



KABUL V. MONUMENTS

KABUL

v. Monuments of Kabul City

The modern city of Kabul has expanded to such an extent in the last three decades that it now spills out from the Kabul valley. This article focuses on the major monuments in and around the Old City of Kabul and the most significant *Dorrāni* dynastic monuments and mausolea.

BĀLĀ HEṢĀR AND KABUL CITY WALLS

The Bālā Heṣār fortress is the heart of the ancient city of Kabul (for ground plan see [Figure 1](#) and Ball, 1982, II, plan 35-1; Sturt, 1839; Woodburn, pp. 8-9, 33, figs. 5 and 27). It is located on a ridge on the northeastern slopes of the Šēr Darvāza mountain. Discoveries of Achaemenid and Indo-Greek coins suggest a settlement existed here from the 6th century BCE (Ball, 1982, I, no. 483; idem, 2008, pp. 218-19; Fussman, II/1, p. 83; Hulin, pp. 174-76). Trenches cut in 2007 for planned new military buildings (since halted) produced samples of ‘late Kushan’ ceramics as well as foundations of medieval and Mughal buildings (DAFA, 2008; Thomas and Gascoigne, pp. 2-5, figs. 2, 4).

The Bālā Heṣār consists of two sections, the Bālā Heṣār-e Pā’in “Lower Bālā Heṣār” and Bālā Heṣār-e Bālā “Upper Bālā Heṣār” (see [PLATE I](#)). The lower Bālā Heṣār covers a low, terraced mound on the north, west, and east faces of the citadel and encompasses approximately 42 hectares (cf. Hough, p. 285).



The high, thick stone and packed mud walls that are still visible date mainly from the mid-18th to late 19th centuries (Atkinson, 1842b, pp. 277-79; Bucherer, RE 60; Masson, 1842, II, p. 250; Woodburn, pp. 10-13, figs. 6, 7, 9, 12). The slope of the hill below the walls has been enhanced to form a glacis. On the south side are the remnants of an early 19th-century *faussebraye* (a second, lower rampart; Hough, p. 287; Masson, 1842, II, p. 250; Woodburn, pp. 7, 15). The outer defenses were once surrounded by a wet ditch (now dry), while the south side of the citadel was protected by the Ḥašmat Khan marsh (Bucherer, RE 56; Burke, no. 173/Photo 430/3[5].; Sturt, 1839).

Both outer and inner walls are punctuated by D-shaped bastions (Hough, facing page 67; Masson, 1842, II, p. 257; *idem*, Sketches, no. 35; Sturt, 1839). The interior of the walls included vaulted casements with angled fire loops. The bastions and walls are surmounted by plastered mud and brick parapets with merlons and angled, hooded fire points (Atkinson, 1842a, pl. 20; Burke, no. 179/Photo 430/3[22]; Masson, 1842, II, p. 250; Woodburn, pp. 11-12 and figs. 9, 11). The Mughals substantially strengthened the outer line of walls and extended the area of the lower fort northwards. Jahāngīr constructed new palaces, audience halls, and a garden (*čahārbāg*). Aurangzeb later added a mosque (Atkinson, 1842a, pl. 20; *Tūzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, I, p. 118; Burnes, I, p. 156; Woodburn, pp. 20-21, see fig. 28 for reconstruction of the Mughal complex).

