THE CAPITAL OF RĀJADHARMA: MODERN SPACE AND RELIGION IN COLONIAL MYSORE[1]

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Mysore Fort, now situated in the centre of Mysore city, former capital of Mysore princely state, was effectively the city itself in pre-modern times. During the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, however, the fort changed its form from a residential town into a modern garden or empty space where now only the palace and several temples remain. This transformation was intended to serve not only to improve the sanitation and hygiene of the city but also to beautify and glorify it as the capital of a Hindu kingdom. In the process, the modern western idea of 'improvement' and the traditional Hindu idea of dharma *(moral order) were somehow reconciled and mutually strengthened. This paper aims to demonstrate how the two concepts worked together during the period of indirect rule. More broadly, the transformation of space in Mysore city reveals the nature of Hindu kingship under British rule. The colonial power did not simply diminish the authority of the Indian kings, but rather enhanced their presence at a supra-local level. The fundamental paradox of Hindu kingship, in which kings have to be transcendent, above society, and at the same time to be rooted in society, remained a conundrum for Indian kings to resolve.*

INTRODUCTION

Mysore Palace, which attracts thousands of tourists daily from all over India as well as from abroad, is surrounded by several Hindu temples, each of which belongs to a different sect. These temples are situated in a large, open, empty compound within fortified walls facing towards the palace, despite the fact that Hindu temples generally face towards the east (see Fig. 1).[2] This unusual composition of temples in the Mysore Fort gives the impression of being a traditional spatial configuration in which the king is at the centre of a religious domain as the protector of his people and of the *dharma* (moral order) within his kingdom.

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2   It is often said that most temples face towards the east (though there are many irregularities in this matter), so that the deities can see the sun rise. Cf. Fuller 1984, p. 3.
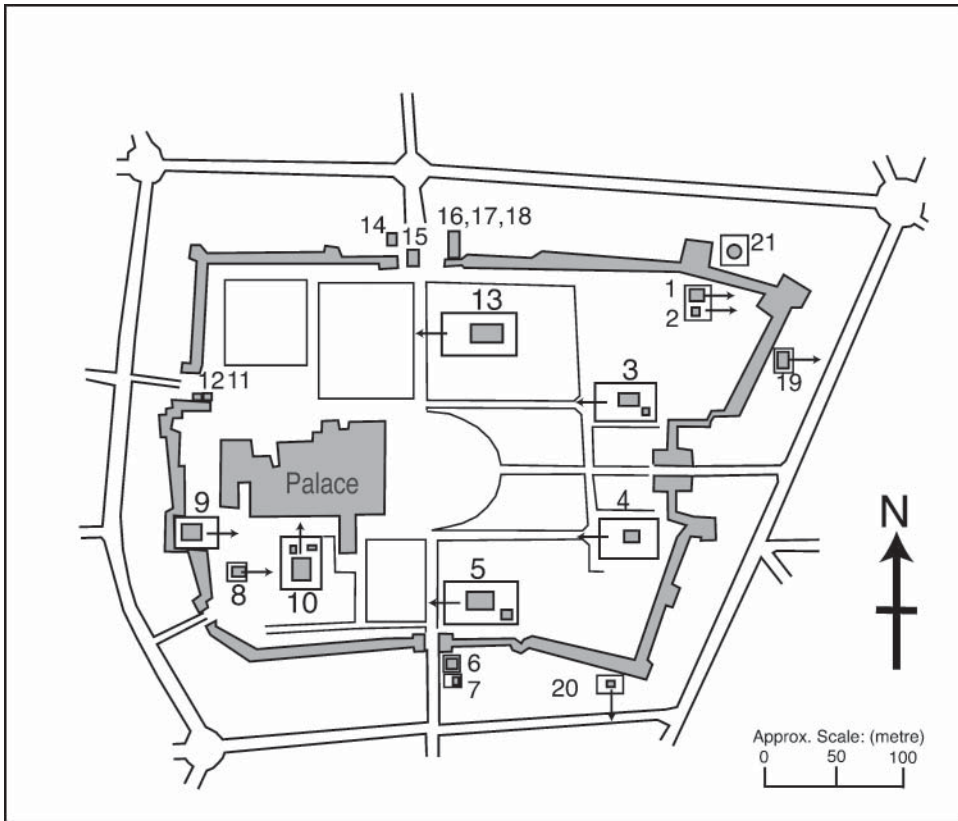
		Direction
1	Sri Kodi Somesvarasvami Temple	East
2	Sri Kodi Kala Bairawasvami Temple	East
3	Sri Trinesvarasvami Temple	West
4	Sri Gayatriammanavara Temple	West
5	Sri Svetavarahasvami Temple	West
6	Sri Dodda Anhaneyasvami Temple (South Gate)	West
7	Sri Vara Prasadi Ganapati Temple (South Gate)	West
8	Sri Khille Venkataramanasvami Temple	East
9	Sri Laksmiramanasvami Temple	East
10	Sri Prasanna Krisnasvami Temple	North
11	Sri Vinayakasvami Temple (West Gate)	North
12	Sri Sanjivanjaneya Temple (West Gate)	North
13	Sri Bhuvanesvariammanawara Temple	West
14	Sri Vinayakasvami Temple (North Gate)	East
15	Sri Anjaneyasvami Temple (North Gate)	North
16	Sri Ramadeva Temple	West
17	Sri Navagraha Temple	West
18	Sri Chandramauleshvara Temple	West
19	Sri Someshvara Temple	East
20	Sri Kote Maramma Temple (Bisilu Maramma)	South
21	Baba Syed Mansoor Shahkhadrira	

Figure 1. Present-day Mysore Fort

However, an anthropological history of Mysore city offers us a very different picture. In pre-modern times, the fort was effectively the city itself, where most of the city dwellers resided in cramped conditions. During the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, however, the fort changed from a residential town into a modern garden, or empty space, where only the palace and a number of temples remained. This spatial transformation was a crucial part of the Mysore city improvement project, which attempted to beautify the capital at the same time as endeavouring to meet modern demands for sanitation and hygiene. Most of the temples inside the fort were restored, enlarged or newly constructed by the Mysore Maharajas at the same time the city itself was radically changing form. In the process, the modern western idea of improvement and the concept of the traditional kingly role as the protector of *dharma* were somehow reconciled and mutually strengthened.

