COVERING KARACHI: THE CREATION OF A BRITISH VISUAL LANGUAGE IN SINDH

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ABSTRACT

Karachi, a city of 14000 people, was evolving as an important port for strategic geopolitical reasons and increasing trade at the time of the British conquest in 1843. However, it was not equipped with the infrastructure — such as an all-weather port — required for its continued economic progress. The fort town had a Chabutra (Custom House), shrines, temples, and caravanserais interspersed among the large *havelis* and houses of Hindu merchants and government functionaries. Neither the fort nor the Chabutra survived British colonial rule in Sindh. In fact, in keeping with their plans for the city, the British demolished these structures fairly early on in their rule of Sindh. The subsequent establishment of British institutions and political infrastructure was reinforced by the construction of buildings and monuments that looked distinctly European in style. This was not only because of the architectural styles employed in these buildings but also in the choice of ornamentation. For example, by patronizing artisans that were well versed in stone engravings and sculpture making, the British shifted attention away from the art of traditional frescoes, painting, and glazed tiles. This paper explores how the Occident imported architectural and visual cultural styles and forms into their colonies to create an entirely new visual language for their colonized subjects in South Asia. It argues that this was done deliberately to ensure political legitimacy in the eyes of their subjects as well as to highlight their own cultural superiority. The lack of native creative expression and the emergence of the modernist movement eventually led to their disappearance from structures built after Independence. This was a colonial project deeply entrenched in discourses of racism and inequality.

Keywords: Colonial architecture, hegemony, tradition, rchittectural movements, coonialism.

INTRODUCTION

For decades mainstream scholarship on Karachi has claimed that the region was little more than a small fishing village whose harbour provided it with the opportunity to also work as a transit centre for other, more economically vibrant cities in the region. As such its residents have been portrayed as little more than fishermen. However, recent scholarship and previously unexamined historical documents have brought to light just how developed the city was. Even in 1843, on the eve of the conquest, Karachi's population (within the town's fortification walls) numbered 14,000 people (Captain T. G. Carless, 1979) – constituting a city rather than a town even by today's standards.

These people, and the port which was one of their main sources of livelihood, would necessarily have had some sort of functioning political, economic, and social infrastructure. More importantly this would have been necessarily articulated in a built environment conducive to their needs and work. As such the city has been documented, by British travellers, geographers, and soldiers among others, to be equipped with a Chabutra, a *sabzi mandi*, a fort and lighthouse at Manora, as well as several sites of religious significance for its Hindu, Muslim, and Jewish communities.

In addition to this, several communities living in Karachi or part of the Sindhi diaspora have claimed their ancestors lived in what is now Karachi well before the British arrived in the region. Hindu and Jewish communities have claimed the existence of *shamshal ghats* and cemeteries dating to the 1700s and later. One of these graveyards is now known as Mewa Shah after the saint that is supposed to have led resistance against the British. A popular shrine in Lyari, Miran Maa, is said to have been originally built in the mid-1600s by migrants from Baghdad(Hashim, 2022).

In 1839, Rear Admiral Sir Frederick Maitland levelled the Manora Fort on the pretence that it had fired the first shot. In 1843, Sindh was one of the last regions to be conquered by the British, under General Napier, and added to the British Raj in India. The British were the first to undertake major works of engineering and urban planning within Karachi and its harbour to create the port they envisioned and needed. Karachi was to be the deepwater port that would help counteract Russian influence in the region and act as a buffer between mainland India and Persia and Afghanistan. The British East India Company had developed Bombay, from an archipelago of small islands to a thriving port city in the Gothic style, as the gateway to India but Karachi was to the be the gateway to Afghanistan and the rest of Central Asia before Russian influence could dominate the region (Lentin, n. d.).

Focusing just on their built heritage, however, points already to an enormous project undertaken by them. Calcutta, for example, was adorned by Classical public buildings and monuments and later by the Victorian Gothic Revival – both following in the direction of debates and trends in Britain

Figure-1: Alexander Baillie's 1838 map of Karachi.
Source: (Hasan A. n.d.)

