Emerald Isle which, regrettably, is no more in my library. I have forgotten the title and even the name of the author. But in the preface there was a poem by Moira O'Neill which stuck in my memory and evoked in me a strong desire to visit County Tyrone and Donegal, and those places in the south with magical names like Limerick, Killarney, Galway and Connemara

> Wathers o'Moyle, I hear ye callin'
> Clearer for half o' the world between,
> Antrim hills an' the wet rain fallin',
> Whiles ye are nearer than snow-tops keen:
> Dreams o' the night an' a night wind callin'
> What is the half of the world between?

I have yet to meet a schoolboy who doesn't like watching films. Back in the early fifties when there was no television, or video cassette recorders, movie theatres provided great entertainment. The cinemas that screened English language films were the Paradise, Capitol, Palace, Plaza, and Mayfair. The last named was an open air cinema located opposite the Marina Hotel. It was rather like being in a garden. One sat on tall, high-backed rattan cane chairs, which rested on the dew-stained grass, and watched Alan Ladd make the North-West Frontier safe for Christianity and the British Empire. It was at the Mayfair that I tasted for the first time, since my father had migrated from Bhopal in India, those hot and highly spiced beef *botis* wrapped in small loaves of white bread. This was the most delicious thing I had eaten since 1947 when I wolfed down that plate of Bombay Roast at the Deccan Queen restaurant at Poona railway station.

In 1950 there was a major cinematic event which took the city by storm. Samuel Goldwyn's *Samson and Delilah* had its premiere at the Paradise cinema. The film ran for a very long time and there was hardly a member of Karachi society who had not seen it. The cheapest seats down in the stalls cost six annas. And for a rupee and eight annas, one sat in relative comfort on sofas in the balcony. A special wide screen had been fixed for the event and hundreds of moviegoers sat transfixed as they

A rare picture of the Karachi Gymkhana as it existed in the early 19th century.

FASHION SHOW

The Women's International Club of Karachi held a most successful Fashion Show recently at the Hotel Metropole. The function was inaugurated by Begum Iskander Mirza and magnificent costumes, both Pakistani and International, were displayed on the occasion. The proceeds of the show are to be donated to "Kashana-i-Atfal".

A most colourful evening was provided for its members and guests and the Women's International Club of Karachi is to be congratulated on the success achieved.

Stills from a fashion show held in a Karachi hotel in 1958.

watched Victor Mature kill a lion and decimate an entire army with the jawbone of an ass. The battle scene, fierce and clumsy, wasn't choreographed in the sweeping Hollywood style that cast war in the safe past tense. The slaying of the Philistines had a freshly minted terror and the scene remained with me for years afterwards.

These are some of the vignettes that take me back to the Karachi of the early fifties—a city that was safe and peaceful and where nobody ever seemed to be in any kind of hurry. People were also very tolerant, especially in the coffee houses where it was fashionable to hold left-wing views and to express anti-establishment sentiments. What a pity those lazy, carefree days are gone forever, like picture postcards, yellowed with, age, stored in a half-forgotten trunk, never to be opened again.

Chopsey building before it was pulled down.

NINETEEN

MILLENNIUM KARACHI

AYELA KHUHRO

In early 2001, I had just returned to Karachi after several years of study and work in the United States. I was excited to see my hometown with a fresh pair of eyes at the start of the twenty first century. Adjusting to the Karachi lifestyle after New York City's demanding pace and versatility would prove difficult, a skill I would have to relearn. Invigorated by my exposure and education, I was ready to sink my teeth into new challenges. One thing was for certain, the old familiar problems persisted but a sense of change was in the air!

At the time, most fresh graduates seemed busy competing for good positions in banks, multi-nationals and developmental agencies. I eased my way into a teaching position in a local high school, not even sure if I had recovered from my own student disposition. Generally, life in Karachi was not easy with poverty, illiteracy and unemployment being the most common problems. Pursuing a job in education seemed like the right thing to do.

Apart from work there was recreation, which had turned into an industry, with a colder and more corporate feel. Weddings remained the most popular form of entertainment, which was evident by the rapidly increasing number of marriage halls, bridal fashion, and catering businesses, followed by charity balls and concerts. 'Club nights' were the in thing with the young and hep crowd who enjoyed the ambient lighting and loud trance music that virtually transport you to a hip international nightclub. Socialites decked up to the hilt in the latest couture or high street fashion would swarm these events, deejays would often be imported from Athens, Mumbai or New York and on occasion, beautiful Turkish belly dancers would be flown in to thrill the crowd and exhilarate the dance floor.

In the food department, live cooking demos of tempura prawns and teriyaki beef were becoming equally popular to typical Pakistani barbequed fare. Bootlegged liquor was

PHOTOGRAPH BY FAISAL FAROOQUI

Iraj Manzoor on a Karachi runway.

the fear of having one's home burgled by armed burglars further aggravated the situation. Curfews too had been common, forcing schools and universities into taking long intervals.

Some of us built up immunity to these environs, surely an acquired survival skill rather than apathy. Others opted to live by the biblical saying, 'eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you may die' (Isaiah 22:13). This time around, however, the whole world was being affected by fear as suicide bombers made their presence felt.

On 14 December 2003, the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf came under attack when a powerful bomb went off just minutes after his heavily-guarded convoy drove over a bridge in Rawalpindi. Eleven days later, on 25 December 2003, two suicide bombers tried to assassinate the President once again but failed; killing 16 civilians instead. Angered by these attacks, the President swiftly ordered a crack down on extremists and terrorists, leading to many arrests in the city and across the nation. Since then, many other terrorist attacks have taken place throughout the city and the country at large. The following year, Musharraf announced that 'enlightened moderation' was the ethos of the nation. Liberal society would have to fight the common belief that Islam was a 'religion of militancy in conflict with modernization, democracy and secularism.'

This was music to the ears of many young people, particularly in Karachi, opening the floodgates of creativity. However as time went by, people began to feel disillusioned and frustrated by the war and the general insecurity. Winds of change began to sweep through the country and talks of bringing back democracy were on top of the national agenda. After much negotiation, President Musharraf and the American allies seemed keen to welcome Benazir Bhutto back to Pakistan to re-establish democracy.