The princely state of Mysore had long held a reputation as a model state in colonial India due to its successful industrialization[3] and modernization of its infrastructure under a succession of progressive rulers and competent Diwans (prime ministers). Mysore was also one of the first states to introduce quasi-representative bodies for the people within the state administration.[4] The city was a symbol of this "model state", as was the Kavery Power scheme (1899–1902), whose main purpose was to transmit electric power to the Kolar Gold Mines, but which also made Mysore the first city in India to be lit by electricity.[5]

Although a modern history of Mysore might emphasise its progressiveness and successful modernization, it is also possible, more than any other Indian State, to call Mysore a "child of imperialism"[6] or a "puppet sovereignty".[7] The Wodeyar, the royal family of Mysore, was nothing but a "restored" house following the defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1799, who had ruled over a much wider area of Southern India in the late eighteenth century. The treaty concluded between Mysore and the East India Company was highly disadvantageous to Mysore and imposed on the state a heavy subsidy payment. The absolute superiority of the British further enabled them to remove administrative power from the Mysore Maharaja in 1831. Although the country was administered in the name of the Maharaja, the British officer conducting the administration was designated "the Commissioner for the territories of the Maharaja of Mysore", and the Maharaja was kept away entirely from any aspect of state administration. He struggled thereafter to restore his power whilst being constantly in fear of his territory being annexed.[8] Fortunately for the Wodeyar, the

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3   One of the most prominent Diwans, M. Visvesvaraya, introduced the state-capitalist model of development which he observed during his stay in Japan in 1898.

4   One of these representative bodies was the Representative Assembly, established in 1881. It was created to distribute information on all state matters but was confined to local elites consisting of landowners and merchants. This form of mobilization of people "from above" was gradually challenged by "a deeper process of mobilization from below". See Hettne 1978, p. 87.

5   The Kauvery scheme was commenced at the instigation of the British during the Maharani's regency, Krishna Raja Wodeyar IV being still only a teenager at the time. Shama Rao 1936, vol. II, pp. 180–82.

6   Hettne 1978, p. 43.

7   Ray 1981, p. 99.

8   See Ibid., pp. 95–120.

uprising of 1857 put a halt to further British territorial acquisition, and state power was "rendered" into their hands again in 1881. However, although the British bestowed a twenty-one gun salute on the Mysore Maharajas (the highest such honour amongst Indian rulers), their submissive relationship to the paramount power remained the same. Mysore city was also symbolic of this rather humiliating history. It was the centre of state administration only until 1831, with Bangalore city continuing thereafter to be the real administrative centre, even after the "rendition" of 1881. In other words, Mysore city was the state capital, but in name only.

This article, however, does not intend to present a political history of Mysore state or examine the political conflicts over state administration, for there already exist excellent works on these subjects.[9] Rather, its purpose is to ascertain to what extent and in what manner the policy of "the old regime" survived in the context of "colonial modernity", by looking at the role of the Palace as an ambiguous administrative body, and especially at its management of space in Mysore city during the colonial period.

DHARMA AND IMPROVEMENT

Ranajit Guha has argued that the coalescence and divergence of two distinct paradigms of politics characterized the general configuration of power in colonial India. One of these paradigms derived from the metropolitan political culture of the British, and the other from the pre-colonial tradition of the "old regime".[10] According to his formula, the general configuration of power is an interactive opposition between dominance and subordination. These two terms are determined and constituted by a pair of interacting elements; dominance by coercion and persuasion, and subordination by collaboration and resistance. The two paradigms of politics, one of the British, and the other of the Indians, have their own idioms which correspond to each of these four elements.[11] For example, coercion functions as the idiom of "order" in the British political tradition and is also interpreted as daṇḍa (force or punishment) according to Indian notions of dominance. Within the element of persuasion as well, there are two idioms at work. One is the British idiom of improvement, which informed all efforts made by the colonial rulers to relate non-antagonistically to the ruled. The introduction of western-style education, the patronage of Indian arts, and the efforts made by Christian missionaries to ameliorate the living conditions of the lower section of society are all considered to be "improvement". The idiom in the Indian political tradition, which consists of an organic element of persuasion, is *dharma*. It was *dharma* to which the Indian elite turned in order to justify and explain the initiatives by which they hoped to make their subordinates relate to them in a submissive and co-operative fashion.[12]

It is rather unfortunate that Guha does not include in his argument any further explanation about this peculiar nature of power in colonial India as the coalescence of two

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9   For example, Hettne 1978 and Manor 1975, 1978.

10   Guha 1998.

11   Ibid., pp. 20–24.

12   Ibid., pp. 30–39.

distinct paradigms of politics. His efforts turn instead to emphasizing how the organic composition of dominance undermined the effectiveness of persuasion in relation to that of coercion, rather than qualifying the nature of the coalescence of these two paradigms. He argues that because of this failure, the dominance of the British and Indian elites in colonial India became nothing but "dominance without hegemony".[13] It is not the objective of this article to assess or to judge the nature of dominance in colonial India, but to analyse how and to what extent these two distinct paradigms of politics coalesced. Hence, we concentrate on one aspect of this coalescence: improvement and *dharma*.

The concept of *dharma* is one of the Indian notions that has most attracted the attention of Western scholars. Yet, the variety of English translations for this word – duty, rightfulness, the moral order and so on[14] – show how difficult it is to define and understand this concept. The East Asian translation of the term in Buddhist texts, 法 (Jap. *hō*; Ch. *fa*), does not escape this difficulty either. *Hō/fa*, law or order, does not explain what conforms to *hō* and what does not. Heesterman's insightful approach helps us to understand the complexity and dynamism of the concept of *dharma*.[15] He sees the difficulty of defining the concept of *dharma* in the fact that this concept itself is torn in two different directions. On the one hand, *dharma* should be a transcendent order which provides man with the fixed orientation needed to face the insoluble spiritual problems of life and death in an uncertain society. On the other hand, *dharma* has to be relevant for a man who sometimes has to act contrary to the tenets of *dharma* in order to lead his daily life in society. Thus, *dharma* has to make allowances for customs which are rooted deeply in society, and what is the right custom needs to be determined by the assembly, the *pariśad*.[16]

In spite of the problematic nature of Indian kingship, especially the ritual inferiority of the ruling class, the Kshatriyas to the Brahmins, the role of the king in regard to the concept of *dharma* is clear. The king is a necessary institution for the protection of the people through the maintenance of *dharma*, the universal order.[17] The duty of the king, or *rājadharma*, anticipated by his subjects in the old regime, was to maintain *dharma*: he was thus both the subject and the formulator of moral order. He was to retain military forces, to take responsibility for settling disputes, to support worship in temples or other institutions, and above all to secure the life of Brahmins, who should not, in theory, engage themselves in any worldly activities.[18] Therefore, the contribution of the king or local chief towards the maintenance of *dharma* and hence the general welfare of society is not limited to his patronage of religious activities, but tends to be measured by how much he spends on temples and other religious institutions. Religious institutions then often acted as a part of the mechanism for the redistribution of resources within society.[19]

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13   Guha 1998, p. 65.

