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HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD (Ḥaydarābād), city in the Deccan of India, situated 17°22’ N, 78°27’ E, the former capital of the Nizams (Neẓāms) of Hyderabad (ca. 1724-1948) and at present the state capital of Andhra Pradesh in southern India. Hyderabad from the time of its foundation in 999/1591 until Indian independence in 1947 had a three and a half century history as one of the major Muslim states and as a center of Indo-Persian culture in the subcontinent.

Plate 1. Čahār Menār, 1590-91, Hyderabad, India. Courtesy of the author.

Plate 2. Mecca Masjed, begun 1617, with additions in the 17th and 18th centuries, Hyderabad, India. Courtesy of the author.

i. *History*.

ii. *Monuments*.

i. HISTORY

Founded by Moḥammadqoli Qoṭbšāh (r. 988-1020/1580-1611), fifth sultan of Golconda, Hyderabad was one of those Indo-Islamic royal residences willed into being by a ruler’s fiat. Golconda, the former Qutbshahi (Qoṭbšāhi) capital,

was located about five miles west of Hyderabad, but by the late 16th century the site was becoming incommodious from overcrowding and the irregular water supply. Golconda remained, in the event of an enemy assault, a virtually impregnable citadel, but Moḥammadqoli Qoṭbšāh laid out his new garden city beside the Musi river. Inside the walls, a north-south road and an east-west road intersected at Chahar Minar (Čahār Menār), now the emblem of the modern city (Sherwani, pp. 14-20). The Qutbshahis (918-1098/1490-1686) ruled the Deccan (q.v.) from the Godavari river south as far as the Kaveri. Its wealth, which included fertile agricultural tracts, maritime trade, and diamond mines, excited the cupidity of the Mughals; and Awrangzēb (q.v.; 1658-1707) devoted much effort to its conquest, which finally occurred in 1098/1687 (Richards, pp. 35-51).

The 18th century. Following the conquest in the late 17th century, a series of Mughal governors (*sobadar*= *ṯawbadār*) ruled the Deccan, of whom the most outstanding was an experienced Turāni soldier, known by his titles of Āṣaf Jāh, Neẓām-al-Molk. Hence, his dynasty is known as the Asaf Jahi, and the rulers of the Deccan came to be referred to as Nizams. Āṣaf Jāh ruled the Deccan 1138-61/1724-48, consolidating it into an autonomous province, while continuing to recognize formal Mughal suzerainty. The most formidable threat to his position came from the ambitions of the Maratha Peshwa, Baji Rao (1133-53/1720-40). With the Marathas so formidable in the northwestern Deccan, its traditional capital, Aurangabad, was increasingly exposed to Maratha attack, so that Hyderabad gradually replaced it as the capital of the Asaf Jahi domains, now virtually independent in all but name. Āṣaf Jāh died in 1161/1748 (Yusuf Husain, pp. 247-50).

Āṣaf Jāh had laid the foundations for what should have been a powerful state, but these expectations were never fulfilled. It was imperative that his successors consolidate their predecessor's achievement by providing a stable administration. Instead, the successive reigns of Nāṣer Jang (r. 1748-50), Moẓaffar Jang (r. 1750-51), and Ṣalābat Jang (r. 1751-62) saw a continuous diminution of resources in the prevailing anarchy, with Marquis de Bussy's French contingent in the Deccan the sole sheet-anchor of stability. These years also saw a new element in Deccani politics: the battle of Ambur (1163/1749) had unequivocally demonstrated European military superiority, resulting in French hegemony in Hyderabad and Anglo-French competition in the Carnatic. Late 18th-century Hyderabad, although well-endowed with human and material resources, came to be seen as a maimed giant, surrounded by

predatory neighbors—the Peshwa, the rival French and English East India Companies, and, after 1761, Mysore (Ray, pp. 3-4).

By mid-year 1762, Ṣalābat Jang was arrested by his brother, Neẓām-ʿAli, who proclaimed himself *sobadar* of the Deccan. Neẓām-ʿAli (1762-1803), the ablest of Āṣaf Jāh's sons, ruled the Hyderabad state for over forty years, but he reigned in dangerous times: the Marathas still sought to expend southwards, rulers of Mysore were hostile neighbors, and he lived to see the final ousting of the French and the establishment of British hegemony. In the protracted struggle for mastery of south India during the four Mysore Wars, Neẓām-ʿAli's deviousness and the poor performance of his troops exposed the Hyderabad state as the weakest of the south Indian powers (Ray, pp. 4-8).

