The Vanishing Glory of Hyderabad (Sindh, Pakistan)
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Abstract
Hyderabad, la città del Sindh che un tempo era chiamata ‘Parigi dell’India’, dove le strade venivano profumate ogni giorno, sta vedendo sfumare velocemente il suo glorioso passato. Fondata dai Kalhora, progredì e fiorì durante i Talpur e la colonizzazione britannica. Gli eventi che precedettero e seguirono la partizione dell’India, nel 1947, diedero un colpo mortale alla città. All’immigrazione in massa di rifugiati dall’India seguirono conflitti etnici, instabilità politica ed un elevato livello di corruzione dell’amministrazione pubblica. Questi fattori, unitamente alla mancanza di senso civico, malgoverno ed un cattivo sistema politico, portarono al progressivo declino della gloria della città. I bei palazzi coloniali sono stati e vengono tuttora deturpati in nome del progresso, mentre parchi e luoghi pubblici sono stati occupati da brutte strutture commerciali da parte di costruttori mafiosi. Le strade di Hyderabad sono oggi piene di confusione: pericolosi cavi elettrici e linee telefoniche hanno deturpato l’estetica della città, mentre la quasi totale assenza di una rete fognaria ha portato al diffondersi di malattie. La mancanza di un traffico regolamentato, la costruzione di nuovi edifici e la diffusione di scritte murarie hanno portato ovunque ad un peggioramento dell’aspetto esteriore. Violenza, scioperi, dimostrazioni, attività criminali sono notevolmente aumentati negli ultimi decenni. Hyderabad posiede tutti gli ingredienti di una bellissima città ricca di storia che può attrarre centinaia di migliaia di turisti da ogni dove. Per raggiungere questo obiettivo è però necessario un ritorno al suo glorioso passato grazie ad un’immediata attenzione da parte di quelle istituzioni internazionali che operano per la conservazione del patrimonio culturale e di un buon modello di amministrazione.

1. Introduction
The glory of Hyderabad, once the cultural and commercial centre of the Subcontinent, is quickly disappearing. Ethnic strife, political expediencies, government apathy, and unenlightened inhabitants, all have played their part in defacing the marvelous Sindhi heritage of Hyderabad.
The story of Hyderabad starts from the year 1757 AD, when Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro, the ruler of Sindh, fed up with the repeated onslaught of the Monsoon flooding1 of his capital Khudabad, near Dadu, at the time when the River Indus was changing its course, conceived the idea of shifting his capital to a better place. For this reason he selected the site on Ganjo Takar (the bald hill) on a low limestone range, on the left bank of the River Indus, where once was located Nerunkot, the town that fell to the Arab invader, Muhammad bin Qasim al-Sakafi when he attacked it in 711 AD.

2. The Kalhora Fort
Ghulam Shah Kalhoro completed the construction of this glorious fort (fig. 1), spread over thirty six acres, whose walls are made of backed clay bricks, in 1769 AD (fig. 2). Its name was advised to Mian Ghulam Shah by the Talpurs and other devotees

* Melaka, Malaysia. “Observatory for Protection of Cultural Heritage in Areas of Crisis”.
1 Rahimdad 1958.
of Hazrat Ali ‘Hyder’, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad. The ‘footprints’ of Hazrat Ali, inscribed on stone, were later gifted by the Iranian ruler to the Talpurs. It was placed in the Qadamgah Moula Ali, which became a place of pilgrimage for many people, and it continues to be even today. The town soon started to grow and flourish slumping Khudabad, Nasarpur and other trade and commercial centres into oblivion. Artisans, craftsmen and traders from far and wide started to migrate and settle there, attracted by the strong fort, presence of ruler, peace and security of Hyderabad.

The founder of the town lived only four years to rule over the fort he built with such an enthusiasm. His son, Mian Sarfraz Kalhoro, was placed on the throne of
Hyderabad by Talpur military heads. He, in remembrance of the previous capital, Khudabad, built a new Khudabad in 1774 AD, some 2.5 km north of Hala and tried to shift his capital there. This new Khudabad was spread over a vast area and it was the second largest town after Thatta. Sarfaraz Kalhora’s attempt to shift his capital failed, and Hyderabad remained the de facto capital. It continued to grow and flourish and whereas New Khudabad was soon abandoned and changed to ruins by 1814 AD. Lohana Hindus, Bhaiband and Memon traders all contributed to the growth and glory of Hyderabad.