14   Cf. Biardeau 1981, pp. 50–54, Frykenberg 1989, p. 44.

15   Heesterman 1985.

16   Ibid., p. 11.

17   Ibid., p. 108; see also Derrett 1976.

18   Price 1989, pp. 563–64.

19   Appadurai 1981, pp. 71–74.

This article takes the operation of space in Mysore city as a concrete example of the confederate relationship between Western ideas of improvement and the Indian concept of *dharma*. Its objectives are first to assess how, and to what extent, the two notions worked together in the operation of space, and second to indicate the limits of this collaboration by demonstrating the nature of the problems which this special relationship had to face in the process of transforming the city.

A HISTORY OF MYSORE CITY

Mysore city, the second largest city after Bangalore in the present day Karnataka state in South India, was the former capital city of the princely state of Mysore. Although it was already surpassed during the nineteenth century by Bangalore in terms of population, and political and economical importance, Mysore city never ceased to be the cultural capital, since it was the residence of the Maharajas. It is said that the name Mysore (*maisūru* in Kannada) was derived from *mahiśāsuradaūru* (the place of Mahishasura, a mythical buffalo-demon slain by the goddess Cāmuṇḍeśvari). The Wodeyars, the Hindu rulers of Mysore kingdom, established their capital here in the early fifteenth century. It was a very important part of the political and military strategies for the establishment of a kingdom in pre-colonial India to build and maintain forts (*kōṭes*).[20] The Mysore Fort therefore probably had a military function as well as an administrative and political role as the royal capital.

Mysore remained the capital of the kingdom until Raja Wodeyar moved his capital in 1610 to Srirangapattana, an island town in the river Kaveri, formerly the seat of the viceroy of the Vijayanagara dynasty. This transfer had the symbolic meaning that he had taken over as the legitimate successor of the Vijayanagara, and he inaugurated the Dasara festival which was performed as a state festival in Hampi, the capital of the Vijayanagara dynasty.[21] In the mid-eighteenth century, the Mysore kingdom was taken over by Haidar Ali, who originally served the Wodeyars as the head of their army. Haidar and his son Tipu Sultan expanded the territory and the latter became the last regular Indian force to stand against British domination in southern India.

When Tipu was finally defeated by British troops in 1799, the East India Company restored the ancient Hindu royal house and installed five-year-old Krishnaraja Wodeyar III as the ruler of Mysore state. They then shifted the Mysore royal house from the former capital city of Srirangapattana to Mysore. When the young king and his royal kin arrived in Mysore they found not a single house standing; although there were a number of houses, in the new fort, called Nazarbad, built by Tipu Sultan, they were in very poor condition and it was very difficult to get water there. The newcomers therefore had to build a special pavilion for the new king's *paṭṭābhiṣēka* (enthronement ceremony).[22] This episode suggests that after the transfer of the capital to Srirangapattana in 1610, Mysore had fallen somewhat into disrepair. However, another historical account indicates that Mysore had

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20 Stewart Gordon's research on forts in Maratha country gives us some idea about the political and military importance of forts in pre-colonial India. See Gordon 1979.

21 Stein 1983, pp. 77–84; 1993a, pp. 37–38.

22 Shama Rao 1936, p. 266.

nonetheless never been completely deserted and had remained a reasonably populated city. *The Annals of the Mysore Royal Family* (hereafter, *Annals*)[23] describe the state of the city of Mysore before the restoration of the Hindu kingdom in 1799.

> There are one inner fort (*voḷakōṭe*), one outer fort (*horakōṭe*), one impure fort (*anṭana kōṭe*) in the Sringara garden, one Khasti street in the inner fort, one Tigara street behind the Palace, one street behind the storehouse, and one store-house street. In the outer fort, there are one Sejjemudanaraja market, one *daḷavāyi* (army chief) street, one *tammaḍi* (Lingayat priest) street, *kandaacaara* (tax collector) office street, one small Brahmin street, one big Brahmin street, one gram street, one flowersellers' street, one street near Srinayana temple, one street behind the stables, one cattle street, one washermen's street, one barbers' street, one potters' street, one conch players street, one street in the Sringara gardens, one prostitutes' street, one school, two tiger stalls, four streets in the impure fort, the same number of markets, 462 houses in twenty-nine *vaṭāra* (a group of small houses built contiguously within a single enclosure), 1,238 shops, fourteen wells, 120 *manṭapa* (pandal), thirty hacāra (halls), four *biḍucāvaḍi* (rest houses) and two official buildings.[24]

From the above description, it is clear that the fort had all the necessary amenities of an early modern city: residential areas, shops, artisans' workshops, public offices, temples and even brothels. Each caste seemed to have had its own street in which to live. Several maps of the city show the remains of these streets (See Fig. 2 and Fig. 3). It is not clear whether the city had two separate forts or two separate spaces inside the fort, but certainly people in the city lived in two separate residential areas which probably consisted of one area for caste Hindus and the other for Untouchables.[25]

After the move from Srirangapattana to Mysore in 1799, one of the first changes the Mysore Maharaja made in the city was the construction of several *agrahāras*.[26] An *agrahāra* is a Brahmin settlement granted by the king or powerful local chiefs. The Brahmins were not only given a place to live, but were offered appointments, cattle and tax-free lands or villages called *inām*. According to the *Annals*, Krishnaraja Wodeyar III constructed twelve *agrahāras* in the country, six of which were located in Mysore city. Half of these *agrahāras* in Mysore are now found to the west and the other half to the south of the fort.

After the transfer of the capital, the population of Mysore city increased significantly. The Maharaja invited there a large number of Brahmins, both priestly and lay, and soldiers

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23 These annals (*Śrīmanmahārājaravara vamśāvaḷi*) were published in Kannada, by the order of Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV in the early twentieth century and were used as a history textbook in most schools in modern Mysore.

24 *Annals*, vol. 2, p. 90, translated from Kannada by the author.

25 There are many similar cases of the disposition of different castes and religious communities in a town. In some cases, not only the area of residence, but also the right of access to a certain area becomes a very serious issue. For example, in the South Indian town of Kalugumalai, the location of a church, which was situated next to the Hindu festival route, caused a huge dispute over the ownership of sacred space. See Good 1999, pp. 74–76.