From 1773 onward, the Dorrānis replaced a number of the Mughal buildings and built new residences in the lower Bālā Ḥešār (Atkinson, 1842b, pp. 277-79, 323; Masson, 1842, I, pp. 256-57) and on the eastern and southern walls (Bucherer, RE 58, 62; Burke, no. 179/Photo 430/3[22]). In the 1830s some 1,000 shops were located in the eastern and western quarter of the Bālā Ḥešār-e Pā'in. There were also barracks, stables, a parade ground, and administrative buildings (Atkinson, 1842a, plate 20; Bucherer, RE 71; Hough, p. 285; Masson, 1842, II, p. 255; Schinasi, p. 43). An Armenian quarter (*maḥāla*) and church was located inside the Šāh Šahid (eastern) gate (Allen, pp. 311-12; Burnes, I, p. 150; Lee, 2002, pp. 158-59; Masson, 1842, II, p. 255). In late 1879, General Roberts ordered the leveling of the bazaars, the neglected Mughal and Dorrāni structures, and the Armenian church (Bucherer, RE 54; Gray, p. 209; Lee, 2002, pp. 160-61; Moncrieff, p. 89; Schinasi, p. 43; Woodburn, pp. 32-33, fig. 45).

Only fragments of Mughal and 18th-19th century structures survive. They include: elements of the Darvāza-e Kāši and Darvāza-e Šāh Šahid barbicans (Bucherer, RE 59-60, 67; Burke, no. 179/Photo 430/3[22]; Woodburn, fig. 16), sections of the parapet, and fragmentary tile work (Woodburn, pp. 11-12, 16



and figs. 10-12, 17-19). Notable 19th-century structures such as Šāh Šojā's Audience Hall (Atkinson, 1842a, plate 22; Bucherer, RE 66; Burke, no. 285/Photo 43/3[29]; MacGregor, p. 107; Rattray, pl. 3; Schinasi, p. 43) and the Residency where Maj. Cavagnari and his escort of Guides were massacred in 1879 (Bucherer, RE 63-65; Woodburn, pp. 27, 30, see fig. 41 for reconstruction) have not survived.

The Bālā Ḥesār-e Bālā, or upper fortress, lies on an elevated knoll in the southeast corner of the citadel. It is enclosed by its own wall with three-quarter circle bastions. The ruined main gate, the Darvāza-e Kāši is located in the angle of the south and east walls (Bucherer, RE 55; Burke, nos. 214-15, 218/Photo 430/3[7-8, 4]; Masson, 1842, I, p. 254; Sturt, 1839). Timur Šāh Dorrāni and his successors turned the upper Bālā Ḥesār into a state prison (Atkinson, 1842b, p. 278; Forster, II, p. 83; Masson, 1842, II, p. 253). One of the two wells, near the Darvāza-e Kāši, became the notorious Siyā Čāh dungeon (Burnes, I, p. 156; Lee, 1996, p. 555; Martin, pp. 149-50; Masson, 1842, II, p. 254). The fort was finally abandoned as a fortified royal residence in the 1890s (Schinasi, p. 72).

Above the main fortress on a knoll of the Šēr Darvāza are the remains of a brick and mud plaster tower known as the Borj-e Laḡlaḡu, Borj-e Hulāgu, or Bālā Borj (Burke, no. 212/Photo 430/3[85]; Masson, 1842, II, pp. 250-51; Woodburn, p. 13), which overlays a stupa, part of the K^wāja Šafā complex (Fussman, II/1, pp. 83-84). In the early 19th century, the keep was linked to the Bālā Ḥesār by a line of parallel mud walls (Bucherer, RE 56; Burke, no. 229/Photo 430/3[9]; Sturt, 1839). The tower's function was to strengthen defenses on the southwest from artillery and musket fire laid down from the Šēr Darvāza heights (Masson, 1842, II, pp. 250-51).

The walls of the old city run for some 5 km to the west of the fortress from the Borj-e Hulāgu (AKTC, no. 14, 2008, p. 2). One line runs up the ridgeline of the Šēr Darvāza to the Taḡt-e Šāh peak. A second line descends into the Deh Mazang gorge, where it crosses the Kabul river, and ascends the Kuh-e Asmāi and down its north face, terminating west of Deh Afḡānān (AKTC, no. 14, 2008, p. 2; Caspari, pp. 33-36; Dupree, pp. 99-100). The walls were once punctuated by six gateways, none of which have survived. Stone and mud plaster fortifications along their length give a [Hephthalite](#) (6th cent. CE) date in some sections (Ball, 1982, I, no. 483; idem, 2008, p. 218). The walls must be considered multi-period, since they have been repaired and rebuilt on many occasions.