The strength of the fort built by Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro can be gauged from the fact that when Talpur Mirs defeated the Kalhoras at Halani in 1773 AD, they took two further years to enter the fort of Hyderabad. Kalhoras’ faithful defender Shalmeen Negro and Maraani Baloch had enough food grains and water supply from five wells to sustain them so long inside the fort. Talpur Mirs’ army entered it only when Maraani Baloch ignited the ammunition dump and the explosion destroyed a portion of the eastern wall, thus providing opportunity to the Talpurs’ army to enter the fort (fig. 3).

The Talpur Mir, Fateh Ali Khan, formally declared Hyderabad his capital in 1789 AD. Renovations, reconstructions and new buildings were made to accommodate the Talpurs and their families in the fort. Rehmatullah Shah Building and Talib Shah Building, near the fort gate, were restored by Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur. Great celebrations were held in 1792 AD to mark Mir Fateh Ali Khan’s formal entry in the fort. Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro’s period is considered to be the Golden period in the history of Sindhi literature. Later the Kalhora behaved as incompetent rulers and Sindh was ruined under Mian Abdun-Nabi Kalhoro (fig. 4). The Talpur Mirs tried to restore the

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2 Elphinstone 1815.
golden era of Sindhi literature to educate their people. In order to start this process, the mother of Mir Fateh Ali Khan, Bibi Khairunnissa, established Jamia al-Khairi or al-Khairi University.

3. The Talpur city and its activities

The strong fort, the rulers and their army all provided a feeling of peace and security amongst artisans, craftsmen, traders, workers and intellectuals who migrated from far and wide to settle there. They made Hyderabad grow and flourish into a busy and booming metropolis. The locality where carpenters settled became known as wadhan jo pirru or settlement of carpenters, the vicinity of barbers became known as nain jo pirru, the street of dyers became famous as khunbhati ghitti and the settlement of the nail makers as naal bandan jo pirru.

During the Talpurs rule, the metropolis became famous for cultural, literary, educational, commercial and trade activities. Gold-plated silver, enameled jewelry, dyed leather, and leather items made in Hyderabad were exported to far-flung countries. Books were written in calligraphy by skilful artists and the bookbinding industry was quite advanced. Susi, Khes and other varieties of cotton cloths made in other towns of Sindh were brought to Hyderabad for trade and sale. Carpets from Thatta, glazed ceramic vessels and lacquered jandi wood furniture was brought from Hala for trading. Other ancient Sindhi handicrafts from the neighbouring towns and villages were brought in for trade and sale. They included carpets from Boobak, ivory from Matiari, jam and rice stuff from Tando Muhammad Khan, steel knives and grass cutters from Matli, horse saddles from Khadro, bedsheets from Naoshehro, Padaidan and Tharo Shah.

Items were exported to Khorasan, Chinese Turkestan, Kashmir, and Central India. Items from Punjab would reach Hyderabad through the River Indus. Henry Pottinger, during his travels in Sindh, saw 341 ships in 19 days laden with export items going to Rajo Dero, navigating in the Indus. The Memon merchants of Sindh used to export ghee (cooking oil) to the ports of India. Afghan traders used to bring Kashmiri shawls, Balochi cloths, Kimkhab (silk fabric brocaded with gold and silver) from Isfahan, Herat, Yazd and Mashhad. Pashmina carpets and rugs and dry fruit was brought from Khorasan, herbs, asafetida, horses and falcons from Sulaiman and Hindukush Range for trading.

During British times, when the capital was shifted to Karachi, the Chief Commissioners, who were British administration heads in Sindh, especially Sir Bartle Ferere, used to come Hyderabad to select items for industrial and trade fairs in Karachi and

1 Huges 1876.
Products from Hyderabad were sent to the Hyde Park exhibition, London, in 1851 AD. Products from Hyderabad also reached Paris and some other European cities.

The main method of transportation during the Talpur period was through ships navigating the Indus River and camels cruising deserts. Afghan traders took away from Hyderabad blue dye, spices and European cloths, for trading to Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. Talpur Mirs’ rule over Sindh ended in 1843 AD due to the occupation by British East India Company. Although they shifted the capital and focused more on Karachi, Hyderabad did not decline during the British period. Karachi traders established trade links and exported Sindh products from the markets of Hyderabad to Bandar Abbas, Muscat, Bombay and Malabar. Besides its strategic location, the economic and commercial importance of the River Indus, Hyderabad was an additional reason, which generated British interest in the area. Investors of London established “The Indus System Navigation Company” in 1835 AD, whose objective was to explore the trade opportunities in the area.