26 *Epigraphia Carnatica*, My. 1, My. 2, My. 3.
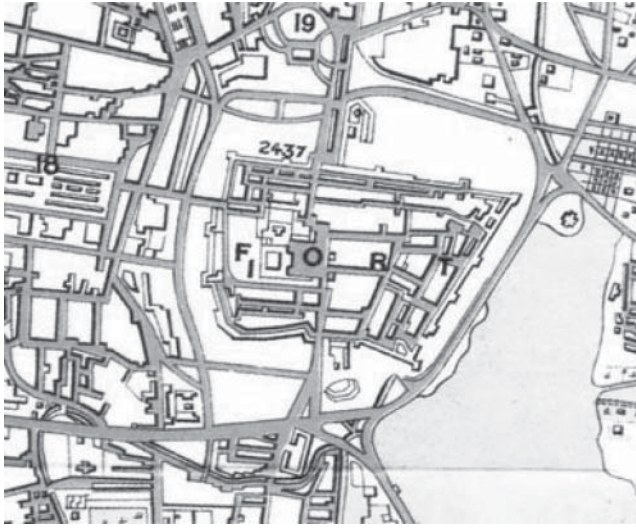
Figure 2. Mysore Fort around the 1890s (from Lewis Rice, *Mysore: A Gazeteer*, vol. II, revised edition published in 1897, reprinted in 2001)

Figure 3. Mysore Fort in 1902 (Karnataka State Archives, Bangalore)

from outside Mysore, especially from the neighbouring Tamil and Maratha countries. The number of people working for the Palace was said to be over 10,000,[27] and the number of people indirectly involved in the Palace economy must have been even greater, although there were few soldiers, since by this time Mysore Fort had lost its military function. The only soldiers permitted were the Maharaja's personal bodyguard and the palace guard, since the British had made it clear that the fortresses and strong places in Mysore state were to be garrisoned and commanded by British troops. The British insisted that they alone had the right to judge which forts should be dismantled and which should be repaired. Mysore Fort was to become a residential town of political and economic importance, but it was no longer the strategically important centre of the kingdom.[28]

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27   *Correspondence relative to the Maharajah's Palace Affairs* (hereafter, *Elliot Report*). (KSA (B) 014323).

28   Articles 8 and 9 of the Subsidy Treaty of Mysore (1799).

THE STATE, THE PALACE, AND THE TEMPLES

What kind of changes did the traditional role of the king as protector of *dharma* undergo during the colonial period? How was the modern establishment of a "state" and the position of the king contested or shared with the administration of the religious domain? In 1831, the British took over the Mysore administration on the grounds that the Maharaja could not suppress the peasant uprising of 1830–1831 in the Nagar region,[29] in the northernmost part of the kingdom. They then shifted all the state administrative functions from Mysore city to Bangalore city where they had built their cantonment. The Palace, which used to govern the state administration, was forced by the British to become an "entirely private body" whose purpose was solely to serve the Maharaja's household.[30] The intention behind this was to remove the influence of the Maharaja and his ministers in the Palace from state-level politics, but the British did not interfere in the Palace administration itself, probably because they did not find it wise to do so at least while Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III was alive. While the Maharaja and his own ministers remained in the Palace, the state administration, under the British Commissioner, was filled with British-appointed Brahmin officials, mainly from the Madras Presidency.

The complex relationship between the state government and the Palace reveals the nature of Indian kingship under indirect rule. When the British took over the administration in 1831, the main purpose of their intervention was the separation of the private and public domains in state administration.[31] The Palace was supposed to serve only the Maharaja's private matters, and the state, which was under British control, was meant to deal with all public affairs. The British believed that they could separate the public and the private, and that doing so would be better for the state administration. The ideal Maharaja's role as a protector of *dharma* consequently became ambiguous, especially in relation to religious endowments. The protection of *dharma* by the king is in theory for the welfare of his country as whole, and not for himself. He sometimes even has to sacrifice himself or his personal interests for the benefit of his people. But when the king is considered to be a private individual and gives his money to religious institutions, is this a personal donation or a kingly act to protect the moral order of his country?

While the British kept away from Palace affairs after the take-over in 1831, they carried out a drastic revision of Palace administration following the death of Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in 1868. This intervention by the British officer Major C. Elliot, under the orders of L. Bowring, the Commissioner of Mysore, was called the Settlement of 1868 and had three distinct purposes.[32] The first was the scrutiny of the late Maharaja's debts, the second was the examination of his property, both immovable and movable, and the third was the reduction and remodelling of the Palace establishment. The number of establishments was thus reduced from twenty-five to twelve – most of the abolished establishments

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29 For extensive studies on the Nagar rebellion, see Stein 1993b and Lind 2004.

30 This policy was strongly imposed especially when Krishnaraja Wodeyar III died in 1868. *Elliot Report*. (KSA B 014323)

31 Minute by J. M. Macleod, 2 November 1832 (OIOC R/2 temp. 1/10).

32 *Elliot Report*.

being the remnants of former state administrative functions, from when the late Maharaja still had power, dating from before 1831.[33]

After the settlement, although most of the leading members of the Maharaja's relations, the Urs (*arasu*),[34] continued to exercise their control as Bakshis (an honorary title given to some heads of Palace departments with an equivalent status to that of Assistant Commissioner in the Government), a Palace Controller's office was created in order to supervise and control Palace affairs by the state. It seems though that supervision by the state through the Palace Controller was seldom achieved without confusion and resistance. One conflict over the sharing of power between the Bhakshis and the Palace Controller concerned the appointment of Palace employees. Most appointments in the Palace were made according to the traditional *hakkudāra* system. Under this system, the eldest son or other senior heir of a retired or deceased Palace employee would be given first consideration in the filling of the vacancy.[35] The Palace officers therefore wanted to limit the power of Palace Controller in the matter of appointments or the removal of permanent staff and insisted that the peculiar nature of this Palace tradition should continue in order to maintain good relationships and the loyalty of officers serving the Maharaja.