On 18 October 2007, Benazir Bhutto returned to Karachi after spending the past eight years in exile. A jubilant homecoming procession of some two million people welcomed her. In a carnival like atmosphere, people sang, danced and chanted political slogans, but the occasion was to turn tragic. Just as her convoy reached Shahrah-e-Faisal, two suicide bombers attacked the crowd, killing at least 300 people. Bhutto managed to escape unharmed but the event would foreshadow the tragic events that were to unfold later that year.

27 December 2007: At home after a typical work day—I turned on the television, rummaged through my closet for clothes to wear to a wedding that night and sipped my habitual evening tea. All of a sudden, the news item caught my attention. Benazir Bhutto had been shot and wounded at a political rally at the Liaquat National Garden in Islamabad, immediately after which a suicide bomber blew himself up close to the site killing a number of people. Benazir Bhutto had been taken to hospital and was in critical condition.

abundant as always, at least for those who would carry it in discreetly, this being the norm ever since the nation-wide ban on alcohol since 1979.

Then, all of a sudden on 11 September, a televised broadcast of terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center practically shook the world! Following these attacks, the US led war on terror began almost immediately, targeting the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. As a strategic ally of the USA, Pakistan supported the war, amidst much controversy.

Still reeling from these catastrophes, the killing of a Wall Street journalist named Daniel Pearl by terrorists in Karachi in February 2002 further inflamed the general mood. Already jaded with years of ethnic violence, Karachi now gained infamy in the international spotlight. To make matters worse, she also began to feel an extremist backlash against the war, with growing religious radicalism and suicide bombings.

Matam; mourning in Moharram.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHAMYL KHUHRO

As terrorists were captured in Karachi after fierce gun battles, many of the civilians who had lived in blissful ignorance felt shock and horror as the name Al Qaeda penetrated reality for the first time. US intelligence and counter-terrorism officials had been watching with concern as this growing organization had moved money to create recruiting and training operations in Quetta and Karachi over the past few years. Now it seemed that the terrorists were in our midst and an age of innocence came to a close!

Karachi people had always known too well how it felt to be on edge with paranoia, having already experienced extreme sectarian and ethnic violence for most of the nineties! Militants armed to the teeth with grenades, assault rifles and rocket launchers had wrought havoc in the city and

outlook and bounce back despite the calamity and peril they constantly face?

It was Charles Napier's conquest of Sind in 1843 that made it happen for Karachi. Napier defeated the Talpurs, the ruling family of Sind, in the battle of Miani. Having secured the region for the British, he became the first governor of the province. He set his sights on a village called Kurrachee flanked by desert, swampy mangroves and the Arabian Sea. Here, he built the Napier barracks (now housing government offices) and formed a municipal committee to levy funds for public facilities to transform the desolate locale into a modern port city.

PHOTOGRAPH BY HERALD MAGAZINE

The ugly face of violence.

The construction of the Napier Mole, locally known as the Native Jetty, connected Kurrachee with Keamari Island and facilitated shipping and trade for the first time. The entrance to the harbour was widened, docks were built and a powerful lighthouse was installed on Manora Island, ensuring the security of sailors and probably scaring away the pirates. Napier then arranged for the laying out of streets according to a smart grid plan. A sophisticated drainage system was put in place, houses and churches were constructed and a permanent water supply was arranged from the nearby Malir River. On his departure from Kurrachee in 1847, he exclaimed: 'You will yet be the glory of the East. Would that I come again, Kurrachee, to see you in your grandeur.'

Needless to say, the city went on to become one of the largest commercial ports of Asia during the British Raj. Today, however, his words have a sad ring to them as we behold the deteriorating infrastructure and law and order of the city that Napier once anticipated would be a glamorous boomtown.

Sensing that riots would break out, I immediately picked up the phone and frantically called all working members of my family, telling them to come home immediately. A few minutes later, at 18:16 local time, the newscaster announced that Benazir Bhutto was dead. The nation was stunned!

Rioters wasted no time and took to the streets. There was arson, cars were stolen at gunpoint, shops were broken into and looted, several banks and petrol pumps were set ablaze and several buildings gutted. I waited with baited breath as each family member came home in the most intense rush hour ever experienced, telling tales of horror. Karachi's famous *Kalapul* (black bridge) was lined with hundreds of burning vehicles, looters were stoning cars on Zamzama Boulevard and in some cases commuters were taking refuge at the nearest homes of friends or relatives they could find and would not make it back home till the next morning. A friend of mine who was due to get married that night had to hastily leave the beauty salon as it was forced to close down. She walked all the way home in her bridal finery.

People were terrorized into staying home for the next few days, only venturing out to try and procure food from brave shopkeepers who were quietly selling bread and milk out of their back doors. The entire city of some sixteen million had shut down. Needless to say, all major events of the glamorous winter season in the city were cancelled or postponed. I spent a rather sombre New-years eve with some friends, grateful to be eating a potluck dinner mostly composed of leftovers and listening to stories of how some had narrowly escaped death on their way home that day.

The tragedy called for solutions. Elections in February 2008 were needed for national therapy and Sindh re-elected the Pakistan Peoples Party amidst much sympathy. This was followed by the post election let downs, while frustration led to a blame game. President Musharraf, who had been in control ever since the beginning of the new millennium, came under much pressure to quit and the ruling coalition was taking steps to impeach him. Musharraf officially announced his resignation as President of Pakistan on 18 August 2008 in a televised address to the nation. In the meantime, life in Karachi seems to have a shadow of gloom hanging over it.

Some productions such as plays and fashion shows have helped society to maintain a façade of optimism but all in all, people have toned down a lot of the showy events that may have otherwise taken place this year. The city struggles as the official rate of minimum wage is a mere six thousand rupees. The price of food, oil, gas, petrol and electricity have sky rocketed due to the worldwide rise in oil prices. To make matters worse, citizens are dogged by constant power failures, bursting sewage systems and roads that begin to resemble lakes during the monsoon season.