Lohana Hindus, who originally migrated from Afghanistan, were basically metal and gold traders. They shifted to Hyderabad as soon as it became the capital of Sindh and played a pivotal role in the development of the city during the Talpur period. Amil and Dewan were the Hindu elites, who were highly educated and proficient in Persian language. Talpur Mirs posted them on important government positions. They continued their elite position also during the British colonial period. They lived in the area of Hyderabad they developed under the name of Amil Colony. The Amil Colony and adjoining Hirabad in Hyderabad had some of the finest aesthetically constructed residential and commercial buildings in British India (fig. 5). In 1947, many Sindhi Hindus had to migrate from their motherland to the Hindu majority areas of India due to violent attacks of Urdu speaking Muslim migrants from India. As a consequence of this unfortunate event, the Sindhi Hindus abandoned these

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5. Hyderabad. British Period house in fast deteriorating condition. Ethnic, political graffiti can be seen on the house walls and ethnic political flag colours on the electric poles.
palatial houses that were occupied by Urdu speaking Muslim immigrants from north and central India. Unfortunately the new occupants cared little about the architectural value of these buildings, whereas the government failed to make or implement laws regulating the preservation of the heritage. As a consequence, some of the wonderful architectural pieces were mercilessly destroyed in the name of renovations and reconstructions in the following years and this process continues to-date (fig. 6). Some of the buildings were totally effaced to raise ill-planned apartment buildings and shop lots of commercial value at the cost of destruction of Sindh’s heritage. The Amil Colony and Hirabad streetscape have resultantly changed to a kind of urban slum instead of the posh locality it was in pre-partition times. Gone are the days when streets were washed daily with rose water and incensed with sandal wood aroma.

The people belonging to the Bhaiband Hindu community of Hyderabad were very sharp and business-minded persons. They attained high positions during both Talpur and British periods. Dewan Giddumal was the Talpurs ambassador in the court of Kandahar. His brother, Dewan Jaspatrai, was ambassador in the court of
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Kabul during same period. Munshi Partabrai was Munshi or accountant of Mir Sobdar Khan Talpur. Munshi Mushtaqram was advisor of Mir Ghulam Ali Khan Talpur. The Talpur-British Agreement of 1809 AD was ratified with his advice. Dewan Gopaldas was envoy of Mir Karam Ali Khan Talpur in Kutch. Munshi Khushiram was key advisor of Mir Murad Ali Khan Talpur in the Talpur-British Agreement of 1832 AD.

4. The British colonial period

With the advent of the British, government system, local administration, irrigation, land revenue rules, educational system, all changed considerably. Construction of British style schools was started as early as 1860s. St. Joseph missionary school was also established in 1868 AD. Later, Noor Muhammad established the once famous Noor Muhammad High School and Sindh Muslim College in Hyderabad. Many Hyderabadi citizens played an important role in the spread of education in Sindh. Hassan Ali Effendy founded Sindh Madressah School in Karachi. Sachal Sarmast College of Hyderabad was established by Sardar Bahadur Muhammad Bukhsh. He also established a college for Sindhi Muslim girls. Hindu Sindhi girls used to study in Piggot and Miran High School. Famous missionary schools, Saint Bonaventure and Saint Mary’s college were opened between 1920 and early 1930s. These schools imparted very high standard education to upper and middle class students until 1970s when these were nationalized and taken over by the socialist government of Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto. The government administration failed to deliver quality education through these schools and with the change of government they were privatized again in 1990s, although the quality level in imparting education of these schools before the nationalization has not so far been achieved.

Sindh University was established more recently, in 1947 AD, and it was shifted to Hyderabad in 1951 AD. The Old Campus building is one fine landmark of the Hyderabad city centre (fig. 7). Al-

5 Huges 1876.
though the frontage of the Old Campus has been reconstructed with an aesthetically alluring facade, the condition of the building inside and on the backyard is still deteriorating quickly.