Figure-2: Pre-British Conquest Sites in Karachi Region.
Source: Arif Hasan, Karachi Before the British Conquest (Institute of Historical and Social Research, 2022)

(Stamp, n.d.). Throughout the Empire, successive governments, whether controlled by the government or the East India Company, created several monuments and buildings in the European style as part of their civilising mission in the East. This in itself is an important matter to deconstruct. However, in this paper, I go a step further and posit that the use of European architectural styles and decorative elements wasn't just to civilise the native population. There was a distinct sense of needing to legitimise their rule in front of native populations that might have rebelled against them. In Sindh, this was an urgent matter since the trading community was already averse to the benefits the English had managed to extract from the Talpurs (Matthew A. 2021).

On the other hand, this was also a common practice among the colonising West. Throughout the colonised world, the Occident imported architectural and visual cultural styles and forms into their colonies. In the case of the British Raj in Sindh and Karachi, the late 19th century was a period of an overly European architectural stance. This changes only in the second decade of the 20th century when a hybrid style emerges. Even then, however, there existed a native elite that wished to emulate their colonial overlords in every way possible. Thus, buildings and monuments primarily for native use are also created in one of the many European architectural styles known to and coveted by them.

Karachi on the Eve of the Conquest

Karachi has been mentioned by various names in historical documents. Shah Abdul Latif's *Sur Ghato*, in fact, talks about a fishing community near the coast which could be the settlement along the Lyari River. The fort town encountered by the British, however, was not established till at least 1729, when Kharak Bundar, the old port, silted up and forced the merchants to look for another suitable location.

However, since its establishment, Karachi faced multiple attempts at takeovers by the Talpurs but had defended itself successfully. The city was home to successful Hindu and Muslim merchants who traded in a wide variety of products with their ships travelling to places like Bombay, Muscat, and ports in the Deccan, among other places.(Hasan A., 2022) For all these activities, as mentioned earlier, the local population had built a physical and economic infrastructure that would allow the smooth operation of their business. This included commercial and governmental buildings, as well as residential spaces. Unfortunately, none of these structures survive in their original condition today.

Important buildings in Karachi, as with other towns in Lower Sindh, were made of stone with rich "designs in colour and texture" (Mumtaz K. K., 1989). Architecture here was influenced largely by Persian sources as well as neighbouring Gujarat and Rajasthan from where the masons were sourced. Important structures like the Chabutra, the Manora Fort, and the Round Tower were all built from the Gizri stone, quarried nearby. Residences and other structures were constructed of timber or mangrove wood and mud since those materials were easily available. Even houses of influential persons would have been made from wood. Important to note here is the range and use of vegetative and animal motifs in the decorative elements of these buildings. In the use of colour, the most extensive use of glazed tilework is seen in the Jami Mosque in Thatta (also known as the Shah Jehan Mosque) (Mumtaz K. K., 1989).

The Built Form as Language

Why is Islamic architecture called "Islamic"? Why are labels given to any architectural movement – Gothic, Revivalist, Central Asian? Why are religions and social and cultural movements thought to influence the built form and environment?

Historians of architecture have sought to group together and categorize different architectural styles and influences according to the ideologies they are based on. Ideologies, in turn, communicate the thoughts, ideas, and processes of their founders and followers. Therefore, and although this is debated widely among architects and historians of architecture, the built form necessarily communicates, through the choice of style, a preferred ideology (William W., 2006).

In 2000, for instance, when the Karachi Strategic Plan 2020 was being developed, the then Mayor explicitly stated that the city should be envisioned as a "world class city". Infrastructural developments and choice of architectural styles for public buildings and spaces were, therefore, to emulate that which was internationally celebrated rather than locally required.

Interestingly, throughout history, empires have also found the answer to some of their questions concerning legitimacy and the acquiescence of conquered peoples to be through the built form that they patronized and encouraged. The straightforward way, of course, was suppression and intimidation through violence but rulers have also used subliminal messaging as a way of demonstrating their power, legitimacy, and authority (Diana D. 2022).

Neither of these methods were new or unique to the colonizers. In fact, there are several examples of Arab/Muslim invaders having employed similar tactics. For example, one of the earliest questions faced by Muslim conquerors was of the ways in which they could "impress upon local populations…the sense of a true and lasting faith" (Alain G. 2017) as they moved further and further away from the Arabian heartland where the religion had original flourished. Although, Alain George ascribes noble intentions to their need to ensure their legitimacy in the eyes of the peoples they had conquered, the tactics they eventually employed have been used by almost all known political and religious entities of the world. Howard Crane and Lorenz Korn note that "the period was one of striking political, social, ethnic, and religious change which cannot but have had a profound impact on the visual culture of the eastern Islamic world." (Howard C. and Lorenz K., 2017)

A well-documented method of demonstrating one's physical might and cultural superiority was the use of spolia when building new monuments, palaces, and religious and profane structures. Successive Muslim empires in the Middle East and Central Asia over the last 1400 years used spolia as a means to demonstrate "conquest, destruction, and construction in the name of Islam" (Zeume[Y., 2017) while the Roman and Byzantine empires also did the same in the lands they conquered.