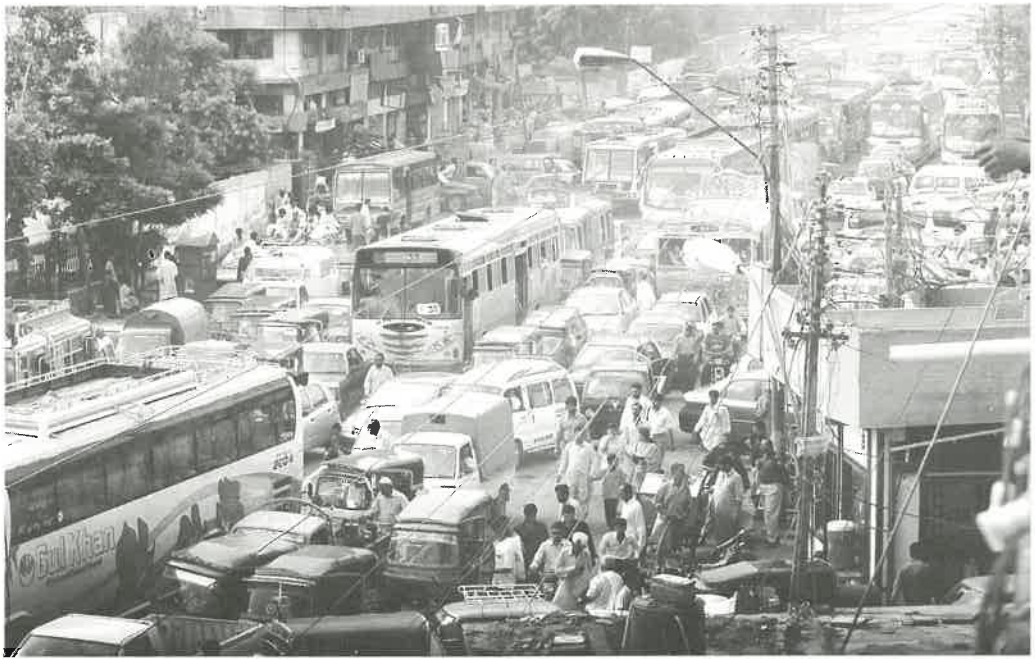
I began to wonder how Karachi had come to this point; a microcosm in a Pakistan of hybrid communities and endless social issues. How do her citizens maintain a positive

consequences. Karachi would have to sacrifice her old world feel for such changes. This is too hard for those who have grown up enjoying the tranquil beaches of the city, eating freshly toasted peanuts sold by vendors in paper cones, taking bumpy rides on camel back, or simply being captivated by the skills of a cobra snake charmer, exotic even by local standards.

Arguably, these schemes could destroy some ten thousand hectares of mangroves that serve as a breeding ground for turtles, fish and shrimp. They also seem pretty scary considering Karachi's proximity to a major fault line at the conjunction of the Indian and Arabian tectonic plates. Above all, would these changes merely appear as a mere face lift or would they help to tackle the deeper issues that prevail. On the upside, these proposed schemes would surely boost the economy, create new jobs and set standards in the real estate business where corruption and the lack of safety standards dominate the typically shoddy examples in construction.

Driving through this city has become a fearsome experience, as there are endless stories of muggings, cell phones being the hottest commodity for gun-toting bandits. Still, long drives and retail therapy always help to counter a little depression. I embark on an adventure across the city with a driver in a four-wheel drive. I make a quick pit stop on chic Zamzama, a boulevard rich with boutiques, cafes, bakeries, galleries, showrooms, gyms and beauty parlours. Fancy restaurants boast international cuisines including Middle Eastern, American, Chinese, Italian and French. I cannot help but hope that this mostly

Traffic jam around the Metropole Hotel.



It is ironic that since the start of the 'war on terror,' Karachi's economy has prospered. For instance, new media, television and radio have altered the feel of the city, influencing lifestyles and creating hundreds of new jobs. In contrast to television in the eighties, which seemed like propaganda with a few token TV serials, today's youth channels provide healthy outlets for younger people to speak their minds and voice their opinions. Music videos on MTV Pakistan and Indus Music boldly showcase multiple tastes, styles and choices that would previously have been considered taboo.

Women are noticeably more vocal, chic and self-confident, no longer required to appear on television with heads covered, as they would have been only two decades ago. News is covered more boldly with journalists reporting events live on site, which is quite a feat in this dangerous place. Despite the rude and abrupt hiccup of the ban on all news channels that came with 'the emergency' of November 2007, the medium has returned and is stronger than ever. Candle-lit vigils and other demonstrations by citizens and journalists in Karachi and other major cities added much pressure on the government to bring the medium back.

Economic solutions have also come our way in the shape of foreign investment but in Karachi this did not pass without controversy. Proposed schemes to develop Karachi's pristine coastline inspired by Dubai's envied Marina, is one such example. The *Sahil ko bachao* (save the coastline) campaign drew much attention to this, with citizens arranging protest walks along the beaches to save the shores from development.

According to the October 2006 edition of *Newsweek* magazine, Dubai's big three company, Emaar, controlled by the ruling Maktoum family announced plans to spend some forty billion dollars on luxury projects in Pakistan which would include island resorts in Karachi. They purchased the twin islands of Buddoo and Bundal off Karachi's coast to build 'Diamond Bar Island' that would house hotels, resorts and apartment complexes. However, the scheme that remains the most far-fetched to the average Karachiite is that of 'Sugarland City.' Described as a 'futuristic city, it would include all of Hawkes Bay and beyond, with three manmade islands, a new breakwater and numerous bridges. Emaar has already set a precedent of building manmade islands in Dubai; one in the shape of a palm that is so enormous that it can be seen from outer space while another resort shaped like the map of the world is still coming up.

Other proposed schemes for Karachi include a resort on Manora Island, one of the world's tallest buildings that would stand at a staggering 1,947 feet, as well as residential apartment complexes such as Crescent Bay and the Karachi Creek Marina.

These schemes could potentially set new standards of good living, hosting their own ferry services, entertainment and shopping spaces and windmill generated power supplies to ease the burden on the city's feeble electric and water supply. However, the citizens have been openly sympathetic towards those that would be displaced and suffer the

rated in 1999. It is one of the city's architectural gems that was rescued from near dilapidation and put to use in the interest of the public. Nestled amidst colonial era bungalows, the palace seems like an optical illusion, with an unusual aura created by the combination of pink and yellow stonework, sophisticated woodwork and crowning arrangement of cupolas. Today, the Museum documents and displays the cultural heritage of Pakistan and her outlying regions and remains a fabulous outlet for tourists, culture buffs and students of all ages.