The 19th century. The reigns of Neẓām-ʿAli's successors were dogged by financial difficulties to the extent that in 1853 the province of Berar was assigned to the British East India Company to provide revenues for the Hyderabad Contingent (the status of Berar became a source of continuous friction between the Nizam's government and the Government of India until, in 1902, a *fait accompli* was negotiated, acknowledging the Nizam's sovereignty, providing a fixed annual payment for the Nizam's government, but with Berar becoming, in effect, a British province). The Nizams in this period were often belittled, yet they reigned at a time when Hyderabad shared with Delhi and Lucknow the reputation of being a center of Indo-Persian culture. Hyderabad, until the last few decades of the British Raj, when communal madness became a contagion, was renowned for its tolerance, as was the dynasty itself. Hyderabad state had an overwhelming Hindu population, but the dynasty, the ruling elite, and important elements of the urban population were Muslim. Most were Sunnites, but there was also a prominent Shiʿite community. European influences appeared with Bussy and continued with the British presence, and a spirit of genuine *convivencia* characterized the capital (Dalrymple, pp. 91, 96-98, 135-37, 228-29, and 262-63).

The first half of the 19th century witnessed growing British hostility towards the Indian princes, culminating in the annexation of Awadh in 1856: it was far from certain that the Hyderabad state would survive. Then came the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857-58 in the north. In 1853, Nāṣer-al-Dawla had appointed Salar Jang as *divān*, and he molded the Hyderabad state for the next thirty years until his death in 1883. Nāṣer-al-Dawla died on 18 May 1857, days before the outbreak of the uprising, and was succeeded by his son, Afżal-al-Dawla (1857-69). During the summer of 1857, Hyderabad city seethed with unrest, but

Sālār Jang ordered strategic arrests and dispersed the mobs. Hyderabad remained outwardly tranquil during the crisis (Thornton, pp. 272-73).

After 1858, the Government of India's policy of preserving princely rule took much of the pressure off the Nizam's government. Sālār Jang was a model administrator; and it was said that until 1870 he never spent a day away from Hyderabad city, fulfilling his ministerial duties with unwearying assiduity and an efficiency hitherto unknown in the Deccan. He did not enjoy the unqualified support of Afżal-al-Dawla, who was profoundly conservative, and it did not help that hewas a Shiʿa at a Sunnite court. The loss of Berar rankled, and it was easy for enemies to blame the minister for his failure to get it back. The *divān*'s energies were variously focused upon the promotion of railway construction, coal mining, education, and public hygiene, and he paid particular attention to improving the civil service; but his policies, energetically enforced within Hyderabad city, often faltered in the districts. For the most part, he enjoyed the unqualified support of the British Resident and the Government of India. However, his attempt to establish a contingent of "Reformed Troops," officered by Europeans and intended to replace the Hyderabad Contingent, was looked at with suspicion in Calcutta (Thornton, pp. 275-76).

In 1869, Afżal-al-Dawla died and was succeeded by his three-year-old son, Maḥbub-ʿAli (1869-1911). Sālār Jang's power naturally increased. From this time on, his policies became more progressive, and he was less pliable towards the British: in 1874, for example, he presented a memorandum to the Government of India demanding the restoration of Berar and the disbandment of the Hyderabad Contingent. Inevitably, the memorandum was rejected at the highest level by the Secretary of State for India (Lord Salisbury). Despite these disputes, Sālār Jang and Hyderabad remained synonymous until his death on 8 February1883. Maḥbub- ʿAli Khan was formally installed as Nizam by Lord Ripon on 5 February 1884. He pursued the same enlightened policies as Sālār Jang but, like the latter, was hamstrung by financial exigencies. In retrospect, however, his reign seemed a kind of "Edwardian Age" before unbridled nationalism and communalism brought down the fragile structure. In his time, prior to World War I, the Hyderabad state comprised 83,000 square miles, a population of over 13,000,000 (87 percent of which was Hindu and 10.3 percent Muslim), and with an annual revenue of approximately three million pounds sterling. It was as large as Turkey, Italy, or Great Britain, was the premier princely state of British India, and, worldwide, was one of the few

surviving Muslim monarchies. This was to be the inheritance of the twenty-six-year-old Nizam, ʿOṯmān-ʿAli Khan, in 1911 (Lynton, pp. 267-70).