By contrast, there was less overt conflict over power-sharing between the state and the Palace in matters of religious policy, and while the state government continued to provide the funds, there was a steady devolution of management responsibilities over religious institutions in favour of the Palace. At the time of the settlement of 1868, religious endowments by the late Maharaja seemed to be very chaotic to Major Elliot, who was in charge of the Palace settlement. Elliot found that there were eighty-nine religious and charitable institutions receiving a monthly allowance totalling 2,513 rupees from the Maharaja's private treasury. The largest grants were a grant of 1,000 rupees per month for the Sringeri Math, one of the most important monasteries in south India, followed by grants to the Civil orphan asylum at Madras (an annual contribution of 1,000 rupees), and to the Roman Catholic church at Mysore (a monthly grant of thirty rupees). Other institutions were receiving only small grants, mainly between ten and twenty rupees per month from the Palace treasury.[36]

> I must however observe that all grants made from His Highness' private Treasury must be considered to have virtually ceased at His Highness' demise, and their continuance must entirely depend upon considerations of public utility and respect due to His Highness's memory.[37]

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33   *Elliot Report.*

34   The Mysore royal caste, Urs, was said to be originally a group of local chiefs around Mysore city, integrated into a single caste at the end of seventeenth century (Nanjammanni 1986, pp. 10–11, Ota 2000, p. 130). In the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the Urs royals and the Palace provided English education for the rural Urs in order to convert themselves into a powerful landed aristocracy (Ikegame 2003).

35   Memorandum by P. Raghavendra Rao, Assistant Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Mysore, dated 25 April 1905 (KSA/MPD PCO file no. 1900).

36   Official Letter from C. Elliot, Superintendent, Ashtagram Division, in charge of Palace Duties, to L. Bowring, Commissioner of Mysore, *Elliot Report*, pp. 37–38.

37   *Ibid.*, p. 37.

The basic policy here was once more to divide these institutions into two categories; the first, institutions founded by the late Maharaja and his family members, the second, institutions founded by private individuals which received a contribution from the late Maharaja.[38] According to the 1868 settlement, all of the grants for institutions in the first category were to be provided by the State Muzrai Department, which administered Hindu temples and charitable endowments, while Elliot proposed that those in the second category would be awarded gratuities to enable the managers of these institutions to invest in land for their support. However, in 1870–1871 a new arrangement was introduced. The management of five temples (Prasanna Kriṣṇa Temple, Lakṣmīramaṇa Temple, Varāha Temple, Trineśvara Temple within the fort and Camuṇḍēsvari Temple in the Chamundi Hills) was entirely transferred from the state to the Palace management on the grounds that the temples were religious institutions of the Maharaja rather than of general public interest and that in some of them the royal family's religious services were frequently rendered.[39] Of the remaining institutions, some were maintained partly from palace funds and partly from state funds until 1891, when their charge was transferred to state funds. Their management, nonetheless, remained with the Palace. Other temples too continued to be supported from state funds but managed by the Palace.[40] Ineluctably therefore, while the funding still came from the state, control over religious institutions in Mysore fell increasingly into the hands of officials whose loyalty was to the Palace.

When Chamarajendra Wodeyar X, the adopted son of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, attained his majority in 1881, he was re-granted possession and administration of his country (the British called this transfer of power, "the rendition of power"). While he was minor, the British educated him by appointing a British tutor-guardian, and even tried to remove him from the Mysore Palace. While the British tried to undermine the Palace, the state-level politics was dominated by better-educated Brahmin administrators from Madras, which caused tension between the Madrassis and the Mysore born officers, the Mysoreans.[41]

While the Mysoreans gradually regained power in the state level bureaucracy, the management of the Palace was also gradually reformed. Officially and formally, the Palace remained under the control of the state, but Palace officers thereafter began to exercise increasing autonomy and authority. A parallel system of supervision was thus introduced for the management of the fort temples, Camuṇḍēsvari Temple, and others, and in the early 1910s a new post, the Muzrai Bakshi (or Minister for Religious Endowments), was created, who was given also the role of Head of Chamundi Thotti, a Palace department which was responsible for all Palace rituals – a position that could be considered equivalent to the state-appointed Muzrai officer.

In the day-to-day management of the temples under state control, a crucial role was played by local trustees, called Dharmadarshis, who were appointed by the state upon the recommendation of the Deputy Commissioner. They were in a position to advise and co-operate with the state-appointed Muzrai officers in matters relating to the internal

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38   *Ibid.*, p. 37.

39   *A Guide to the Records in the Divisional Archives*, Mysore, Part I, 1991, p. 41.

40   Fifteen religious institutions in Mysore city were placed under the Palace management in 1908. The number of institutions was increased to twenty in the 1920s and to twenty-five in the 1950s. *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

41   Hettne 1978, pp. 72–74. This tension continued till 1912 when the examination was restricted to Mysoreans.

management of the institutions and were obliged to have regular meetings, check accounts, and supervise the daily affairs of the institutions. The Muzrai Bakshi had to supervise these Dharmadarshis and report to the state-appointed Palace Controller.

It seems that the Dharmadarshis were not very keen to perform their duties. H. Lingaraj Urs, the first Muzrai Bakshi, complained that they did not have any interest in the management of the institutions and were reluctant to hold the obligatory monthly meetings. In 1915 he found that there had not been any meeting worth the name held during the previous five years. Under such conditions, he felt he could well manage without their extraneous help, since the institutions were near to each other and could easily be visited, and the Palace Controller was available to audit and check his accounts.[42] In practice, the amount of supervision Lingaraj Urs had to handle was probably much more than he had anticipated, but a similar enthusiasm and sense of responsibility was to be found amongst other Palace officials. For them, the management of Muzrai institutions was not simply a matter of controlling these institutions, but was also a matter of serving the public interest.

> The Muzrai is a matter of momentous significance. It seems to me that for success in the administration of this Department, it would be well to take into account as far as possible man's spirit of disinterestedness and sentiment of devotion, especially so where reverence to concrete forms as a means to stimulate sacred abstract notions of spirituality plays a prominent part. To enlist popular sympathy, secure public co-operation and offer suitable inducements to voluntary services in regard to the various religious and charitable institutions would go far to avoid complications, and promote harmony and healthy action, ensuring efficiency along economic lines.[43]

Religious institutions under state control in Mysore indeed occupied a position of tremendous significance in the state administration. There were 18,938 institutions in 1915, 33 of these being outside and the rest within the state, enjoying an estimated income from inām land and other sources of Rs. 880,000 and a cash grant from the state budget of Rs. 322,000, giving a total income of Rs. 1,202,000.[44] The State Muzrai Department classified these institutions according to their annual income and put them under different forms of control (See Table 1). The first class of institutions, termed as major institutions, were under the Muzrai Superintendent's direct charge, the second class of institutions, named minor institutions, were left to the care of the Deputy Commissioner, and the third class of institutions, called village institutions, were looked after by village bodies such as the village Panchayats.[45]

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42   D. O. No. 93/1, from Palace Muzrai Bakshi, H. Lingaraj Urs to Huzur Secretary, Mizra Ismail, dated 31 August 1915 (KSA/MPD Muz. file no. 1913–14).