Another fine example of architectural conservation in the neighbourhood is The Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. The institution grooms a lot of the city's young creative talent but remains best known for having rescued and relocated the stunning one hundred year old Jamshed Nusserwanji building to the Clifton area.

Karachi seems to be bursting with artistic energy as galleries continually showcase installations, paintings, photography, digital art and sculpture by numerous local artists. In addition, innovative cafes that are growing in number appeal to customers at many levels with displays of paintings, poetry readings, stand-up comedy and other attractions. Numerous underground bands flock to a host of small venues, playing their own renditions of western music along with their original songs.

For the world of music and drama, the Karachi scene is evolving into a more multicultural form. The National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) is an affordable conservatoire that was inaugurated in 2006, the first solid platform for those keen on a career in music or drama. This is a breath of fresh air in a city where academic institutions mostly focus on the sciences, law and business, catering to those looking for the sure shot financially lucrative career.

As a venue for international acts, Karachi is picking up the pace. For instance, Karachi Fashion Week held in August 2008, showcased haute couture from Pakistan and abroad. Karachi has also played host to the International Sufi Festival held at the old polo ground which featured *Qawali* music and mystical dance with over three hundred Sufi artists all the way from Konia to Morocco. Whilst communicating the spirit of Islam as a proponent of peace and love, the dancers spun like tops at a remarkably high speed and caused a sensation, but it was Abida Parveen's singing that stole the show in the end.

March of the religious right, c. 2007.

under construction area will someday be paved with pedestrian walkways and clean outdoor dining spaces under sweet little umbrellas. For now, however, its narrow streets are a chaotic maze of dead-ends, random potholes and other headaches. Soon, armed with a cappuccino from my favourite café, I turn up the volume of the radio, psyched up by a familiar classic rock guitar riff on FM 89.

I drive through the sprawling residential neighbourhoods of Clifton and Defence, past the homes of the wealthy. The architecture here could be described as eclectic, considering the mishmash of cultural influences that is reflected. Gorgeous Victorian and Art Deco style bungalows from the twenties and thirties are fast being sold to developers and replaced by unimpressive town houses and apartment complexes. Ornate contemporary villas often depict Quranic calligraphy on their facades, whilst whitewashed Mediterranean style homes with pillared porches seem popular and conducive to the humid climate.

Even in these relatively serene and affluent neighbourhoods, poverty is an inescapable truth, glaring through the shelter of one's vehicle. Pouting transvestites saunter about in printed *shalwar kameez* (loose trousers and tunic) begging for money from passers by, young children clean out garbage dumps as rag pickers for a measly pay and destitute men in threadbare clothes presumably addicted to heroin lay on the sidewalks. Despite the relief provided by welfare groups such as the Edhi Foundation, a plethora of social problems still exist in this city with its growing population.

As I drive into Old Clifton, I discover that Funland, a vestige of my childhood with its old Dodgem cars, Ferris wheel and Pirates' ship has been relocated and refurbished! The City District Government has replaced the old site with beautiful parkland adjoining the Jehangir Kothari Parade with a fresh plantation of some ten thousand tree saplings, a much-needed green belt for the over polluted city. Cleverly designed, the park incorporates an old Hindu temple in its very heart, free of cost to worshippers. The temple adds legendary mystique to the park, said to once have been connected to the nearby Mohatta Palace through an underground tunnel for private use by the Mohatta family.

Karachi riots, c. 2007.

The Mohatta Palace Museum where I am employed was inaugu-

of instruction and many of them are affiliated to the Cambridge or London Universities, while many others prepare students for the local matriculation system. On the other hand, government schools, which cater to the wider segment of population, follow the local matriculation system and Karachi's low income use Urdu as the medium of instruction.

As I continue to whiz through the streets, through the recently constructed underpass that has altered the face of Clifton Road, I notice that its walls show off some fine tile work produced by local craftsmen, already vandalized with mindless graffiti. Moving on, I approach the signal near Marriot hotel and find myself caught in a typical bottlenecked traffic jam. Puttering rickshaws and honking vehicles seem to spasmodically jerk their way closer to the traffic light creating a mind-numbing din. I notice the bleary-eyed commuters unconsciously absorbing details from billboards pertaining to modern technology and lifestyles, from cell phones to online banking to the fastest flight to London or Hong Kong.

As I pull out a twenty for the flower boy at my window for a pair of sweet smelling jasmine bracelets, my mind flashes back to the tragic 2002 suicide bombing outside the US consulate just a block away. This normally elegant neighbourhood was shaken with terror, its streets barricaded and debris from the blast strewn all over this street, its trees, Frere Hall Park and the tennis courts of Sind Club that stand opposite. As the overpowering floral aroma fills up the interior of my vehicle, I realize yet again how dangerous and erratic Karachi can be.

My next stop is Saddar, a major shopper's paradise in the heart of the city. In Saddar, it is hard to ignore the occasional architectural gem from the colonial era peering through the chaotic mess of concrete structures that are beginning to dominate the city's skyline. For instance, the famous Empress market: a covered bazaar whose clock tower and arcades resemble the market halls of north England. This fascinating market sells all sorts of specialty foods, from exotic morel mushrooms, oriental greens, fresh shark, mussels, squid, oysters and various other gilled creatures from the Indus River to the Arabian Sea. Live animals of all sorts are available for sale; from caged birds such as parrots and budgies to peacocks, woolly lambs, rabbits, quails, partridges and pigeons. I see a group of art students watching patiently as a remarkably subdued squirrel has its tail pruned to create special paintbrushes for their craft of miniature painting.

Prunewallah.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM MOORE

Ali Saleem posing in his persona of Begum Nawazish Ali.

Apart from *Qawali*, western rock music emerges as a major influence on Karachi's modern musicians. The most talked about rock concert in Karachi caused hundreds of frenzied Bryan Adams fans including my self to drive all the way to the Arabian Sea Country Club near Steel Town to hear him sing. Performing for the establishment of schools for under-privileged children and victims of the South Asian earthquake of October 2005, Adams played in an electric atmosphere. Singing along with him the whole way through with cellular phones raised above their heads, the crowd gelled perfectly and there were high hopes that rock bands such as U2 and Coldplay would follow suit. We still patiently await those!