The 20th century. Applauded by the British Government for Hyderabad's contribution to World War I and for the founding of Osmania University (1918), the new Nizam's reign seemed likely to prove a continuation of the enlightened rule of his father, and of Sālār Jang before him. Well educated, thoughtful, and shrewd, ʿOṯmān-ʿAli Khan developed as an able administrator and a very able financial administrator. However, his deep-rooted distaste for much that was happening in twentieth-century India led him to cultivate a detachment that conveyed the impression that he was both above and beyond the fray. His position was, of course, anomalous; no believer in democracy, he was a benign Muslim autocrat ruling a state with an overwhelming Hindu majority in an age of passionate nationalism, with which he had little sympathy, and of virulent communalism, which he could not comprehend. Through the decades, he sought to find his way through the labyrinthine twists and turns of the Indian nationalist movement as this impinged upon his state. As Indian independence approached, reckless advisers sought to persuade him that Hyderabad was large enough not to accede to the Indian Union but "to go it alone" as an independent country. Amid a rising level of violence, of which both Hindus and Muslims were guilty, there came the inevitable "police action" and occupation of Hyderabad by the Indian Army in September 1948, and on 24 November 1949 the Nizam issued a *farmān* of formalaccession to the Indian Union. Prime Minister Nehru treated him decently enough. From April 1950 to 1 November 1956, he was Rajpramukh of the Hyderabad state, but thereafter, in the reorganization of the Indian states along linguistic lines, Hyderabad was merged with Andhra Pradesh. Offered the new post of state governor, the Nizam declined on health grounds, thereafter living in quiet retirement until his death in the King Kothi palace on 24 February 1967.

Hyderabad, like Delhi and Lucknow during the period when they were mediatized states under East India Company paramountcy, provided a uniquely creative milieu for a late Mughal, Persianized culture, infused with both indigenous Indian and even European elements, a multi-faceted culture which embraced poetry and belles-lettres, painting, music, and dance. The commercial and military priorities of the Company created a cultural space into which flowed a sensual, Mughal *fin-de-siècle* sensibility, for which Hyderabad and its court offered a suitably nurturing environment.

See also DECCAN.

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ii. MONUMENTS

Moḥammadqoli Qoṭbšāh (r. 988-1020/1580-1611) founded Hyderabad in 999/1590-91. By the late 16th century, the population of Golconda, the Qoṭbšāh’s capital, had swelled. Overcrowding and lack of water led the sultan and his advisors to conceive a new city that could house the royal court, including the civil and military bureaucracy, as well as the overflow population from the older hill fort. They chose a location four miles east of Golconda, along the south bank of the Musi river, on the east-west highway leading to the port of Masulipatam. The city, which Mir Moʾmen, one of Moḥammadqoli’s nobles and an Iranian émigré, praised as “a new Isfahan,” became a showcase for Qutbshahi architecture and town planning (Husain,

2000, p. 25). Hyderabad, not walled until the mid-18th century, spread out with water tanks, palace gardens, orchards, and squares (*meydān*), creating a veritable city of gardens (this characteristic provides one explanation for Hyderabad's original nickname, Bāḡnagar; Sherwani, 1974, pp. 339-48; Tavernier, p. 132). The other dominant characteristics expressed by the built environment were the Qoṭbšāh's Shiʿite affiliation and Persian cultural links.