43   Memorandum on reorganization of the Muzrai Department, no date but circa 1915 (KSA/MPD Muz. File no. 1913–14).

44   *The Administration Report* for 1914–1915 under Muzrai Department.

45   The system of the management, control and supervision of Muzrai institutions was revised in 1917. Government Order No. 2514–25 Muz. 71–13–2, dated 2 April 1917, in *Supplement to the Mysore Muzrai Manual*, p. 7.

Table 1. Religious institutions in Mysore state in 1914–1915

Classification		Number	Percentage
1st class	Institutions outside the state	33	0.17
	Institutions within the state, with an income over Rs. 1,000 per year	133	0.70
2nd class	Institutions with an income between Rs. 100 and Rs. 1,000 per year	1,372	7.25
3rd class	Institutions with an income less than Rs. 100 per year	17,400	91.88
	Total	18,938	100

Compiled from *The Administration Report* for the year 1914–1915 under Muzrai Department.

Those religious institutions managed by the Palace were deemed a part of the Maharaja's private religious domain, however those thought to be of public interest remained under the direct control of the state administration. Despite this, officials continually deferred to the religious authority of the Maharaja and the Palace steadily gained more power over religious institutions in Mysore city, both numerically and financially. Thus by the 1920s the Tasdik grants[46] for institutions managed by the Palace's Muzrai Bakshi had reached more than one-fifth of the total state Tasdik grants (See Tables 2 and 3). Moreover, most of the Palace Muzrai institutions had acquired by this time considerable importance in terms of the scale of their income, and were classified as major institutions, of which there were only 133 in total in the country (See Table 1). This means that while the Palace and the state enjoyed a generally co-operative relationship in the management of the religious institutions, the Palace inexorably came to dominate religious affairs within Mysore and in this domain at least began to act like a state itself within the country.

IMPROVEMENT AND THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN SPACE

The rate of population increase in Mysore city was probably slowed by the transfer of the state administrative functions to Bangalore in 1831, yet the city remained prosperous and sufficiently attractive for new immigrants. Although the Palace had lost its role as the sole central administrative power, it still employed several thousand people working in state institutions of several kinds: administrative, judicial, and educational. Patronage in the religious and cultural domains of the Palace, in the name of the Maharaja, also created a large number of posts for religious scholars, artists, musicians, and artisans.

The fort, with its many old, narrow and winding streets, was crowded with buildings of all sorts and the palace itself was densely surrounded by a number of private dwellings. Improvements to sanitation in the fort commenced around 1872 when some house

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46   Fixed grant given by the government to a temple, mosque, etc. Anthony Good suggested to me that they might have been grants replacing earlier land grants and therefore payments as compensation. This is quite possible in the case of Mysore as well, though I did not check this issue in situ. Cf. Good 2004, p. 214.

Table 2. Annual Tasdik grants for institutions of the state in the 1920s

Classification	Annual Tasdik grants	Percentage
Chattrams (charitable institutions)	61,162	24.1
Temples	125,364	49.3
Mahomedan institutions	12,405	4.9
Palace institutions	55,182	21.7
Total	254,113	100

Compiled from the Official letter from the Palace Huzur Secretary to the Financial Secretary to the Government, dated 23 March 1928 (KSA/MPD Muz. File no. 1928).

Table 3. Annual receipts of religious institutions under Palace management, 1928–1929

	Institutions	Cash tasdik (Rs)	Remittances (Rs)	Special grant (Rs)	Total (Rs)
1	Maharaja's Chattram (charitable institution)	19,450	86.4	1,300	20,836.4
2	Pancagavi Math	626	158.9	–	784.9
3	Jagapadakatte Math	350	–	–	350
4	Prasanna Kriṣṇa Temple (Fort)	13,732.25	460.2	–	14,192.45
5	Varāha Temple (Fort)	4,359	392.7		4,751.7
6	LakcmīramaGa Temple (Fort)	2,049	58.8	–	2,107.8
7	Trinēśvara Temple (Fort)	2,041	1,090.1	–	3,131.1
8	Camuṇḍēsvari Temple (Chamundi Hills)	9,149	3,890	1,440	14,479
9	Mahābalēśvara Temple (Chamundi Hills)	1,139	–	244	1,383
10	Narayana Temple	354	–	132	486
11	Gaddige Ammanavara Temple (Chamundi Hills)	210	–	–	210
12	Uttanahalli Jwalamukhi Temple	896	–	184	1,080
13	Camanpatti Dēveśvara Temple	178.75	–	–	178.75
14	Sanjēvarāj Urs' Temple	120	–	–	120
15	Pattada Gudi	60	–	–	60
16	Kille Venkataramma Temple	287.9	–	–	287.9
17	Somēśvara Temple (Fort)	8.75	–	–	8.75
18	Bhairava Temple (Fort)	8.75	–	–	8.75
19	Anjaneya Temple (Fort)	104.75		70	174.75
20	Vināyaka Temple (Fort)	58.2	–	–	58.2
21	Tulmasa Santharpane	–	770.3	2,650.8	3,421.1
22	Grant for annual repairs	–		2,000	2,000
	Total	55,182.3	6,907.4	8,020.8	70,110.5

The Palace Administration Report for the year 1928–1929, p. 31.

properties east of the palace were acquired and dismantled, and a new residential area called the Nagarkhana block was erected on the site. Subsequently some very unsound portions of the palace were pulled down and rebuilt, habitations crowding the space between the palace and the western side of the fort wall in its neighbourhood were cleared, and a system of underground pipes for drainage was gradually introduced.[47] This stage

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47 *The Palace Administration Report* from 1868 to 1918, p. 5.

of the improvements, though, was more to do with the creation of space for the palace buildings than sanitation.