BUDDHIST AND HINDU-SHAHI MONUMENTS

Kabul's main Buddhist complexes are located in southeastern Kabul in an arc along the eastern face of the Šēr Darvāza mountain and the Taḳt-e Šāh (for site distribution, see Ball, 1982, II, Map 110; Fussman, II/1, p. 80, *idem*, II/2, pl. 3). The “Ḥašmāt Kān” complex (Ball, 1982, I, no. 418), lies to the south of the marsh of the same name and consists of a series of monastic complexes (ca. 1st-5th cents. CE) mostly overbuilt by modern shrines, graves, and houses. The Panja-ye Šāh-e Mardān group is located on and around the ridge to the west of the shrine of the same name and stretches up the Taḳt-e Šāh as far as Tepe Naranj (Ball, 1982, I, no. 1905; Fussman, II/1, pp. 85-93, *idem*, II/2, pls. 11, 82; Kāli, pp. 39-40). Masson's excavations uncovered arched recesses, clay statues, wall paintings, and manuscript fragments (Masson, 1842, II, pp. 235-36; *idem*, III, pp. 93-96; *idem*, Sketches, no. 4). Recent excavations, from 2004, have uncovered a substantial monastic complex which includes cylindrical, diaper masonry stupas and clay statues (Fussman, II/1, pp. 86-90; *idem*, II/2, pls. 83-87).

The Kṵwāja Šafā monastic complex is situated some 800 m northwest of the Bālā Ḥesār (Ball, 2008, pp. 218-19; Fussman, II/1, pp. 81-83; Masson, 1842, II, p. 252; *idem*, III, pp. 92-98), to the east of the shrine of Kṵwāja Šafā. Excavations by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology (commenced 2004) have shown the site to be extensive with at least one diaper masonry monastery and a large stupa (3.9 m × 3.10 m). Preliminary dating indicates two phases of construction (4th-5th cents. CE; Fussman, II/1, p. 82). The unexcavated site of Tepe Kāzāna, at the extreme northern tip of the Šēr Darvāza, today lies under a hospital. The site's dating (5th-7th cent. CE) is based on the chance discovery of some fifty figurines (Ball, 1982, I, no. 1168; N. Dupree, L. Dupree, and Motamedi, pp. 103-5, fig. 44; Fussman, II/1, pp. 80-81; Tissot, pp. 347-51).

A further two diaper masonry stupas and monasteries complexes are located on the south face of Tepe Marajān ('Maranjān [sic] 1 and 2') below the tomb of King Nādir Šāh (Ball, 1982, I, no. 1173 and II, plan 49; Fussman and Le Berre, pp. 95-99). 'Maranjān 2,' the earlier site (Kushan, 1st-3rd cents. CE), is situated at the base of the slope and consists of a monastery and seven stupas. A reliquary was found inside the main stupa (Fussman, II/1, pp. 99-103; *idem*, II/2, pls. 76 [ground plan] and 77-81). The monastery at 'Maranjān 1' (3rd-4th and 5th-6th cents. CE) to the east was ornamented with wall frescoes. Two hordes of Kushano-Sasanid and Sasanid coins were recovered from the site (Carl and Hakin, pp. 7-12; Dollot, pp. 284-5; Fussman, II/1, pp. 95-99 and II/2,



pls. 74-75; Fussman and Le Berre, pp. 95-99).