One of the things that this musical event brought to my mind was that Karachi is very much a bilingual city. English appears to be the dominant force within Karachi's ethnically diverse community, even though Urdu is very widely spoken and is the language of the masses.

On the streets, it has become hard to ignore slogans on billboards such as *Bolo dil khol kay* (talk as much as you like) that boast of products in Urdu but according to trend are written in the English script. Missionary highs schools of catholic and protestant origin, such as the Karachi Grammar School and the Convent of Jesus and Mary amongst several others use English as the medium of instruction, with graduating certificates from the Universities of London or Cambridge. These prestigious schools prepare students for expensive overseas educations and prominent real world jobs. Most non missionary private schools to use English as the medium

Nadia Hussain, Sanam Saeed, Vaneeza Ahmed, and Fayeza Ansari model the clothes of designers Sana Safinaz at the Ensemble Fashion Show, Karachi, November 2008.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CATWALK PRODUCTION

Films such as Shoaib Mansoor's *Khuda kay liye* (In the name of God) have broken down barriers lately, receiving standing ovations across the city's houses. Exposing a new kind of villain, from the cruel American prison guard to a bigoted militant or cleric that brings misery to the protagonists, the film shows up realities that are so close to home that they must be faced.

Of course the new Cineplex of the Defence area that only permits families sells hot buttered popcorn and has sanitary conditions of all sorts, is more popular with those living on the southern side of Clifton Bridge. Those seeking extra grit or even a little obscurity in film now have the luxury to attend the annual Kara film festival and rub shoulders with celebrities from the Indian and Pakistani film and television industries. Held annually in the cool month of December, the festival showcases international films and local talent that may otherwise have been ignored or overlooked.

I soon stop off at the mausoleum of Mohammad Ali Jinnah to pay my respects to the founder of the nation. After all, it was Mr Jinnah's advocacy of the case for a separate state for the Muslims of the subcontinent that led to the creation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947. Clearly the city's most famous landmark, the crowds that throng here range from Chinese businessmen and foreign journalists, to military personnel and large middle class families. I sneakily attach my self to a group with a tour guide, walking through the oriental gardens with their marble fountains and water channels—quite the inner-city sanctuary! I feel dwarfed by the cyclopean walls of the structure and I learn that the arches are made up of twelve tons of bronze as reinforcements for earthquakes. The railing around the grave is made of solid silver while the chandelier was a gift from the Muslim Association of the People's Republic of China.

It is hard to believe, amidst the grandeur, that a few miles north are Pakistan's largest *katchi abadis*, housing over a million people. First there is Lyari and then, Orangi Township. These were some of the many makeshift abodes that came into being after 1947 when large numbers of migrants flooded the urban centres in search of work and took on low paying menial jobs. Karachi and Hyderabad went on to absorb tens and thousands of such migrants. Migrants from the more prosperous trading communities of North India, Kashmir, Central Asia and Iran set up trading houses in Karachi, adding to the growth of wealth and privileged classes of society.

Fawad Khan and Saeen Zahoor, Lux Style Awards 2008.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FAISAL FAROOQUI. COURTESY CATWALK PRODUCTION

Clearly, these animals are useful for more reasons than simply enriching the dinner tables of the wealthy.

Charmed by all I have seen, I move on to Zainab Market, my favourite shopping centre in town, which comprises of a series of knick knack shops selling copper and brass goods, embroidered shawls, lacquered goods and inlaid woodwork, genuine leather jackets, camel skin lampshades, glazed tiles, hand loomed cotton, indigo dyed cloth lengths called *ajrak*, embroidered wall hangings, antique jewellery, export quality denim and t-shirts galore! As my brain goes numb and my spirit weakens, I become lost in this maze of narrow alleys buying all sorts of things, from miniature marble turtles to chunky costume jewellery. Old markets such as these now stand in contrast to the giant shopping malls that have become popular all over the city, selling everything from organic hair products to imported cheese and branded goods from international heavyweights such as Christian Dior, Nike, Levis and Victoria's Secret—with American fast food chains such as McDonalds and Pizza Hut dominating their food courts.

Satisfied by the retail therapy, I speed on through Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi's longest avenue in the heart of the city. I am reminded of the 12 May 2007 riots, when fierce lawyers donned in black coats and gun toting political activists faced off in bloody clashes on this very street and later that year, Benazir Bhutto's tragic homecoming.

Leaving this avenue of violence and heartbreak behind me, I move along onto Tariq Road, past hundreds of shops and bazaars full of cloth merchants selling fine silks and cotton, as well as tailors who would stitch them in record time at unbelievably low prices.

I pass by the old cinema houses of M.A. Jinnah Road; Nishat, Capri and Prince to name a few. Karachi was originally home to Pakistan's film and music industries—and in the eighties made films and exported them to foreign countries with cinema houses boasting the very latest in modern technology. In contrast, today's houses are poorly maintained and roaches crawl over carpets stained with beetle juice; but entertainment starved crowds still seem to pour in. Massive hoardings outside feature heroines bedecked in jewels with kohl decorated eyes alongside macho heroes or ghastly villains depicted with the infamous Kalashnikov rifle or TT pistol.

Memories of family outings to watch Superman, Star Wars or James Bond films during childhood begin to flood my mind. Even now, after a film one can stop off at a nearby roadside *dhaba* (restaurant) for *faluda*, *kulfi*, *nihari* and chicken *tikka*; and for the more adventurous gastronome, spicy pan-fried goats brains served up with piping hot *naan* bread. My favourite snack is *chaat*, a delectable concoction of spiced chickpeas in tamarind and yogurt sauce topped with crisps and fresh onions, to be washed down by a satisfying effervescent beverage—preferably an ice cream soda. Akin to other likable major cities, Karachi too has its fair share of food and fantasy.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

1.