Practical measures to improve sanitary conditions in India were put into action first in the army, and then in major cities during the 1860s.[48] The sanitary measures taken in the second half of the nineteenth century mainly concerned the improvement of ventilation and the creation of a sewage disposal system. These measures were based on the theory of miasmas, toxic air arising from a swamp, which was believed to be the cause of serious disease. Sewage disposal and ventilation were therefore considered necessary measures to remove the causes of miasma and to eradicate disease. When the Central Government of India published proceedings on practical measures for sanitation in towns and villages in 1888, which were circulated as government proceedings in Mysore, the systems they defined as necessary in promoting sanitary reform were water supply, drainage, and water conservancy.[49] These measures seem to be reasonable according to current ideas on sanitation, but there was still a strong belief that "the chief disease causes in all Indian towns are to be found within the walls which enclose the compounds and houses".[50] The proceedings further criticized the traditional planning of Indian houses: "from being enclosed within walls, [they] have no proper ventilation, and the rooms are so dark as sometimes to require a lamp day and night", and, worse still, "in some parts of India, it is the practice to cover in the entire courtyard, so that foul exhalations are prevented from escaping into the air".[51] They also pointed out the danger of houses which had privies in the same soil close to the water-well. They then concluded that "the simplest way of avoiding these dangers would be by rebuilding the houses on new ground and adopting precautions to prevent the subsoil being polluted with filth". These traditional Indian houses must, needless to say, have had several advantages in terms of the Indian climate as well as of custom and life style. However, British sanitary specialists did not have any intention of combining the traditional Indian lifestyle with modern requirements. For them, the main obstacles preventing sanitary improvement were "the ignorance of the people" and "the passive resistance offered by them to all departures from the practice of ages".[52]

The first drastic action of modern town planning, adopting sanitary precautions, took place in Bombay in 1898. This was a response to an epidemic of the plague in 1896, as a result of which six thousand people had died within three months. The Bombay City Improvement Trust (CIT) was created by an Act of the Parliament in order to improve living conditions in Bombay. The Municipal Corporation and the government of the Bombay Presidency entrusted all vacant land to this body. The CIT widened roads in the central crowded parts of the town. A new east–west road, Princess Street, was constructed to bring sea air into the centre of crowded residential areas. Suburban development was also started in 1899 for the purpose of relieving congestion to the south. Well-laid out

48   See S. Guha, 1993, p. 389 and Dossal 1991, pp. 137–40.

49   *The Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department (Sanitary)*, dated 27 July 1888, and *the Proceedings of the Dewan to His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore (General)*, dated 18 December 1888.

50   *Ibid.*

51   *Ibid.*

52   *Ibid.*

plots, with mixed land-use patterns marked these sections.[53] These methods of improving living conditions were to introduce air to the congested parts of the city by creating wide streets, and simultaneously to develop new suburban areas to accommodate people from central parts of the city as well as new immigrants. A similar policy was soon introduced in Mysore. The Mysore City Improvement Trust Board (MCITB), set up in 1903, was meant to provide quick measures to counter the plague epidemic, which reduced the city's population dramatically in 1900 (see Table 4). At the same time, this immediate introduction of a similar institution to one in British India was intended as a counter-measure to British paramountcy, and was intended to show the capabilities and adaptability of Mysore as a "model state".

The MCITB employed the same methods that were applied in Bombay, and the Trust Board built several new suburbs in order to decongest the city.[54] The main area ravaged by plague in 1900 was the residential area to the west of the fort. The buildings in this area were demolished and several hundred families were uprooted as a consequence. The new suburbs (or "extensions") were laid primarily to provide housing for these people as well as for the growing population of the city. New broad roads were also constructed. The Sayaji Rao Road (named after the Gaikwar of Baroda) was created by filling in a canal, known as Purnaiya's Nullah, originally excavated with the object of bringing water from the Kaveri river into the city. Ashoka Road was an extension of an existing road, called Dodda Peetha (Big Commercial Street), which used to cross the centre of the fort from the south to the north.

Table 4. The population change of Mysore city, 1870–1990

Year	Population	Area (sq. km)	Population density (person/sq. km)
1871	60,312	–	–
1881	63,363	–	–
1891	74,048	–	–
1901	68,111	19.43	3,505.5
1911	71,306	24.61	2,897.4
1921	83,951	24.61	3,411.3
1931	107,142	25.90	4,136.8
1941	150,540	33.67	4,471.0
1951	244,323	36.26	6,738.1
1961	253,865	37.30	6,806.0
1971	355,685	37.30	9,535.8
1981	441,754	40.05	11,030.1
1991	480,692	36.69	13,101.4

The Census of India, 1991.

53 This information was taken from the website of Department of Theoretical Physics, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (http://theory.tifr.res.in/bombay/amenities/orgs/cit.html) and on planning of Bombay city in nineteenth century in general, see Dossal 1991 especially pp. 95–148.

54 Shama Rao 1936, p. 754.

While the MCITB developed several extensions and allotted plots to people for building houses,[55] the Palace played an equally important role in the transformation of the city. The Palace often acted as a mediator between the Trust Board and people living in the fort, especially the Maharaja's kin, the Urs. The primary idea was that the Trust Board would take their houses and lands in the fort and give them enough compensation to buy a new plot in the new suburb reserved for the Urs. But the Urs, who used to have large houses in the fort, were often reluctant to sell their houses and move to the new suburb.[56] The acquisition of land in the fort was therefore never easy. The Trust Board asked the Palace to intervene in the matter of the acquisition of land, and the Urs tried to negotiate through the Palace to maximize the amount of compensation or to obtain better plots. Their houses were often built by the Palace Maramath (the public works department) using materials from old, demolished houses within the fort. The Palace also gave them generous loans to buy a plot and build new houses.

Dismantling the old city and developing new suburbs was intended not only to solve the problems caused by congestion and to ensure that the increasing population had a modern and hygienic living space, but also to create the opportunity to visualize and to fix once again the social stratification articulated by class, caste and religion. It is important to note, therefore, that the city was not simply a spatial representation of existing social stratification, but a device to make concrete and enforce social stratification itself.

The division of habitation based on community was transformed from the street-wise division in the fort to the more spacious and more distinct area-wise division in the new suburbs.[57] The suburb in the north was mainly for the Muslim and Christian population, since the *agrahāra* in the west and the south and the new quarters in the west were meant for the Brahmins, both priestly and lay, Lakshmipuram in the west extension and Itigas in the east for the Urs royals, extensions in the south for the other caste Hindus, and several separated areas, of which the largest was Jalapuri (now called Gandhi Nagar) in the north-east part of the city, for the *dalits* or untouchables.

The division of habitation was changed not only in terms of scale and dimension, but also in terms of social distance. Until the early nineteenth century, the distance of the residence from the palace building showed the proximity of a person to the king. The inner circle surrounding the palace consisted of the royals, high-ranking courtiers, and Brahmins, whereas the outer circle was mostly populated by the more lowly courtiers and other poor people. Sivarampet and Santhepet, just outside of the fort, were occupied by the merchants, and in the north of these commercial areas was the residence of the artisans and the Muslims.[58] However, during the drastic transformation of the city, people of wealth and status moved to suburbs far from the fort and the poor sections of society remained in the congested centre. Physical proximity to the palace ceased to represent social proximity to

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55   In the first instance the Board did not undertake to build houses but laid out extensions and divided them into plots with all the amenities to attract people from the congested areas. This effort was highly successful and in the new extensions, buildings sprang up with open spaces surrounding them (Mahadev 1975, p. 89).