TIMURID AND MUGHAL

No pre-Timurid Islamic monuments survive in Kabul city. The construction of the Bālā Jui canal, is attributed to the reign of Uluġ Beg (reigned 1411-1449 CE; *Bābor-nāma*, tr., pp. 200-201). It brought water from the Logar river to the Bāġ-e Bābor and terminates in the upper Bālā Heṣār (Masson, 1842, II, pp. 284-85; Woodburn, p. 25). Scattered monumental fragments of a Timurid structure (4 m high, 11 m × 6 m base), probably a recreational pavilion, were recorded on the peak of Taḳt-e Šāh (Ball, 2008, p. 220; *Bābor-nāma*, tr., p. 200; Masson, 1842, II, pp. 234-35, 284-85; idem, Sketches, nos. 48-50). The baked brick, single domed tombs of Šēr-e Surḳ and the Ziārat-e Seh Uluġ in the Ḥašmat Khan area are also attributed (stylistically) to the late Timurid period (Ball, 1982, I, no. 418; Burke, nos. 180, 181/Photo 430/3 [21, 20]; Dupree, p. 113; Ḳalil, pp. 30-31, 47-49). Excavations within the grave enclosure of the Bāġ-e Bābor have uncovered foundations of a Timurid structure, possibly a tomb (Franke-Vogt, Barti, and Urban, p. 545 and fig. 7).

The most significant and best preserved Mughal monument of Kabul city is the Bāġ-e Bābor, “Bābor’s Garden,” on the western slope of the Šēr Darvāza (for ground plans, see: Franke-Vogt, Barti, and Urban, p. 540; Leslie, pp. 5, 16-19; Parpagliolo, plans 1, 3-6). The present garden extends to some 11 hectares and was laid out during Bābor’s reign as a *čahārbāġ* on the site of a Timurid tomb-garden (*Bābor-nāma*, tr., appendix V, p. lxxx; Franke-Vogt, Barti, and Urban, p. 545; Masson, 1842, II, p. 240; Parpagliolo, pp. 10, 12). German excavations since 2004 indicate that it overlays a substantial Kushano-Sasanid (3rd-4th cents. CE) Buddhist complex (DAI). Bābor’s own grave (d. 937/1530) lies on the fourteenth terrace with the graves of four of his descendants nearby (Atkinson, 1842a, pls. 23-24; *Bābor-nāma*, tr., pp. 709-10 and appendix V, p. lxxx; Bogdanov, pp. 6-12; Darmesteter, pp. 493, 496-99, 501-2; Ḳalil, pp. 219-21; Jackson, p. 199; Schinasi, pp. 33-35). In 1016/1607 Jahāngir ordered memorial stones placed at the head and foot of Bābor’s grave and a marble screen to surround the graves (*Bābor-nāma*, tr., p. 711; Bell, p. 143; Bogdanov, pp. 3-4; Darmesteter, pp. 494-96; Jackson, pp. 202-4; Ḳalil, pp. 218-19; Masson, 1842, II, pp. 238-39; idem, Sketches, no. 46; Sannino, pp. 51-55; Zajadacz-Hastenrath, p. 136). A prayer platform (Hindi/Urdu *chabūtrā*) was built on the fifteenth terrace and a cistern dug on the ninth terrace (AKTC, No. 1, 2006, p. 1; Franke-Vogte, Barti, and Urban, p. 547; Parpagliolo, p. 10). In 1638 Šāh Jahān commissioned a small but magnificent mosque on the thirteenth terrace faced in white marble (PLATE II;



Bābor-nāma, tr., appendix V., pp. lxxx-lxxxi; Parpagliolo, pp. 10-11). Three open bays with cusped horseshoe arches surround the prayer area on three sides. A low parapet is capped by carved finials (Atkinson, 1842b, p. 308; idem, 1842a, pl. 24; Burke, no. 256/Photo 430/3(39); Niedermayer and Diez, pl. 36; Vigne, p. 154; Zander, figs. 30-32). An inscription on the east-facing parapet, dated 1056/1646, commemorates Šāh Jahān's conquest of [Balkh](#) (Darmesteter, pp. 499-50; Jackson, pp.198-99; Thomas, p. 165).

