



ARCHITECTURE OF QUTUB SHAHI DYNASTY

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ABSTRACT

Qutb Shahi architecture is the distinct style of Indo-Islamic architecture developed during the reign of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, also known as the Golconda Sultanate. Qutb Shahi buildings are seen in the city of Hyderabad and its surroundings. The Golconda Fort, which predates the founding of the city is the earliest example. The style reached its zenith during the reign of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, who founded the city of Hyderabad and constructed the Charminar as its centerpiece. The style is similar to that of the Bahmani Sultanate and other Deccan Sultanates, whose monuments can be seen in Gulbarga, Bijapur, and Bidar. It is heavily influenced by Persian architecture. Several buildings in the style were put by UNESCO on its "tentative list" to become a World Heritage Site in 2014, with others in the region, under the name Monuments and Forts of the Deccan Sultanate (despite there being a number of different sultanates)[1].



KEYWORDS : Features of Architecture, Golconda Fort, Qutb Shahi tombs, Charminar.

INTRODUCTION

Golconda Fort, Qutb Shahi Tombs and Charminar, located in Hyderabad, are the landmarks that together symbolize the Qutb Shahi Dynasty (1518 CE. to 1687 CE.) The city of Hyderabad served as the capital of the Qutb Shahis, the Asaf Jahi Nizams and is now the capital of the state of Telangana. Qutb Shahi Islamic Sultanate was one of the five prominent dynasties that emerged in the Deccan following the downfall of the Bahmani Dynasty in 1518 CE. Seven rulers of the Dynasty ruled for 170 years and successfully resisted the Mughal attack till 1687 CE. It was the last kingdom to be absorbed in the expanding Mughal Empire. The monuments of the Qutb Shahi period represent different building typologies. In this context the present article attempts to fulfill the research gap.^[2]

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Features of Architecture

The Qutb Shahi buildings consist of:

- Expansive mosques and palaces built out of granite
- Inscriptions including Persian poetry and verses from the Quran
- Heavy stucco ornamental work and jali latticed screens

Golconda Fort Golconda Fort

(Urdu: "round hill"), (Telugu Gollakonda : "shepherds' hill"), is a fortified citadel built by the Qutb Shahi dynasty (c. 1512–1687), located in Hyderabad, Telangana, India. Because of the vicinity of diamond mines, especially Kollur Mine, Golconda flourished as a trade centre of large diamonds, known as the Golconda Diamonds. The region has produced some of the world's most famous diamonds, including the colourless Koh-I-Noor (now owned by the United Kingdom), the blue Hope (United States), the pink Daria-i-Noor (Iran), the white Regent (France), the Dresden Green (Germany), and the colourless Orlov (Russia), Nizam and Jacob (India), as well as the now lost diamonds Florentine Yellow, Akbar Shah and Mogul.^[3] The complex was put by UNESCO on its "tentative list" to become a World Heritage Site in 2014, with others in the region, under the name Monuments and Forts of the Deccan Sultanate (despite there being a number of different sultanates)



Qutb Shahi tombs

The Qutb Shahi tombs are the necropolis of the Qutb Shahi rulers, set in a vast garden on the outskirts of the Golconda Fort. The tombs share common features: an onion dome atop a cube surrounded by an arcade with rich ornamental details, with small minarets featuring floral motifs.^[4] The Qutub Shahi Tombs are located in the Ibrahim Bagh (garden precinct), close to the famous Golconda Fort in Hyderabad, India. They contain the tombs and mosques built by the various kings of the Qutub Shahi dynasty. The galleries of the smaller tombs are of a single storey while the larger ones are two storied. In the centre of each tomb is a sarcophagus which overlies the actual burial vault in a crypt below. The domes were originally overlaid with blue and green tiles, of which only a few pieces now remain. The complex was put by UNESCO on its "tentative list" to become a World Heritage Site in 2014, with others in the region, under the name Monuments and Forts of the Deccan Sultanate (despite there being a number of different sultanates)^[5].



Charminar

The Charminar is one of the most recognizable examples of Qutb Shahi architecture.^[6] It was built by Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in 1591 as a centerpiece for the newly built capital city of Hyderabad. The Charminar is a large building, square in plan, having an arch in each of its faces and a lofty decagonal minaret at each of its angles. To the south of the Charminar is the Mecca Masjid, which is one of the largest mosques of India.^[7] To the north of the Charminar is the Gulzar Houz fountain, which is surrounded by four arches, called the Char Kaman.



The arches are simple and do not have many embellishments. There used to be other Qutb Shahi palaces, as well as a rose garden in the vicinity, but they were probably destroyed during the Siege of Golconda^[8].

Other monuments

Another early structure was the Purana Pul, built in 1578 across the Musi River. The Qutb Shahi rulers built elaborate caravanserais, or resthouses, including the Shaikpet Sarai and Taramati Baradari. The former had had 30 rooms, stables for horses and camels; a mosque and a tomb of an unknown Sufi saint. Other mosques built during this time include the Khairtabad Mosque, Hayat Bakshi Mosque, Musheerabad Masjid, and Kulsum Begum Mosque.^[9] The Qutb Shahi rulers also made considerable additions to the Gandikota Fort. Under the reigns of successive rulers of the dynasty, architecture and art flourished in the kingdom^[10]. The earliest extant school of painting in the Deccan sultanates is from Ahmednagar. Several palaces, such as the Farah Bakhsh Bagh, the Hasht Bihisht Bagh, Lakkad Mahal were built, as were tombs, mosques and other buildings^[11]. Many forts of the Deccan, such as the fort of Junnar (later renamed Shivneri), Paranda, Ausa, Dharur, Lohagad, etc. were greatly improved under their reign. Daulatabad, which was their secondary capital, was also heavily fortified and constructed in their reign. Literature was heavily patronised in the kingdom, as seen through manuscripts such as the *Tarif-i Husain Shah Badshah-i Dakan*^[12]. Sanskrit scholarship was also given a boost under their rule, as demonstrated by the works of Sabaji Pratapand Bhanudatta. The city of Ahmadnagar, founded by the Nizam Shahs, was described as being comparable to Cairo and Baghdad, within a few years of its construction. It was modelled along the great cities of the Persianate world, given the Shi'i leanings of the dynasty^[13].

CONCLUSION/FINDINGS

The heart of the city beats to the beat of the Charminar, a priceless gem of Hyderabad and a source of national pride for India. It was a gift from the Qutb Shahi Dynasty to honour the splendor of the Sultanate. The oldest mosque ever constructed in the "City of Nizams" is located inside this enormous example of Indo-Islamic architecture called a Charminar, which translates to "four minarets" and gives the history of the monument. The heritage nature of the two places must be preserved through collaboration between residents and governmental organizations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is wide scope for the Research Scholars and Teachers to conduct a Research on Architecture of Qutb Shahi Dynasty. Present study is having good future towards Minor and Major research projects.

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