The use of spolia is but one way to impress a message upon the minds of people. The Ottomans, for example, carried out public works building public baths, kitchens, fountains, and caravanserais in major cities that they conquered. Sometimes older structures were left intact with new, Ottoman-patronized monuments and structures built adjacent to them as a way to "integrate their presence" in the new community (Darke D., 2022).

Colonialism through architecture
Why did the British destroy the Chabutra in Karachi and build the Custom House instead? (Hasan A., 2006) The answer lies in Umberto Eco's statement: "we commonly do experience architecture as communication, even while recognizing its functionality." (Whtye William, 2006). 2005The Chabutra acted as a Customs House under the Talpurs. It was the main center for goods to be processed for taxation purposes and all goods entering or leaving the Karachi port had to pass through the Chabutra. According to historical records, the building of the Chabutra "consisted of a large hall raised on five impressive arches" (Burton R., 2017).

The British saw in the Chabutra evidence of a previous, well-functioning economic, political, and social order but one that was very distinct from the British way of commerce and politics. What was known to them, familiar to them, thought superior by them, was the Custom House and the infrastructure it implied, both tangible and intangible. The new Custom House's "arrangement of space" and "choice of style" was proof of a "vision of empire" (Metcalf R., 2005).

The upheaval across the Persianate world in the 7th and 8th centuries bears striking similarity at least in political and cultural terms, to the age of empire from the 18th century onwards. By the 20th century, Europe collectively held "roughly 85 percent of the earth as colonies…" (Said E. n.d.) The imprint of this scale of imperialism is found through various tangible and intangible means even now in the 21st century.

Since "architecture has always been…used as a vehicle for the communication of ideas," (Mumtaz K. K., 1989) the question that arises relates to the kind of message(s) that colonial powers wanted to send across to their subjects. In Africa, scholars claim that "colonial buildings in Kenya…spoke to Africans" about the superiority of the Europeans and the latter's expectations from the former (Amutabi M., 2017). In India, the establishment of the Public Works Department (PWD) in 1854 was the result of a strong feeling that the "presence of (the British) should be beheld with respect and even with admiration by the natives." (Stamp, n.d.)

In Sindh, particularly, the British, to show the immense wealth at their disposal, imported stone from Jaipur and other places to be used in some of their grander, more monumental buildings thus moving away from the widespread use of easily available Gizri stone. It cannot be denied that the British Raj deliberately created "monumental architecture…which constituted the public face of the empire." (Treadwell L., 2017) This had been done previously in Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay – cities intricately connected to the Indian heartland. The need to do the same in Sindh came about as the result of a realization that "Karachi…had her own position" – one that would far surpass that of the aforementioned cities (Ahmed N., 2017).

The well-documented colonial perspective, regarding all things native and indigenous, was that the Indian subcontinent had nothing of value to offer to the British or to Western civilization as a whole. The wholesale use of "contemporary European mainstream" architectural styles and influences

as the official style of the Empire was thus justified (Mumtaz K. K. 1989).

As late as 1886, Lockwood Kipling, then Principal of the Mayo School of Art in Lahore, noted that "not a single native draughtsman turned out from this school has been taught the architecture of this country." (Manji F. 2021) Although this is a story of the Punjab, it can be applied to the rest of the subcontinent – colonial ideas of cultural superiority pervaded almost all thought and action. For instance, despite his critique that the PWD "and its highly centralized system,… prescribes the form of all buildings in one uniform pattern" (Stamp, n.d.), the PWD existed in Karachi, too, under the Superintending Engineer of the Province (Khuhro, n.d.).