In the 1890s Amir ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān Khan (r. 1880-1901) constructed a pavilion on the site of Jahāngir's reservoir, consisting of a central wooden veranda and pillars with residential wings on the north and south (Atkinson, 1842a, pl. 23; Franke-Vogt, Barti, and Urban, pp. 548-52; Niedermayer and Diez, pl. 35; Leslie, p. 12; Parpagliolo, p. 13 and figs. 3, 7-10, 13, 20-21). Much of the original latticework, the wooden pillars, and original tile work were replaced with modern materials during the ‘restoration’ of 1997 (SPACH, no. 4, 1998, p. 6). The Aga Khan Trust for Culture has now restored the surviving structure (AKTC, no. 3, 2006, p. 1). Fountains, in the European style (now replaced with replicas of original Mughal pools and channels) were also installed on the lower terraces (Niedermayer and Diez, pl. 31; Parpagliolo, p. 64 and fig. 3). ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān Khan also constructed a brick and mud plaster palace for his wife, Bibi Ḥalima, in the southeast corner (Niedermayer and Diez, pl. 34; Leslie, p. 2; Parpagliolo, pp. 12 [plan 1], 21 and fig. 2; Schinasi, pp. 83-84). Recently restored, the palace is now used for cultural functions (AKTC, no. 5, 2007, p. 1; idem, 15, 2008, p. 1; Leslie, pp.18, 21). By the 1830s the graves, mosque, and gardens were neglected (Atkinson, 1842a, pl. 24; Burnes, I, pp. 141-42; Kennedy, II, p. 86; Masson, 1842, II, pp. 239-40). A series of earthquakes between 1830 and 1895 caused the collapse of much of the perimeter walling, the grave enclosure, and the mosque (Burke, nos. 256-58/Photo 430/3[39, 45, 88]; Parpagliolo, p. 11; Zajadacz-Hastenrath, p. 136). The mosque was restored in 1964-66 by [IsMEO](#) (Zander, figs. 20-31) but further damage was caused in the fighting of 1992-95, when the garden was on the front line. In 2002-08, as part of a wider rehabilitation program, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture installed a replica of the funerary screen and removed the 20th-century gazebo over Bābor's grave (Bogdanov, pls. 1a-1b; Dupree, pp. 76-77; Niedermayer and Diez, pl. 37; Parpagliolo, p. 14 and figs. 26-29).

M. Schinasi (p. 216) provides an inventory of Kabul's Mughal buildings, but most have been pulled down or built over during the 19th and 20th centuries. Nine of the ten Timurid-Mughal gardens identified by Beveridge survive



merely as names of suburbs (*Bābor-nāma*, tr., appendix V., p. lxxx). Some Mughal elements of the Čahār Čatta bazaar survive (Bell, p. 94; Dupree, pp. 95-96; Saleq, pp. 5-12), though much of what is left is from the mid-19th-century rebuild (Schinasi, pp. 50-51). Constructed ca. 1641-52, the bazaar consisted of nine subdivisions, with two octagonal market spaces (*čawk*) at either end and a mosque (Atkinson, 1842b, pp. 273-74; Forster, II, p. 80; Kennedy, II, p. 98; Masson, 1842, II, pp. 264, 267-68; Mitford, pp. 88-96; Schinasi, p. 216; Vigne, p. 179). The mosque and bazaars were destroyed in 1842 by Gen. Pollock as retribution for the assassination of Sir William McNaughten (Kaye, II, pp. 638-40). Monumental fragments of a white marble Mughal mosque were recorded in and around the shrine of K̄wāja Zanbur, east of the Airport Road, including foliate friezes, chevron pillars, stalactite and vine-leaf lintels (Lee, 1985). A white marble dado, parts of which retain traces of fine decoration, has survived in the Goldasta mosque in the Tandursāzi quarter of the old city (Jolyon Leslie, personal communication, 2009). Clusters of Mughal graves and tombs are scattered around the old city. The Zīarat-e Seh Uluḡ contains the tombs of descendants of Uluḡ Beg (Dupree, p. 113; K̄alil, pp. 43-44). Significant assemblages of Mughal graves are located in the cemeteries of Dōst Kāvand Vali of Deh Afḡānān, Seyed Ja‘far Āqā in Andarābi, and outside the city at K̄wāja Musāfer at the junction of the Ġazni-Paḡmān Road (K̄alil, pp. 193-98, 236-37).