NAME	1981	1998	2007	PARENT DIVISION
KARACHI	5,208,132	9,339,023	12,315,843	SINDH

2. Karachi City District Government was the outcome of a Devolution Process initiated by the Government of Pakistan in 2001 wherein various departments and public sector entities were devolved and merged into CDGK.
3. 'A Master plan of development for Karachi has finally been prepared which says that Karachi should be expanded vertically and not horizontally, which means more high rise in the city. 'The plan is also known as 'Karachi Strategic development Plan 2020'.This is the sixth Master Plan of the city. The first was prepared in 1923, second in 1945, third in 1952, fourth in 1994 and fifth in 2000. *The News* stated that the Master Plan 2020 documents are on the fact that there will be a manifold increase in Karachi by 2020, that is, 270 million and at present, the city needs 600 MGD water. By 2020, this will go up to 1200 MGD.
4. Later the Government of Pakistan set up PIDC to set up industries and subsidized entrepreneurs to take them over.
5. Narayan Jaganath Anglo Vernacular School was named after an officer of the Sindh Educational Department who was not only a distinguished teacher but also helped to modernize the 'Khudabadi' script in use by the Sindhi *banyas* or traders.
6. Rambagh, now called Arambagh, is in the heart of the city near Burns Road.

CHAPTER 1: HOW IT ALL BEGAN

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Philanthropists, educationists, lawyers and administrators contributed to the development of the expanding city, struggling for the betterment of the poorer populous, probably the biggest challenge that they face even today.

As the day begins to decline, I leave the mausoleum to the droning sound of cars and the muezzins call for *Asr* prayers. As I drive away, the view of a morphing cityscape zooms past my window.

I feel that like me, Karachi has grown older, more aggressive and more impatient, practically at the end of its tether as it grapples with all the terrible contradictions the modern world is throwing at it. In a strange way, the Karachi of today reflects the wider world, instinctively absorbing influences from within Pakistan, Asia and the world.

I would still like to believe that it is in Karachi's destiny to become 'the glory of the east' someday, with a spirit strengthened through the retention of cultural roots and external influences as well as an embrace with the future.

Benazir Bhutto home coming on 18 October 2007.

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NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

HAMIDA KHUHRO

Dr Hamida Khuhro was educated at the Universities of Karachi, Cambridge, London and Oxford. She is a historian and has taught at the Universities of Karachi, Oxford and lastly Sindh University where she was Professor of History. She left University teaching to concentrate on writing and politics. She has twice served as Minister for Education and Literacy, Government of Sindh.

She has led a number of official and non-official delegations abroad and has been a Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly thrice. She has also served as Member and Chairperson of several political, academic, and government committees.

She has published a number of seminal books including *The Making of Modern Sindh*, *Mohammad Ayub Khuhro: Life of Courage in Politics*. Among her edited works are *Sindh Through The Centuries* (OUP, 1981), and *Papers of The Separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency* (Institute of History and Culture, Islamabad) as well as a number of colonial texts. She has contributed numerous articles in learned journals and newspapers and has been founder editor of *Grassroots*, a journal of Pakistan Studies, University of Sindh. She has edited the *Arts Journal*, University of Sindh, and has revived the *Journal of the Sindh Historical Society*.

MUNEEZA SHAMSIE

Muneeza Shamsie (née Habibullah) was educated in England and has lived in Karachi for most of her life. She is a critic, short story writer, and the editor of three pioneering anthologies *A Dragonfly in the Sun: An Anthology of Pakistani Writing in English* (OUP, 1997) a retrospective of poetry, fiction and drama; *Leaving Home: Towards a New Millennium: A Collection of English Prose by Pakistani Writers* (OUP, 2001) about migration; *And the World Changed: Contemporary Stories by Pakistani Women* (Women Unlimited 2005/OUP 2006/ Feminist Press 2008) and is General Editor of a companion volume

9. Such a list must include Ustad Habibuddin Khan, Ustad Qudratullah Khan, Ashiq Ali Khan, Ustad Ramzan Khan, Ustad Hameed Ali Khan, Ustad Manzoor Ali Khan, Ustad Umaid Ali Khan, Ustad Ghulam Rasool, Fateh Ali Abdullah, Zafar Ali Khan, Ustad Amin Ahmed Khan and Salim—Azeem Prem Ragi's son. Listeners who found the *pucca gana* too heavy and preferred something lighter turned to the lilting melodies of other singers like S.B. John, Zawar Hussain, Ahmed Rushdi (who was much in demand as a playback singer in Pakistani films) Taj Multani, Iqbal Ali, Kalim Sarwar, M. Kaleem and Habib Wali Mohammad.
10. B.C. Deva, *Indian Music*, p. 3.
11. According to Ustad Safiullah Khan and Faqir Mohammad, of the music teachers at the Pakistan American Cultural Center, mention must be made of Malika Pukhraj, Khursheed Ambalewali, Jeeran Koosoorawali, Champabai, Nighat Seema, Rashida Begum, Kajjan Begum, Ishrat Jehan, Kaukab Jehan, Nasima Shaheen, Asma Ahmad, Naheed Akhtar, Mehnaz and Pervez Dastur. There were quite a few who made a name for themselves on television such as Tina Sani, Afshan Ahmad, Madhu Almas, Deborah Daniel, Nazeer Begum, Nighat Akbar, Fatema Jafri, Runa Laila, Shahnaz Begum and Nazia Hasan.
12. B.C. Deva, *Indian Music,* p. 3.
13. The most prominent violinists were Mohammad Shareef, Sardar Hussain Hashim, Mukhtar Hussain, Ashraf Hussain, Zakir Hussain, Maqsood Hussain, Zafar Hussain and Mazhar Hussain.
14. Fakir Mohammad believes that the list of *tabla nawaz* should include Ustad Ballay Khan, Ustad Allahditta Khan, Ustad Khursheed Ali Khan, Wajid Ali Khan, Afzal Hussain, Abdur Rashid, Bashir Khan, Ustad Abid Hussain, Dilawar Hussain, Ustad Ghulam Hussain, Jiray Khan and Nemat Khan.
15. A number of male and female dancers performed a variety of dances as the occasion demanded, which was an indication of their versatility. Some, however, specialized in a particular style. Local dance instructors are accustomed to referring to *Kathak* as 'classical' to distinguish this north Indian dance from other styles which are conveniently lumped together as 'folk' and 'south Indian'. The dancers who specialized in *Kathak* are Parveen Qasim, Nahid Siddiqui (and her pupil Nighat Chaudhry) and Ananda Devi. There were those who fitted into the 'classical' mould like Amy Minwalla, Panna, Saloni Solomon, Meena and Ishrat Chaudhry. There were others who performed in cabaret and did a vulgarized version of the *Kathak* to titillate the jaded appetites of an all-male audience such as Munawar and Kishwar, Shakila, Jamila and Farida Anjum. A Bengali dancer named Shelley specialized in Manipuri, and Sheema Kirmani is probably the only known expert in Odissi, a distinct East Indian style. Among the male dancers one must mention Mahraj Ghulam Hussain Kathak, Rafi Anwar who introduced *Bharat Natyam* (along with Madam Azurie), Mohammad Yakub Memon and Ghanshyam Dada who along with Nilima Ghanshyam was a major figure in the South Indian style.
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Arif Hasan has taught at universities in Pakistan and in Europe, served on juries of international architectural and development competitions, and is the author of a number of books on development and planning dealing with Asian cities in general and Karachi in particular. He was a celebrity speaker at the Union of International Architects Congress in Brighton in 1987 and has been a member of the Steering Committee of the Aga Khan Award for two cycles and a member of its Master Jury. He is currently on the board of several international journals and research organizations including the Bangkok based Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. He is currently a visiting fellow at the International Institute for Environment and Development, UK. He has also received a number of awards for his work (which spans many countries) including the UN Year for the Shelterless Memorial Award of the Japanese Government (1990), the Prince Claus Award of the Netherlands Government (2000), and the Hilal-i-Imtiaz of the Government of Pakistan (2001). Recently, he has been given a Life Time Achievement Award by the Institute of Architects, Pakistan (2003). The Orangi Project-Research and Training Institute, of which Arif Hasan is chairman, received the British Housing Foundation's World Habitat Award in 2002.