(R. Metcalf and Stamp, n. d.) point to debates between architects, engineers, and planners regarding the styles to be adopted for the buildings commissioned by the Raj. Several were convinced that a crucial aspect of "Empire" was the "national style" which should be "upheld as a rallying cry." (Stamp, n.d.) Still others were of the belief that European architectural styles would have to be modified (considerably according to some) to suit the distinctive climate of the subcontinent. It is not until after 1857 and the War of Independence that genuine interest in the local architectural traditions of the region is shown by the British Raj and its officers (Stamp, n.d.) because "regardless of their commitment to a particular style, all architects…concern with political effect." (R. Metcalf, n.d.)

As mentioned earlier, Sindh was one of the last regions to be formally brought under British colonial rule in 1843. Nevertheless, the British wasted no time in impressing upon the locals what it meant to be ruled by them. "Coloniality as a process of subjectification" (Vikramaditya P., 1994) expressed through architecture was successful in intimidating local peoples and cultures by controlling the physical space and having the exclusive power to build upon it in the way they chose.

In the 21st century, postcolonialism demands that we deconstruct colonial sites of power – colonial articulation through language, histories, literature, geography, as well as the built form. The way our cities were organized and what was used to organize them – what were the pertinent questions being answered when the British decided to break the walls and gates of the Karachi Fort in 1843? What was the impact on the local psyche when the British army created the Saddar Bazaar soon after blasting through the Manora Fort? The latter was, in fact, similar to the way garrisons

were initially established in Africa before colonial powers had divided up the entire continent among themselves (Demissie, F. 2017).

Moreover, in Africa, "architecture was mobilized to create a cultural environment to express the grandeur of the empire, to police social and racial borders and to preserve the identity of the European settler population." (Demissie, F. 2017) In Karachi, an example of this is the creation of Saddar Quarter as distinct from the Karachi Fort.

Thus, homes and other buildings within the previous Karachi Fort were visually distinct from the built environment of Saddar which focused on large-scale use of Gizri stone. Where the city inside the Fort had grown organically, with only one main road running from Kharadar to Mithadar, and had many small, narrow, winding lanes connecting neighbourhoods to each other, Saddar was created on a grid pattern.

Additionally, the demography of the new town was also different – it was "inhabited primarily by the Europeans, Goans, and Parsis" while the old city retained its Hindu and Muslim residents (Hasan A., 2004). This creation of a "European city" fully furnished with a "commercial area where European ladies could shop in a not too unfamiliar environment" was another mark of the colonial city (Hasan A., 1986).

The local elite, initially a very small non-Muslim, non-Hindu populace, eventually conformed to colonial cultures and expressions as a means of increasing personal social power, thus admitting the "superiority" of the British. The visual distinction between the native quarters (see Fig 2: **Old Town**) and the growing boundaries of the new city was more than just the pattern upon which the new quarters were laid out and planned.

This "dual city" is again a reiteration of political, moral, economic, social, and religious superiority that the colonial administration wished their subjects would never forget. One author has described a similar setting in Accra (1873): "many pretentious houses, whitewashed, attracting attention from their prominence above the clay-brown huts among them." (Amoah, F, 2000) Moreover, several scholars have pointed out the "exclusive" nature of the colonial venture in India: "spatial segregation was a key feature of in a typical colonial urban setting." (Ahmed N. 2074)