Gardens. While many of the religious or religious-related monuments have survived, the original gardens are gone. Travelers' accounts, dynastic histories, and poetry by Sultan Moḥammadqoli, however, provide some idea of what they were like (Neẓām-al-Din Aḥmad, pp. 44-73; Nath, pp. 131-73; Sarkar, pp. 234-47; Tavernier, pp. 131-32; Moḥammadqoli Qoṭbšāh, pp. 123-208). Most of the gardens and pleasure palaces were placed on the city's outskirts, around large water tanks, such as the Ḥosayn Sagar, which was constructed during the reign of Ebrāhim Qoṭbšāh (1550-80). The Qutbshahis located the tanks and orchards in low areas to take advantage of water runoff and then built multistoried palaces on nearby hills that formed natural lookouts (Husain, 2000, p. 25). The well-known 19th-century Falaknemā Palace, for example, sits on the foundation of Moḥammadqoli's three-story Koh-e Tur Palace. Another group of garden palaces and parks was constructed along the Musi river that formed the city's northern boundary. These structures included the Amin Bāḡ, which housed the Safavid envoy Imāmqoli Beg during his six years stay at the Qutb-shahi court, the Naddi Maḥall, built by Moḥammadqoli, an area for playing polo, a square for ʿĀšurā ceremonies, and the Bāḡ-e Moḥammadšāhi, a pleasure garden exalted by Moḥammadqoli in one of his poems (Husain, 2000, pp. 36-97).

Čār Menār. Hyderabad's centerpiece, the first monument built in the city and its primary landmark today, is theČār Menār. Constructed of plaster and stone in the years 1590-91, it forms a triumphal arch of sorts with 36-foot archways on each of its four 60-foot sides framing the crossroads of the city's major thoroughfares. Decorative stucco standards (*ʿalam*, q.v.), linking the monument with the Qutbshahis' Shiʿite faith, cap the apex of the pointed arches. The Čār Menār's upper level, the western side of which contains a mosque, displays an arcaded balcony with a smaller arcade and perforated screen above. Possibly because of its mosque, the monument and crossroads are shifted ten degrees from the cardinal directions, roughly aligned with Mecca. Corner minarets, containing spiral staircases to the upper level, rise 160 feet from the ground and are embellished with distinctly Qutbshahi-style triple tiers of balconies

and domed finials. Replastering work was done over the centuries, and in 1889 clocks were set into the center of each side, but otherwise the Čār Menār remains much as when it was built.

Čār Kamān. This is an open square, located 80 yards north of the Čār Minār and demarcated by four 50-foot high arches placed 110 yards from the square's center, which originally held a large octagonal fountain. The Čār Kamān, called the Jilu Ḵāna when it was constructed in 1592, marks a second major crossroads, giving Hyderabad a double cross or gridiron plan. The Čār Kamān, with its central fountain flanked by trees and four roads leading out, has led some scholars to speculate that the royal builders intended Hyderabad as a replica of paradise (Pieper, pp. 46-51). The plaza's eastern arch, containing an elevated chamber for drummers, led to mili-tary barracks and an open area for the viewing of troops, while the western arch led to the royal residence. The gated royal compound, which no longer survives, covered an area of 1,000 square yards leading up to the Musi river. It included several multistoried palaces, such as the Dād Maḥall (lit. Palace of Justice), located close to the main gate, so that residents with complaints could have easy access (at least theoretically) to the sultan (Husain, 2000, p. 308). When the city's main layout was complete, Moḥammadqoli ordered the construction of 14,000 shops as well as mosques, schools, and caravansaries, along the main roads stretching out from the two squares (Shorey, p. 23).

Royal ʿĀšur-ḵāna. The first purely religious structure to be built in Hyderabad was the Royal ʿĀšur-ḵāna, which perhaps displays the Qutbshahis' Shiʿite affiliation and Persian cultural bonds more strongly than any other monument. The largest of all the *ʿāšur-ḵāna*s built by the Qutbshahi, it was begun in 1593andessentially completed by 1595, with tiles added in 1611 and extensive repairs and additions carried out through the Qutbshahi and Āṣafjāhi periods. Inscriptions adorning the complex record many of the building stages (Bilgrami, 1927, pp. 21-25). The main structure, part of the initial construction, houses copies of the standards carried by Imam Ḥosayn b. ʿAli, and it was used for the events marking the ʿĀšurā, the 10th of Moḥarram. It stands on a raised platform and consists primarily of a flat-roofed hall supported by four pillars. The hall's interior, including three niches on the west wall and one niche each on the north and south walls, is covered with cut enamel tiles, considered by many to be the finest in India (Michell and Zebrowski, p. 138). The tiles, Persianate in style and in the colors of blue, white, yellow, green, and terracotta, are arranged in large panels. One panel

depicts a giant standard containing a mirrored Arabic inscription and flanked by two smaller standards. Another panel contains a vase of plenty design, while others depict fine geometric and stylized floral patterns.