Western medicine was introduced in Hyderabad during British times. With a contribution of Rs. 50,000 by the philanthropist Sir Cowasji Jehangir Readymoney and a government grant of Rs. 8,000, lunatic asylum consisting of eight wards for natives and one for Europeans, a hospital, and quarters for a superintendent and the officials, was constructed in 1871 AD. It has more recently been changed into an Institute of Psychiatry. This is the only institution dealing with psychiatry in Sindh today. The beautiful civil hospital building, constructed during British times, has also been victim of unscrupulous renovations and additions in the recent years. Its original facade and wonderful appearance has been replaced by an ugly look. New walls and wards in same premises, which do not match with the original architectural design, have changed the entire appearance into an ugly looking agglomeration of old and new structures. The Countess of Dufferin Hospital for women and St. Elizabeth Hospital used to be very good hospitals in the past although nowadays they are no longer, either in their appearance or function.

The prison constructed in 1851 AD had a capacity of 600 prisoners at that time. It had facilities of a well-maintained hospital and a dispensary as well. Prisoners were mostly kept employed in various works like manufacturing of carpets, table-cloths, towels, trousers, sheeting cloths, camel kits, mats, chairs, boots, earthen piping bricks and chat ties. They were taught these skills during their stay in prison. The same prison is now overcrowded lacking any kind of facilities and notoriously labeled as a ‘drug-den’.

To tame the mighty Indus River, the British constructed a huge bridge across it in 1897 AD. A railway line was laid between Karachi and Kotri and then to Quetta through Lukky and the Bolan Mountains with intention of taking it to Afghanistan. With the opening of the railway line between Karachi and Kotri, the value of the garden property in and around Hyderabad increased considerably. It boosted both agriculture and transit trade through Hyderabad. Hyderabad railway station was built somewhat later. Originally the building had a reasonably nice appearance, although today it has fallen prey to the apathy of the railway officials. Its frontage nowadays appears congested due to haphazardly build shops, ill planned huts and selling stalls. The walls of the fort on this side have also become weak and dilapidated. At many places these have caved in damaging property and killing and hurting people. The Kotri Bridge over the Indus is now 110 years old and, on papers, the heavy traffic is banned although in practice heavy lorries systematically pass through it. The Rajah’s Rail used to ply between Hyderabad and Jodhpur. Daily wage earners
used to come from Jodhpur to Hyderabad and back through it. This is now a part of history.

With the advent of the British, the pattern of trade and commerce also changed. With the increase in population and influx of European products, Hyderabad evolved into a large consumer market. Its economy now consisted of lesser exports as compared to previous times, but the quantum of transit trade increased from north and east of Hyderabad en route for Karachi.

During the Talpur period Hyderabad was famous for the manufacture of various types of arms and armour. Matchlocks, sabers, daggers, suits of chain armour, shields and other warlike paraphernalia were produced and traded at Hyderabad. The workshop of the Talpurs court had highly skilled goldsmith and enamellers. Most of the guns of the Talpur royal family had immaculate floral decorations over a gold background. At the fall of Talpur rule, many of their arms were dispersed and found their way into European collections.

Collector’s Kutchehri, which accommodates Durbar Hall and now Sessions Court and public offices, is a fine colonial style, upper storied building of red brick. Though it has been kept alive, its maintenance is however done half-heartedly. It appears either the authorities, doing renovations more recently, could not find competent architects, or contractors carrying out their work disregarded the advice of architects.

The main fort of Hyderabad is built with baked bricks and hence is called Packo Qilo by the local people to distinguish it from another mud-thatched clay fort, called Katcho Qilo. In the Packo Qilo, the main building of Talpur Mirs, located just opposite the gateway, was converted into a ‘Government House’ by the British. British forces were first quartered inside the fort but later moved to a new cantonment.

In 1857 AD, the year of ‘Indian Mutiny’, almost all the original and renovated houses in the fort were pulled down by the British authorities, and a new sixteen-sided arsenal building was built on that site. Thus came the first blow to the original buildings of this unfortunate fort. In 1867 AD, the arsenal was finally shifted from Karachi to Hyderabad6 (fig. 8).