NOMAN AHMED

Noman Ahmed is an architect and planner by profession. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Dawood College/ NED University, Karachi and a Master's degree in city planning from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. He also obtained postgraduate training in Urban and Regional Planning from the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), Nagoya, Japan and Centre for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA. Noman obtained his PhD from Loughborough University, UK. He has taught in the leading architecture and planning institutions in Karachi and also supervised postgraduate research in the same disciplines. Noman worked as a Faculty Member and Coordinator, Urban Design Graduate Programme at the Dawood College of Engineering and Technology, Karachi between 1989 and 2000. Thereafter he founded an Architecture and Planning Department at the NED University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi. He is currently working as its Professor and Chairman. He has undertaken several self-motivated research studies on developmental issues and has been a consultant to many NGOs, CBOs, and government organizations in Pakistan and abroad. He has also published several reports, monographs and papers on different relevant topics and subjects. He regularly writes on developmental issues in the leading newspapers in Pakistan.

on Pakistani Literatures. She is also writing a critical book on Pakistani English literature. Since 1982, she has contributed freelance articles on a wide range of subjects for many publications, particularly *Dawn*, *Newsline* and *She*, though she now concentrates on literature. She is on the editorial board of *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* and writes for the online Literary Encyclopedia <www.Litencyc.com>. She has written the entries on Pakistani English literature for *The Encyclopedia of Pakistan*, and a Companion volume on Pakistani History being edited by Ayesha Jalal. She was a Fellow of the 1999 Cambridge Seminar and has spoken at many literary forums in Britain, India, and Pakistan. She is a founder member of The Kidney Centre and from 1975–82, taught music and mime at a Special Education school pioneered by The Association for Children with Emotional and Learning Problems (ACELP). Muneeza Shamsie was married in 1968 and has two daughters, Saman and Kamila.

SHAHIDA WIZARAT

Dr Shahida Wizarat did her MA in economics from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA, and her PhD in economics from the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. She is a professor at the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC) at the University of Karachi. Her research papers mainly in the area of development economics and industrial economics have been published in journals of international repute, both in Pakistan and abroad.

ARIF HASAN

Arif Hasan is an architect and planner in private practice in Karachi. He studied architecture at the Oxford Polytechnic and on his return to Karachi in 1968, established an independent practice which slowly evolved into dealing with urban planning and development issues in general and of Asia and Pakistan in particular.

He has been a consultant and advisor to many local and foreign CBOs, national and international NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. Since 1982, he has been involved with the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) and is the founder chairman of the Urban Resource Centre (URC), Karachi, since its inception in 1989. Both institutions have received international recognition and are being replicated both nationally and in a number of other countries. The OPP is an informal settlement upgrading project whose development is managed and funded by local communities. The URC is a research and advocacy organization supporting communities against eviction and against gentrification and degradation of Karachi's inner city.

DR MUHAMMAD ALI SIDDIQUI

Dr Muhammad Ali Siddiqui is a prominent Urdu critic. He is, at present, Dean of the faculty of Management and Social Sciences in Biztek University, Karachi. He also served as Dean of the faculty of Education and Social Sciences at Hamdard University, Karachi for six years. Dr Siddiqui took his Master's degree in English Literature, and is the first PhD and D.Litt in Pakistan Studies in Pakistan. He taught at Karachi University for a number of years, and served as the director of the Quaid-i-Azam Academy for six years. He has 16 books to his credit; two of them were *Tawazun* and *Croce ki Sarguzasht*, judged the Best Book of the Years 1976 and 1979. He contributed a literary column for *Dawn*, Karachi under the pseudonym Ariel for forty years. Ariel is now being published in another Karachi daily—the *Business Recorder*.

ASIF NOORANI

Born in Karachi in 1942, Asif Noorani has been writing for national newspapers since he was in his late teens. At the age of 21 he started editing *Eastern Film*, the country's most widely circulated English language magazine. That was when he was studying for his Master's in English Literature. In 1970 he joined a multinational as a copywriter in its advertising department. Later he headed that department, which was followed by a similar position in the marketing department.

In 1985, he returned to the world of media, initially as general manager circulation of the Dawn Group of Newspapers and later returned to full time journalism, when he edited *Star Weekend*, the pullout weekly magazine of the afternoon daily *Star*. He is currently working for the group as a consultant and is supervising the indexing of the backdated issues of the 61-year old daily—*Dawn*.

Noorani appears on television, writes for Pakistani and Indian dailies and weeklies, and also reviews books. His subjects are varied—from music and visual arts to travelogues and humour. He has written on Mumbai and Karachi for the book titled *Tales of Two Cities*, while the Indian columnist Kuldip Nayar is penning his experiences in Lahore and Delhi. The book is a part of the series Cross-border Talks (Roli Books, New Delhi), edited by David Page, a well known media personality of the UK, whose special interest is in the subcontinent.