Another feature was the distance at which initial European residential "zones" or "quarters" were planned from the
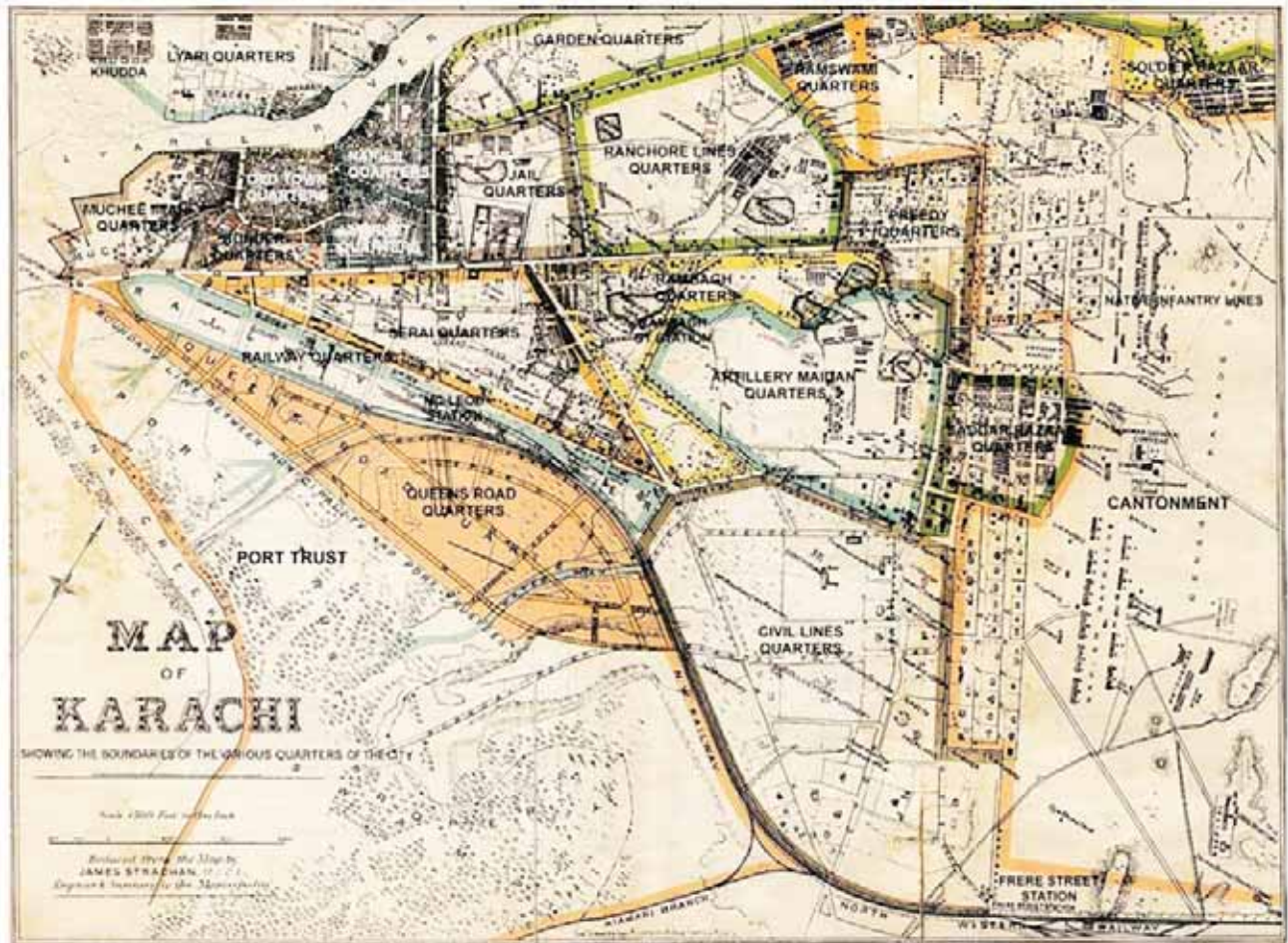
Figure-3: Baillie's Map of Karachi's quarters in 1890.
Source: (Hasan A. n.d.)

original native town. As seen in Figure 3, the Old Town Quarters are on the opposite end of Saddar Bazaar Quarters and the Cantonment, the two zones initially set up by the British for the soldiers, officers, and their families. The Figure also shows the Infantry Lines bordering the Saddar Bazaar and the Cantonment areas which further reinforces the idea of control and power wielded by the colonizers (Kosambi, M. & Brush, J. E. 1988).

Walking through Colonial Saddar

The following monuments/buildings/spaces, based primarily in Karachi's Saddar area, have been chosen for a visual representation of the "timeline" discussed above – from European to a hybrid architectural style with representation of local and indigenous elements. This section is to show readers the "grandeur" of empire, the means at the disposal of the colonial government, and its political motivations. The inclusion of native-patroned buildings in the following


Figure-4: A Scene of busy street in Karachi Taken by an Unknown Photographer in C. 1900.

section is to highlight how their use of the same materials, motifs, and architectural styles played into their need to be accepted by their colonial masters.