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6 Huges 1876.
The round watchtower located just outside the main gate was also demolished by the British in fear of any possible misuse by the Baloch warriors. Mir Sher Muhammad Talpur, the last Talpur ruler (fig. 9), could not stop tears dropping from his eyes when he saw the changed shape of the Hyderabad fort. “The decay has started” he said. Since the partition of India events, which included mass migration of people, the illegal encroachment inside the fort has converted it into a kind of shantytown. Immigrants from India, who were temporarily settled here in a shelter camp, constructed their illegal dwellings even adjacent to the Fort walls (figs. 10 and 11). Preservation measures have been pledged and proposed many dozens of times by many important figures of various successive governments, but so far no practical step has been taken. If this neglect continues the parts of the fort wall still intact will be lost forever soon.

The Hyderabad Municipality was established in 1853 AD. Within twenty years of its existence, the municipality had constructed about 20 km of metalled roads, which were fully lit at night by kerosene lamps. Saddar and Soldier Bazaar were new additions to British Hyderabad, where the traders of Dauodi Bohra community from Gujarat and Pune were settled.

Most of the Talpur Mirs of Hyderabad, who surrendered to the British, were taken into captivity and exiled to Calcutta in British India. Many Talpur Mirs died there during many years of confinement in a small area near Calcutta. The bodies of the
Talpur Mirs who died there were brought back to Hyderabad when all Mirs were allowed to return to Sindh. These Mirs were buried in the tombs located at the northern edge of the Ganjo Hill (fig. 12). The condition of these tombs has deteriorated to the extent that they may collapse any time (figs 13 and 14).

The Talpur Mirs who were released from captivity by the British, on their return build their houses to live in Tando Mir Ghulam Hussain and Tando Mir Noor Muhammad near Hyderabad. These houses were fine structures of mixed Sindhi and colonial styles (figs. 15 and 16). Most of the houses of Tando Mir Ghulam Hussain have vanished. And only one palace, the Badshahi Bungalow Palace of Prince Mir Hasssan Ali Khan Talpur is intact at Tando Mir Noor Muhammad Talpur (fig. 17). This Badshahi Bungalow was well kept by its owner Mir Muhammad Ali Talpur of Tando Mir Noor Muhammad until it was nationalized and sealed for years by former Prime Minister Mr Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s. This wonderful palace was neither restored by the government nor its owners were allowed to maintain it (fig. 18). This palace was returned to its owners by the competent ministry after Mr Bhutto’s government had gone, but the owner then faced financial problems to maintain it properly. Mir Haider Talpur, its present owner, also faces similar problems (fig. 19). A fund for the preservation of the heritage sites of Hyderabad would greatly help preserve its vanishing glory.
14. Hyderabad. The Tomb of Mir Muhammad Naseer Khan Talpur and other Mirs are now in worst conditions. Mir Muhammad Naseer Khan was the last ruler of Hyderabad.

15. Hyderabad. The ceiling of the residence of Mir Muhammad Ali Talpur, Tando Mir Mehmood. This is the only Hyderabad XIX century Talpur residence, which has been tastefully renovated in its originality.


17. This historic palace of Talpur Mirs was constructed in 1863 AD. At present this palace highly needs attention by heritage lovers and international agencies for its preservation.


Once the most striking feature of Hyderabad was its peculiar skyline dominated by wind-catchers. These wind catchers or *Manghu*, as they are called in the local Sindhi language, were fixed on housetops, to catch the southwesterly breeze in the hot summer days and evenings. The breeze entering the wind-catchers would penetrate into the room and keep it cool. Due to the numerous wind catchers, Hyderabad became famous as *manghan jo shaharu* or the city of wind catchers. This tradition started to wane with the advent of electricity during the World War II when the British authorities built a powerhouse at Tando Agha. Most of the new houses and buildings have switched to other methods of room cooling, e.g. electric fans, room coolers and air conditioners and, therefore, the wind catchers are no longer numerous over the cityscape. Only few buildings have continued to follow this tradition of having *Manghu* on their rooftops. These include the newly constructed Civic Centre and the Aga Khan Maternity and Child Care Centre.