Noorani also teaches media studies at a private university. His passion in life, however, is music and he has a wide collection of classical and semi-classical pieces, as also *ghazals*

TARIQ RAHMAN

Dr Tariq Rahman is one of the most erudite and best read scholars in Pakistan. A prolific writer, he received his MA (Political Science) from Peshawar University, his MA (English Literature and History) from Sheffield University, UK, his PhD (English Literature) from Sheffield University and his M.Litt (Linguistics) from Strathclyde University, UK. He has held posts in Peshawar University, Azad Kashmir University, Sana'a University in Yemen and Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad.

His various appointments include Fulbright Senior Research Scholar at the University of Texas in Austin, Scholar on the Pakistan Chair in the University of California, Berkeley and HEC Distinguished National Professor for life. Dr Rahman has a number of publications to his credit—12 books, 26 contribution to books, 85 articles in scholarly journals, over 400 in Pakistani newspapers, over 300 reviews of books on the social sciences, literature and linguistics and around 100 short stories. Some of his publications are: *Language and Politics in Pakistan* (OUP, 1996); *Language, Education and Culture* (OUP, 1999); *Language, Ideology and Power: Language Learning Among the Muslims of Pakistan and North India* (OUP, 2002); *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan* (OUP, 2004).

NAVID SHAHZAD

Professor Navid Shahzad, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore—director, actor, writer, reviewer, broadcaster and critic, is one of the leading stars of the Lahore literary scene. She did her MA in English Literature from Government College, Lahore and received her diploma in Drama, Art, Fashion Design and French from Seattle, USA. She is a former Principal of the Pakistan School of Fashion Design, and Associate Professor at the Department of English Literature and Language, Punjab University, Lahore. Professor Shahzad is a gold star member of the Thespian Society of Actors, USA, and contributes regularly on screen to national TV channels, and in print to leading dailies.

HAMEED ZAMAN

The late Hameed Zaman started his career in Radio Pakistan in 1954, after obtaining his Master's degree from Lucknow, India. He was a programme producer and also a broadcaster. In 1964 he joined *Morning News*, a newspaper that was published in Karachi and Dhaka. Subsequently he became the editor of *The Mirror* after the publisher, Zaibunissa Hamidullah, left for Ireland. He was also the editor of *The Third World* for a period. For a while he freelanced for *The Muslim*, an English language newspaper published from Islamabad and joined the staff of *The News* in 1995. His speciality was themes which centred on theatre, art, literature and poetry. The late Mr Zaman was a highly respected member of the journalist fraternity and had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

ANWER MOORAJ

Anwer Mooraj was educated in India and England and is a graduate of the London School of Economics and Political Science. He started his journalistic career in *Dawn* in the 1960s as an assistant editor, was the founding editor of *The Herald* in 1970 and served as chief executive of the *Gulf News*, Dubai from 1982 to 1985. He is widely travelled and is the author of three books *Sand, Cacti and People* (1965) *Wild Strawberries* and *Harbour Lights* (1992), and co-editor with Dr Hamida Khuhro of the first edition of *Karachi Megacity of Our Times* (1997) He is a management expert and his last assignment was as chief executive of The Pakistan American Cultural Center—the world's largest bi-national centre which he served from 1990 to 2004. Anwer Mooraj is keenly interested in European classical music, especially the operas of Wagner, Mozart and Richard Strauss, the music of Cuba, Mexico, Colombia and Argentina, particularly the period referred to as The Golden Age (1920–50) and Jazz, the period between 1920 and 1940. During the 1990s he delivered a series of illustrated, audio-visual lectures on 'Traditional Jazz' in the American Centers in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad. He has also given talks on the contribution of Existentialism to European philosophy.

and film songs; but he gladly switches off his CD and LP players, when his grandchildren come from the US. Their chattering is music to his ears.

MARJORIE HUSAIN

Marjorie Husain is a leading art critic and has played an important role in promoting Pakistan's art and artists in this country and abroad. She is a well known art writer and author whose articles have appeared in numerous newspapers and journals.

Deeply involved with art in Pakistan from the 1960s, she was fortunate to meet and has documented many of the country's first generation of artists, as well as successive art generations. She has written about well known artists, past and present, and has recorded for posterity their achievements. Marjorie has also curated exhibitions from Pakistan in the UK, New Delhi and Singapore, where she lectured on art in Pakistan.

Marjorie regularly travels around the country meeting and talking to art students at various art institutes. In 2000, she published the first textbook for art students and teachers of art: *Aspects of Art*, published by the Oxford University Press. The textbook is available in English and in Urdu, and is widely in use.

In 1995, she was called upon to write *A History of Art in Pakistan* for the Pacific Asia Museum Catalogue that accompanied a group show from Pakistan. In 2003 she was co-coordinator of the Jamil Naqsh Retrospective Exhibition held at Mohatta Palace, Karachi. The same year, she played an active role in organizing the 8th National Visual Arts Exhibition held at Alhamra Lahore. She took part in 'Encounters with artists in Pakistan', at the Pakistan Embassy, London in collaboration with Asia House. In this context she was interviewed by BBC Asia Today.

Her other publications are: *Ali Imam: Man of the Arts* (FOMMA 2002); *Jamil Naqsh: A Companion Publication* (Mohatta Palace 2003); *Artviews: Encounters with Artists in Pakistan* (FOMMA 2005); *The Last of the Bohemians: Bashir Mirza* (MERCK 2006); *The Sun Blazes the Colour Through My Windows: Anna Molka Ahmed* (NCA 2007 National Art Gallery Collection) PNCA 2007. Marjorie Husain was awarded the Fatima Jinnah Gold Medal in 2004.

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AYELA KHUHRO

Ayela Khuhro was educated in Karachi and the USA. She did her BA in history from The College of Wooster in Ohio (1999). She teaches history and has been the Curatorial Assistant at the Mohatta Palace Museum in Karachi since 2004, having participated in organizing the exhibitions 'Jamil Naqsh: A Retrospective,' 'Jewel in the Crown: Karachi under the Raj' and 'Tale of the Tile: the Ceramic Traditions of Pakistan.' She was also a contributing author to OUP's golden jubilee edition of *Karachi Megacity of Our Times* in 1997.