Figure-5: St. Joseph's Convent School started in 1862 by the Belgian Sisters of the Cross. Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.
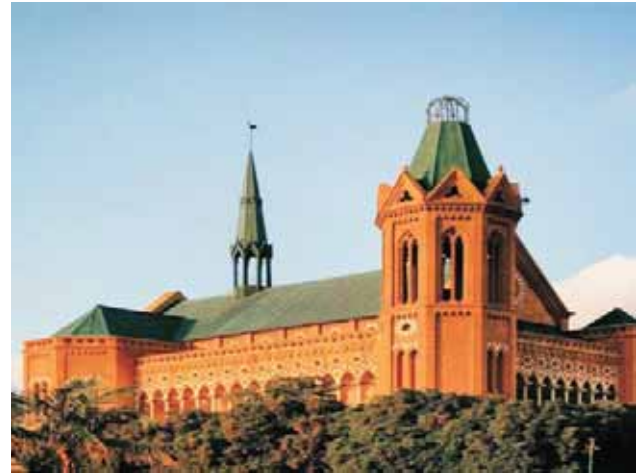
Figure-6: Frere Hall, Completed in 1865, Designed by Henry Saint Clair Wilkins.

Figure-7: Details on the Merewether Memorial Tower. The Star of David can be seen clearly here. Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

Figure-8: Merewether Memorial Tower, known as Tower by Karachiites, constructed in 1884-1892. Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

Additionally, it should be noted that the purpose of the building/monument was not as internalized by the people as what the façade represented. Take for example the St. Joseph's Convent School – set up by the Daughters of the Cross, this was a very different educational system from what the locals were used to. And yet by the end of British rule in the subcontinent, native elites preferred to send their children here and other schools like it rather than the traditional schools of the region.

A similar instance is of the Khalikdina Hall and Library. Why should local patrons of a library use a European architectural style rather than Indo-Saracenic or Indo-Persian? The various European styles were employed by local patrons who desired to climb the social hierarchy and felt conformity with the British, in every way possible, would help them.

Both the monuments above were built in what is known as limestone (or yellow-stone, in layman terms). In the case of Frere Hall, the stone was imported from the nearby region of Jungshahi (Author unknown 2003)." The sloping, conical roofs seen on both structures are practical elements in use particularly in colder regions in the world. However, in the warmer, more temperate weather of Karachi, this element was not just very new, it was also severely out of place. Both buildings are firmly from the Italian Renaissance and Venetian-Gothic architectural styles (Lari Y. 2001), respectively.

The construction of Merewether Memorial Tower finished in 1892 – a time when pockets of resistance to European architectural traditions were popping up in select regions across the Indian subcontinent. Merewether Tower is quite

Figure-9: Dayaram Jethmal (D.J.) Sind College, 1893. Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

Figure-10: Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

Figure-12: Khalikdina Hall Built in 1906.

Figure-11: Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

possibly the most distinct architectural structure still existing in Karachi. The figural (human) representation in a building, seen above, was the first of its kind for any religious or ethnic community in Sindh, much less Karachi. Furthermore, the Tower is built in the English Medieval style and also showcases the Star of David as part of its decoration. It is quite possible that no other structure in Karachi could have possibly evoked more real memories of England than James Strachan's Merewether Memorial Tower.

The Dayaram Jethmal (D.J.) Sind College completed in 1893 was designed by the same architect who designed Merewether Tower, James Strachan. However, as the pictures above show, the stylistic elements used and inspiration for the College is completely different from that of the Tower.

In fact, Strachan used Italian architectural style for this building. Its main, front façade, as seen in Picture 4b, is very close to the main front of Khalikdina Hall built in 1906 (see below). Both have been designed according to the Palladian architectural style and strive to invoke a sense of grandeur.

On the other hand, the adoption of British, or Indo-Greek styles by the native elites soon gave evidence to the fact that the new imperial language had been accepted. The natives had also accepted that "native architecture was never…equal to European architectural traditions (Lari Y. 2001)."

Built in 1906, Khalikdina Hall and Library was named after its chief benefactor and is the "first building built by local Muslim philanthropists (Lari Y. 2001)" primarily for use by the natives. Unlike other buildings constructed in this manner, this building was situated in Ranchore Lines so that the natives could come there easily. However, this does not mean that local architectural elements were used in its design and construction. The stone used in its construction is again

Figure-13: Bristol Hotel built in 1910.

yellow-coloured limestone and the architectural style is Palladian. The "Iconic portico, a high podium and a…triangular pediment (Lari Y. 2001)" were chosen specifically to immediately impose the sense of grandeur on behalf of the audience.