The *Shahi Bazaar* is the main market of Hyderabad. It is about 2 km long, starting from the main gate of the Hyderabad Fort and ending at the Navalrai Clock Tower (fig. 20). The Shahi Bazaar (or King’s Bazaar) was also established soon after the construction of the fort by Ghulam Shah Kalhoro. The artisans, craftsmen, traders, merchandisers, and Hindus with business acumen, called ‘Sindh Warkis’ from various parts of Sindh, either relocated their businesses here or would come to sell their products. Although the bazaar was established during Kalhoro rule, it became a popular business area in a real sense only during the Talpur Period. The Sindh Warki traders had business links as far as Java, Geneva and Paris, long before the advent of the British. The British Period witnessed development and construction of aesthetically attractive shop houses on both sides of the bazaar lane. However, the imprudent renovations and indiscreet reconstructions in the post 1947 AD era, have defaced the original street-

scape of the Shahi bazaar. The hustle and bustle however still continue especially in the Resham Ghitti (Silk Lane), which is visited by every Hyderabad lady. The condition of Navalrai Clock Tower, under which the wet market and bazaar used to be, is fast deteriorating due to lack of maintenance, apathy of administration and un-enlightenment of the stakeholders. The condition of adjoining market areas of Fakir jo Pirru and Siroghat has already changed into a look different from the original. The condition of other old areas of colonial times is not very different. These include, Gaddi Khatto (fig. 21), Talahu number tay, Phuleli, Chawri, Chhotki Ghitti, Tando Agha, Tando Mir Mehmood.

The road to Giddu Bandar was once called Thadhi Sadak or Cool Street, owing to the presence of numerous shade trees. Gone are now its trees, shade and cool breeze.

5. After the 1947 AD partition

The entertainment and recreational facilities are affected most since the British departed. They had established wine shops for their soldiers and Gymkhana club for bureaucrats and elite civilians. The Ladies Club was a famous place for Hindu ladies’ social activities, whereas Dialdas Club was the place for the Sindhi Hindu elites’ gatherings. The facade of the Dialdas Club and Besant Hall buildings have been restored to some extent, although not enough to be brought back to their originality. Another case is that of the public parks, the Rani Bagh (Queen’s Garden) for instance, named after Queen Victoria. The land mafia has encroached most of the public parks and used them for their commercial constructions. Most shameful was the order of a municipal administrator in 1990s to dump the city rubbish into the low-lying areas of this public park! The relatively newer Niaz Stadium of Hyderabad is more a venue to wedding gatherings and a breeding ground for mosquitoes in the Monsoon, than a place of leisure or sport activities. The Eidgah build, in a Mughal style, and the neighbouring Barkat Bhai Park have met with similar a fate. The only well kept buildings of the colonial times appear to be the Circuit House and the adjacent government bungalows, probably because they are frequented by the ruling elites. Though these are kept up to date, these too are not maintained in their original form.

Hyderabad has also been referred as the city of inclines. These inclines off the Ganjo Takkar used to give a picturesque appearance to the city, especially when it was a clean and peaceful place. Tilak Incline, named after the Indian National Congress leader, Lokmaina Tilak, is the most famous of all the inclines. Besant Hall was established by Mrs. Annie Besant of the Home-rule League political party (fig. 22). Other politicians of the early XX century were remembered through memorials of their names. The Azad Maidan of Hirabad was named after another Congress leader, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. The famous Lajpat Road was named after the congress leader, Lala Lajpat Rai.

In a sharp contrast to today’s mediocre leadership, which is leading it to nowhere, Hyder-
bad produced many towering personalities in the past. Dr. Choithram Gidwani remained president of Sindh Congress Party until the departure of the British. Acharia Kripalani was another Congress leader from Hyderabad. He became Indian Congress President in 1946 AD. Firebrand lady, Kumari Jethi Sipahimalani was a Congress member in the Sindh Assembly from Hyderabad. She played a significant role in the public life of Sindh and Sindhi people.

In the XX century, the names, which remained dominant on the horizon of Hyderabad, include Talpur brothers. Khaksar Movement leader, Mir Ali Ahmed Khan Talpur and the labour movement leader Mir Rasool Bux Talpur. Both were the founding members of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) although they later detached themselves from it due to contrasts with Mr. Bhutto over some issues including quantum of autonomy to provinces under Pakistan’s constitution. The other two brothers, who rose to the horizon of Hyderabad, were the Kazi brothers of the hakim family. Kazi Muhammad Akber and Kazi Abdul Majid Abid surfaced through municipal politics and journalistic contributions. Both Talpur and Kazi brothers played an important role in the rehabilitation of Urdu speaking Muslim immigrants from India. Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur, the Speaker of Sindh Assembly in 1950s, was yet another towering personality who refused to bow to the rulers of the day, who wanted him to follow their infamous dictates and get the resolution of amalgamating Sindh with the other three provinces of West Pakistan passed to create one West Pakistan province.