DORRĀNI DYNASTIC AND NATIONALISTIC MONUMENTS

When Kabul became the capital of the Dorrāni kingdom, a significant amount of rebuilding took place, which resulted in the loss of many earlier monuments, particularly Mughal. While space does not allow discussion or an inventory of every Dorrāni monument, Schinasi has a comprehensive inventory of civil, dynastic, and nationalist monuments, including all known royal graves in Kabul from the late 18th century to the early 20th century (Schinasi, pp. 216-28).

The *maqbara* “mausoleum” of King Timur Šāh Saduzāy (d. 1207/1793), lies on the right (south) bank of the Kabul river in Čahārbāḡ, on the site of a built-over Timurid-Mughal garden (*Bābor-nāma*, tr., pp. 269, 346 and appendix V, p. lxxx; Burke, no. 241/Photo 430/3[40]; K̄alil, p. 155; Samizay, p. 42; Schinasi, pp 55-56; *Tūzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, I, p. 106). This imposing mausoleum is in the style of late 18th-century Mughal India, though the recessed, arched niches also evoke earlier, Timurid, forms. The grave is located in a crypt under a massive octagonal brick structure supporting double domes (Burke, no. 241/Photo



430/3[40]; Dupree, p. 76d). The mausoleum was never completed (Masson, 1842, II, pp. 227, 282-83; Schinasi, pp. 55-56). It was restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture during 2003-05 in a newly reclaimed park (AKTC, no. 6, 2007). The graves of three of Timur's sons, including Šāh Šojā'-al-Molk (d. 1842), lie outside the tomb (Kāḷil, p. 155; Schinasi, p. 226). The mausoleum of Sardār Solṭān Moḥammad Telāi (1795-1861), half-brother of Amir Dōst Moḥammad Khan (Dupree, p. 118, who erroneously has great-grandfather; Schinasi, p. 211) lies on the southeastern side of Tepe Maranjān. This plain brick and stone, octagonal mausoleum is surrounded by a portico. The dome (now almost destroyed) was added in ca. 1890 (Schinasi, pp. 59-60 and pl. VII).

Around thirty major dynastic, administrative and religious buildings were commissioned during the reign of Amir 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Khan (r. 1880-1901; Schinasi, pp. 217-18). His most significant architectural achievement, inasmuch as it changed the face of the center of modern Kabul, was the construction of a series of palaces and administrative buildings on the left (north) bank of the Kabul river. Now heavily encroached on by recent, unplanned urban development, the complex original stretched from Murād Kāna in the east to Deh Afḡānān in the west. At the heart of this new dynastic city lies the heavily fortified Arg, commonly referred to as the Delkuša Palace, though the Delkuša is, in fact, a distinct structure within the Arg complex. The Arg walls enclose an area of several hectares and includes administrative buildings, palaces, private residencies, audience halls and women's quarters (*ḥarāmsarāi*). It is still the official residence of the president of Afghanistan (Schinasi, pp. 74-79). The crenellated walls of the Arg are punctuated at intervals with low round turrets and fortified gateways (Bell, pp. 55 for panorama photograph; Gray, pp. 35-39, 434). Inside the walls, the Amir's palace, or Kōti, is an octagonal pavilion. Modifications made in 1928 surrounded it with a double height veranda and carved wooden pillars (Schinasi, pl. III). The roof domes are said to have been inspired by Russian Orthodox church architecture (Gray, p. 39; Schinasi, pp. 73-76 and pl. 3).