The Bristol Hotel (pictured above) was a part of a quartet of Railway Hotels built in Karachi in the early 20th century. However, it was initially built as a mansion for a rich Parsi, hence the spacious rooms. Built in the Italian Renaissance style, this building was the first from its surroundings to be a three-storey building – the first effects of overpopulation were being felt in the city around this time.

However, it must be noted here that Sindh was one of the last regions to be made part of the British Indian Subcontinent and other regions such as Madras had already developed a hybrid form of architectural style after decades of debate and conflict. This style, popularly known as Anglo-Mughal, incorporated stylistic and practical elements from the local arena as well as European architectural traditions. Popular in some regions, though not all, it was still largely absent from the Karachi architectural scene in which "'Italianate' buildings were still popular (Lari Y. 2001)." It was only until 1930 that these 'hybrid' buildings began to appear in Karachi. The first of these was the Karachi Muncipal Office Building (shown below) completed in 1931.


Figure-14: Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) Office Building completed in 1931. Picture taken from Heritage of Sindh.

The KMC building was the first of its kind in Karachi. Its architect deliberately merged 'Oriental' or 'Islamic' architectural styles with European Renaissance styles. This is seen in the number of domes, "arched forms", and cupolas but the "U" shaped building plan is quite distinctly inspired from that of Queen's College in London (Lari Y. 2001). The clock tower pictured above takes up center space and can be seen from a distance. Unlike that of the Merewether Memorial Tower, the inscription on this building is quite distinct and can be seen properly. The main entrance to the building, under the clock tower, is flanked by Saracenic domes, a distinctly 'Islamic' feature.

Current Perceptions

In 1994 the Government of Sindh passed the Sindh Cultural Heritage Preservation Act which introduced protective measures for buildings and monuments in the province
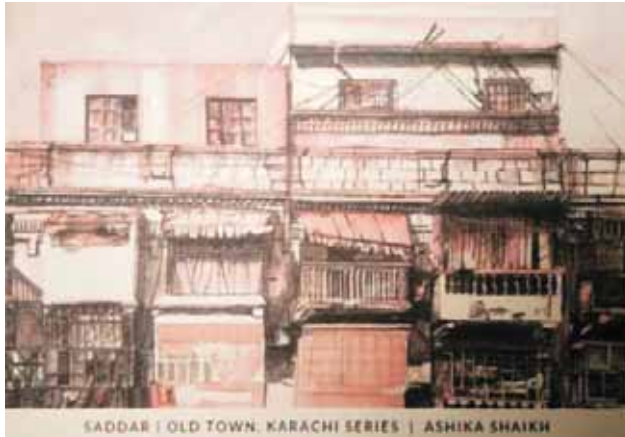
Figure-15: Old Town, Karachi Series I. The artist has managed to capture additional rooms built on top of the original building.

included on a special Protected Heritage List (The Sindh Government Gazette, 1994). Aside from the problems with the Act itself, in which certain clauses are either contradictory or ambiguous within their implementation, the government showcases a lack of willingness when it comes to the protection of built heritage. In recent years, the demolition of pre-partition buildings and homes has accelerated, with several scholars, activists, and members of civil society voicing their concerns. In their place, tall residential and commercial buildings have come up, completely changing the face of the city (Ali n. d.).

The impudence with which both owners and real estate developers have continued to destroy the built heritage of the city is a result of the negligence of the government as much as it is a result of their complicity. The government-bureaucrat-developer nexus has meant that all land in Karachi is viewed as a commodity that needs to be developed to its full economic potential.

On the other hand, a new generation of artists, writers, and civil society activists have taken up the cause of the city's built heritage. Through postcards, artwork, art installations, biennales, maps, and other forms of cultural expression, the younger generation has made these movements central to the way Karachi is depicted in popular media. This is important since for too long, Karachi's image in popular culture has been dominated by politics and ethnic and civil strife.

The postcards depicted below (Figures 15-18) were drawn by Ashika Shaikh as part of her Old Town Series. According to her, the ornamentation of these buildings gives them a "more subjective, personal sort of quality and architecture today is too neat, manicured, and robotic." (Hashim A. 2020)

Figure-16: Old Town, Karachi Series II. The top left-hand corner shows a child peering out of their balcony. This postcard focuses on the different grilles and balcony styles.

The way Shaikh sees Karachi's heritage – colourful, varied, "subjective" – is clearly seen in Figure 8, the most colourful of the Series.