6. The recent past

The history of communal violence goes back to the middle of the XX century when Hindu extremists prepared their youth for fighting, boxing, wrestling and sword using. Packo Qilo (fort) became the stronghold of the extremist Hindus and a ‘no go’ area for the Sindhi Muslims. Times have changed and the Hindu extremists are no longer there, but for the Sindhi Muslims the fort still remains a ‘no go’ area now under the control of the ethnic Urdu speaking Muslim immigrants from India, who settled inside it resulting in the criminal disfigurement of this heritage site. These Indian Muslim immigrants changed the demography of Hyderabad. They belonged to the literate middle class and therefore set up small businesses and cottage industries, like carpet and bangle making. The Sindhi Muslims could not cope with the vacuum created by the emigration of the Hindu Sindhis business class. They confined themselves to the rural areas under the domination of the feudal Muslim landowners. Migrant Muslims in the battle for survival found it difficult to preserve the heritage of Hyderabad. In spite of this, they did produce some notable literary figures, artists, poets and singers. Akhtar Ansari Akbarabadi and Kabil Ajmeri are the most
prominent names among them who hailed from Hyderabad.
The 1950s and 1960s are regarded as one of the nicest period of the more recent post-partition Hyderabad. The presence of a radio station, theaters, cinema houses, bars, cafes, English medium schools, bookshops and the University of Sindh, shaped the multi-cultural ambiance of the city.
The city witnessed ethnic divide and violence in 1980s and 1990s resulting in the migration and settlement of indigenous Sindhis and Urdu speaking Indian immigrants into separate and distinct localities. The history of the ethnic divide started in 1967 AD, when there was a movement to remove the Vice Chancellor of Sindh University, Dr. Hassan Ali Abdul Rehman, and Principle Engineering College, Dr. Afghan. Sindhi nationalist students launched a protest against this move and against the one-unit government under which Sindh was merged with other provinces, and a province of West Pakistan was created by the military government. March 4th, 1967 is regarded as a memorable day in the history of Hyderabad when students buses coming from Jamshoro were stopped on the River Indus bridge by the authorities. This movement changed to an anti-military government movement. The immigrant Muslim and Pathan communities formed an alliance to counter this Sindhi movement against ‘one-unit’. Although there were movements against one another, the ethnic divide was peaceful until 1972 AD, when language riots broke out. The violence was politically motivated by leaders with vested interests, but it did play its part in the further destruction of what had remained in Hyderabad. The ransacking of the Hyderabad fort museum and burning of its building destroyed all the relics and antiquities belonging to the former Talpur ruling family. All the Sindhi heritage articles kept there were pillaged away by the mobs. No attempt was made to recover these antiquities by the authorities (fig. 23).

In these days it is not difficult for anyone to reduce to debris any of the old structures built in Victorian or Gothic styles during the colonial times using political influence or under table dealings. Public parks, cinema houses, old residential buildings or even hospitals can be demolished in no time in the name of 'development' and commercialization and replaced with ugly shopping centres (fig. 24). Buildings like Moti Mahal at Gadi Khato, Roop Mahal, Tarachand hospital, were all razed to the ground and new plazas raised there. Once the most serene area of colonial Hyderabad, the Saddar, is no longer a peaceful place. New commercial buildings have taken away the tranquillity it once possessed (fig. 25).

Hyderabad, the second largest city of Sindh, known for its cool breeze and balmy nights, is considered by its dwellers as the most beautiful in the world. It is for the Sindhis, what Paris is to the French or Berlin to the Germans. The fact however is that this city has now fallen prey to the vultures like building and land mafia, extortionists of ethnic political parties, and a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy. Neither there are proper roads now, nor civic facilities. Heaps of rubbish and debris can be seen everywhere. No rubbish bins are provided by the corrupt local government officials.
Gone are the days when the streets of Hyderabad were considered cleaner than those of Paris or Geneva.\(^7\)

Hyderabad, with its rich history and heritage has a great potential to become a very attractive tourist place in the South Asia. It has all the ingredients required to be a tourism hot spot. However, the restoration of Hyderabad to its past glory requires sincerity, dedication, political will and education of civic sense amongst both the rulers and the ruled. Unfortunately, none of these are in sight at the moment.

References

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\(^7\) Mujtaba 1998.