Jāmeʿ Masjed. Southeast of the Čār Kamān and northeast of the Čār Menār stands the city's congregational mosque, built by the noble Amir-al-Molk in 1006/1597-98. The date is recorded in a chronogram within a Persian verse inscribed in elegant *nastaʿliq* on a black basalt slab above the entrance. The mosque's prayer niche (*meḥrāb*) contains a second inscription, verses from the Qurʾān written by the calligrapher Ḥosayn b. Moḥammad Fakkār Širāzi. The mosque consists of a prayer hall, approximately 72 x 32 feet, overlooking a paved court of 74 x 70 feet. A central double arch (consisting of a pointed arch with a secondary shallow or "false" cusped arch above) and six flanking, smaller double arches pierce the hall's façade. Corner minarets with colonettes, demarcating the upper stages in the typical Qutbshahi style, spring from octagonal bases at each side of the façade.

Dār'l-šefāʾ. In 1595 Moḥammadqoli oversaw the construction of the Dār'l-šefāʾ, a hospital and teaching center for Greek (*yunāni*) and Aruyvedic medicine situated next to the sultan's garden on the banks of the Musi river. The complex originally consisted of a two-story hospital around a square courtyard, a mosque, an inn, and a bathhouse (*ḥammām*). Only the mosque and hospital survive, and these are in bad repair. The mosque has tall minarets and enamel tile medallions ornamenting the three arches of its façade. A large gate on the hospital's northern side leads to its 175-foot square courtyard. The hospital's north wing contains eight rooms on each of the two floors, while the remaining three wings contain twelve rooms per floor.

Makka Masjed. The most important structure built during the reign of Moḥammad Qoṭbšāh (1612-26), Mo-ḥammadqoli's successor and son-in-law, and the largest mosque in Hyderabad, is the Makka Masjed. Begun in 1617 on a site southwest of the Čār Menār, the mosque has a 225 x 180-foot prayer hall that reaches 75 feet in height. The hall is three bays deep and five rows wide, with five large, airy, pointed arches piercing its façade. The interior bays are capped with domes, except for the bay in front of the prayer niche that bears a pointed vault. Minarets with arcaded balconies buttress the sides of the façade. Constructed entirely of dressed stone rather than rubble and plaster, the mosque was not completed until 1693, when the Mughal emperor Awrangzēb (r. 1659-1707) added domes to the minarets and a gateway. In the 18th century the Āṣafjāhi rulers built an enclosure in the mosque's southern

courtyard for use as a burial place for members of the royal family.

Later architecture. The reigns of ʿAbd-Allāh (1626-72) and Abu'l-Ḥasan Qoṭbšāh (1672-87) witnessed the construction of many moderate-sized structures throughout Hyderabad and its suburbs. The buildings mostly conform to the established Qutbshahi style marked by large multi-stage corner minarets, tall, narrow façades, pointed arches, bulbous domes set on rows of petals, and extensive surface decoration in cut-plaster (the incised decoration became increasingly profuse as the dynasty pro-gressed). Two prominent examples are the Toli Mosque (1671) and Ḵārati Begom Mosque (1626). After their invasion in 1687, the Mughals had the Qutbshahi palaces destroyed and the regional capital moved to Awrangā-bād, though they did augment Hyderabad's architecture by completing the Makka Masjed. In response to Maratha attacks, the first Āṣafjāhi ruler, Neẓām-al-Molk (r. 1724-48) had walls with thirteen gates constructed around Hyderabad. The second Āṣafjāhi, Neẓām ʿAli Khan (r. 1762-1803) returned the capital to Hyderabad, after which the city again became a showplace for royal architecture. The Āṣafjāhis and their courtiers favored European styles, particularly the Neoclassical, as evidenced by the Čaw-maḥalla, the Falaknemā Palace, and the palace of Sir Salar Jung (now the Salar Jung Museum). In the early 20th century, the seventh and last Neẓām, Mir Oṯmān ʿAli Khan (1911-50), patronized a series of civic monuments, including the railway station, High Court of Justice, and Oṯmāniya Hospital. The British architect of the monuments, Vincent Esch, employed an Indo-Saracenic style that incorporated many elements of Qutbshahi decoration in an effort to link Hyderabad's Indo-Persian past and 20th-century present (Tillotson, pp. 31-45).

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