CONCLUSION

In the colonial city, buildings and monuments were not innocent of politics – they acted as sites of power and domination in favour of the colonizer. They were intended to "hold up a high standard of European art" (Demissie F., 2017) and intimate to the beholder European values, culture, justice, and law among others. Among this was the belief that the Indians lacked "public virtue" and that it was the responsibility of the British to educate them in it through various means. (R. Metcalf, n. d.) This, from the perspective of the colonisers, made sense since their mission in India was as much a "civilizing" one as it was economic. Therefore, only European styles could reflect that civility. This feeling was prevalent among the British as late as 1873 (Demissie F., 2017).

Figure-17: Old Town, Karachi Series III. The balcony in the top is shown as broken but still being used as can be seen by the woman on it.

Figure-18: Old Town, Karachi Series IV. The broad range of colors seen above is exactly as they are in reality. Green shutters (for windows and doors) and other brightly colored aspects of a building were common earlier.

Given Karachi's economic importance to the British, scholars would agree that it was colonial center at par with other cities like Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta in the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Even though Karachi had a sizeable population before its conquest by the British, this fact is almost completely forgotten in history – the history the British narrated was one of "discovery". Therefore, Karachi became a mere "fishing village" that the British then developed into a major hub and imparted knowledge and civility to. Almost all traces of the indigenous city were wiped out very early on after the conquest.

Although she focuses largely on Madras, Susan Nield's (1979) view that cities established or developed by Europeans "stood apart from precolonial urban centers" can also be applied to Karachi. She also addresses the "dual social and spatial structure" of these cities which differed from non-colonial cities in the rest of the subcontinent. Again, as can be seen throughout the images presented in this paper, there was a distinction, especially and immediately visual, between the European zones and the native zones of the city. Figure 4 depicts a scene in a busy street in Karachi. Notice the walls and balconies of the buildings in the street compared to the stone walls of buildings like Frere Hall or St. Joseph's Convent. Locals used materials they could easily and cheaply source whereas the British could afford to import stone from as far as Jaipur.

Additionally, by refusing to participate in the market structures of Karachi's Fort Town, the British colonisers were sending out a clear message of the difference between the population. A difference that they always wanted to emphasize and magnify. What use did the locals, largely Hindu and Muslim, have of Easter and Christmas decorations sold in the Saddar Bazaar? This politics of exclusion was practiced not only through the market but also through visual set up of the city. Saddar Quarter's wide roads, grandiose buildings, tall church towers and spires, all pointed to a new era, a new ruler, a new language. In pre-partition Karachi, "the churches and town halls with their tall spires and clock towers unequivocally declared the supremacy of the alien culture (Lari Y. 2001)."

However, there existed another strand of thought within the colonial administration which felt that Britain's role in India should be more "paternalistic" (Mumtaz K. K. 1989) and "incorporate certain elements of indigenous aesthetics in the design of public buildings to quell local resistance." (Demissie F., 2017) For this group, the goal was not to intimidate the natives into submission but to win them over and thus make them accept the British as legitimate rulers. In Delhi this exercise was carried out by architects and planners like Lutyens "to legitimize colonial rule." (Demissie F., 2017)

On the other hand, the native "measured his (own) superiority by his ability to mould himself after the white sahib's fashion." (Mumtaz K. K. 1989) This continued even as they fought for their independence, resulting in the D.J. Sindh College and the Khalikdina Hall and Library. Native attitudes towards their own forms (traditional) of art and architecture were considered ugly and inferior. The native elite that had managed to climb the social hierarchy and had come to think of himself as belonging to the ruling British class became critical of his own cultural heritage (Mumtaz K. K. 1989).

Furthermore, students trained in schools "based on the western model" (Mumtaz K. K. 1989) were unable to connect with or understand the long-standing arts and architecture tradition of the subcontinent of which they were a product.

Thus, despite the discontinuation of European styles of architecture, colonization in the Indian subcontinent had been successful in severing generations from their history.

However, soon after the Independence of the subcontinent, these architectural styles were largely discontinued, whether due to a lack of financial resources or because the principal architects for such projects were largely British/European. This points to an architectural language having been imposed on a people and space that could not connect to it. The lack of native creative expression in the monuments around them eventually led to their disappearance from future structures. This was a colonial project deeply entrenched in discourses of racism and inequality.

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