Outside the Arg walls, on the south side, on the western side of the park known as the Bāḡ-e Zarneḡār, is the mausoleum of Amir 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khan (d. 1901; Bell, p. 142; Dupree, pp. 67-68; Kāḷil, pp. 165-68; Schinasi, pp. 82-83 and pl. 6). Completed in 1892, it was known originally as the Bostān Sarāi, a semi-private palace (Martin, pp. 36-38). It incorporates elements of both European and Mughal architecture. Made of red brick, a material favored by the Amir, the entrance on the south is through a vaulted space with similar



verandas on the east and west facades, with repeated, shuttered windows in the latter (AKTC, no. 12, 2008, p. 1; Schinasi, p. 82, pls. 5, 6). The central dome, corner towers and finials were added when the building was transformed into a mausoleum in 1902-05 (see [PLATE III](#); Dupree, pp. 67-68; Kalil, pp. 165-66; Schinasi, p. 111). At the same time a mosque was added on the west (Schinasi, p. 111). The mausoleum was badly damaged by a British bomb in 1919 (Adamec, p. 117). On the west side of the Bāḡ-e Zarnegār is the Golistānsarāi, a small, single-storey, square palace built for the Amir's queen, Bibi Ḥalima. It is said to have been designed by a Bukharan architect. Sections of original foliate stucco and carved wooden doors and frames still survive (Dupree, pp. 769-70; Schinasi, pp. 82-83 and pl. 1).

The Šahr Ārā palace and garden, in the modern district of the same name in northern Kabul, was constructed in 1899-1900 and was named after the Mughal garden of the same name, which was located on the left (north) bank of the Kabul river (Dupree, p. 128; Schinasi, pp. 32-33, 89 n. 105; *Tūzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, I, p. 106). Much of the late 19th-century palace and gardens is overbuilt, partly by the Malalāy women's hospital and the barracks to the east. An octagonal red brick tower, the Borj-e Šahr Ārā, and a fortified gateway, now used as the entrance to the barracks, as well as sections of the walls, in poor condition, have survived (Ārām, pp. 62-66; Schinasi, p. 89 and pls. 10-11). The religious center of 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Khan's new city was the 'Id Gāh mosque, built between 1894 and 1897 (Schinasi, p. 99) on the right (south) bank of the Kabul river. One of the largest mosques in Kabul city, it is still used for major religious festivals and state occasions. Conceived on a vast scale, the open, paved courtyard accommodates thousands of worshippers. Behind the courtyard, the entrance of the mosque proper was dominated by three red brick, arched halls (*iwāns*; see [AYWĀN](#)) and flanked by a colonnade of arches with minarets in neo-Mughal style (Bell, pp. 144-45; Schinasi, pp. 99-100 and pl. 18).

Amir Amān-Allāh Khan (r. 1919-28) also was a prolific builder. A Europhile and 'modernizer,' he set out to create a capital city worthy of a newly-independent kingdom and decided to shift the center of government from the old city to a semi-rural site in southwest Kabul that he named Dār-al-Amān (Samizay, p. 36; Schinasi, pp. 151-61, see fig. 10 for ground plan). This grand and expensive scheme, however, was never completed. The complex of buildings and formal gardens, some of which still survive, is centered on two vast buildings. To the east is the Qaṣr-e Amānia palace, designed by the French



archeologist, A. Godard (Dupree, p. 85; Schinasi, pp. 155-59). This imposing and monumental two-storey, domed building is described by Byron as “a French municipal building” (Byron, pp. 272-73; see Schinasi, pp. 159-61). To the west is the Amir’s palace at Tepe Tāj Bēg, the interior of which was once lavishly ornamented with lapis lazuli and imported European marble (Dupree, pp. 87-89; Schinasi, pp. 157-58). Both buildings were gutted and looted during the fighting of 1992-95 and remain as mere burnt-out shells.

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