56   There are many documents concerning the loan given by the Palace to the Urs and much correspondence between the Palace and the Urs who were reluctant to move from the fort. (KSA/MPD, PCO and UBS files).

57   Mahadev 1975, p. 11.

58   *Ibid.* p. 10.

the king and even reversed its original significance. Yet the incentive to create residential areas separated by caste and religions seemed to be somehow even more strengthened than before. This incentive was particularly strong among the high "clean" castes, who tried to avoid any kind of physical contact with lower castes as far as possible in order to maintain their ritual purity. They were especially afraid of receiving food or water from lower castes, and living next to them would do nothing but increase such risks. Some of the new suburbs in the west, such as Sarasvathipuram, inhabited mostly by people working for colleges or other educational institutions, were practically meant for vegetarian high castes, and non-vegetarian castes still hesitate to live there.[59] The improvement of the city was certainly one of the occasions on which people could differentiate themselves from others by using caste ideology in the same way as they would use a census to claim a higher status.[60]

THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE CAPITAL CITY AND THE RESTORATION OF TEMPLES

During the programme of beautification, marshy areas, such as old canals or tanks and the moat which used to surround Mysore Fort, were filled up, old houses in congested residential areas, typically in the fort, were demolished, and villages or forests surrounding the city were transformed into new residential plots. New modern spaces finally appeared after these operations were completed. It was within these new spaces that european-style boulevards, parks, and modern architecture were then constructed. The western area of the city, developed by the Trust Board, was one such modern space where several public buildings were built in an elaborate colonial style. The Gordon Park, named after the Chief Commissioner and later the Resident of Mysore in 1870s, was a huge empty space containing prominent buildings such as the Victoria Jubilee Institute (presently the Oriental Institute), the Maharaja College, and the Law Courts. Such disproportionate investment of state money in the beautification of capital cities was a common phenomenon in the princely states.[61]

While the Trust Board was constructing modern buildings and extending roads in new, developed areas, the fort was gradually changing its form and functions. The western extension, especially Gordon Park, was a more europeanized modern area, whereas the fort was meant to represent the Hindu capital. The clearance of the entire fort except for temples and palace buildings was decided upon in the late nineteenth century but was probably not completed until the 1930s.[62] However, the newly cleared spaces in the fort were enough to construct a new palace and to enlarge several temple compounds.

Mysore Palace, which is undoubtedly one of the most splendid palaces in India, was designed by British architect Henry Irwin. The construction of the new palace was started

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59   From oral communication with non-vegetarian residents in Mysore city.

60   Srinivas 1972 (1966), pp. 1–48.

61   For example, the transformation of Jamnagar city that Howard Spodek demonstrated is a case similar to Mysore (Spodek 1973 pp. 253–75).

62   I interviewed a retired railway employee, who had resided inside the fort till around 1925. He told me that the fort was still congested with market streets and houses in the 1920s.

after the old one was destroyed by a fire in 1897. The Maharani, the then Regent Vani Vilasa Sannidhana, decided to build a new palace on the model and foundations of the old one. Irwin, who was also known for the Viceregal Lodge in Simla and the Victoria Hall in Madras, had at that time recently retired as Consulting Architect of the Government of Madras and was therefore free to undertake private work. He received the contract for the new Mysore palace, his plan was approved, and the construction was inaugurated in October 1897, only eight months after the fire.[63] The new palace was to represent the second-largest princely state in India, therefore the scale and cost of the construction were inevitably extravagant. When the construction of the new palace was completed in 1912, the total cost reached Rs. 4,417,913, which was nearly double the original estimate of Rs. 2,500,000.[64] The actual cost of construction was equal to nearly one-quarter of the annual revenue of Mysore state.

In spite of its exotic appearance as a mixture of European and Oriental styles,[65] the plan of the new palace was based upon similar principals to the old one, as the Maharani had wished. The main structure of the palace consists of two parts. One is the front half of the palace, called *sajje*, which opens towards the public square, and was the place where the royal durbar took place during the state festival of Dasara and the Maharaja's birthday celebrations. The Maharaja, royals, high-ranking officers and representatives of different communities in the country all used to be seated here according to their rank and status. The other part of the palace behind the *sajje* could be seen as a combination of many rooms, called *toṭṭi*, which have a courtyard in the centre. A *toṭṭi* would sometimes be a departmental office, and sometimes a residential section. This structure was retained throughout the evolution of the palace.

Additional work was carried out in the 1930s in order to enlarge the *sajje*. This added a much wider stage to the palace building, which unfortunately covered Irwin's elaborate façade (Figs. 4 and 5). The expansion of the *sajje* clearly suggests that the Palace needed a wider space in order to accommodate more participants in the durbar and to allow a larger number of spectators to witness it. The fort thus gradually transformed its function into that of a stand for viewing the rituals and ceremonies of a "theatre state".[66]

In the course of the construction of the new palace, temples within the fort became the subject of restoration and beautification. The restoration of old temples, and the construction of new ones in the fort, had already started in the early nineteenth century.

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63 *The Mysore Palace, A Visitor's Guide*, Directorate of Archaeology & Museums, Mysore, 1989, Reprint 1996.

64 *Ibid.*

65 Thomas Metcalf has argued that the British believed this new architectural style, called Indo-Saracenic, was well suited for princely buildings, as well as their own public buildings such as railway stations, colleges, and law courts. The blending of "traditional" and "modern" elements exactly fitted their conception of the princes' role within India under the British Raj. The princes were meant to embody at once India's past and a vision of its future (Metcalf 1989, p. 106). In the case of Mysore, the Maharaja and royals probably had to choose the recognized architectural style for their new Palace, but the local idea of space, especially the use of *toṭṭi*, somehow survived beneath the extravagant ornaments of the new Indo-Saracenic style.

66 This shows how keen the Indian princes were to impress their people as well as the British with the extravagant display of rituals. However this might be overstated, since because the British undermined the central power of Indian kingship, Indian princes were arguably obliged to adapt and assert themselves more in the ritual domain (Dirks 1987, pp. 384–97). The display of state rituals, such as Dasara, cannot therefore be simply considered as an assertion of king's authority. See Gell 1997.

Figure 4. The Mysore Palace in the 1930s (Karnataka State Archives, Mysore Palace Division)

Figure 5. The Mysore Palace, 2005, by the author

Krishnaraja Wodeyar III constructed a Sri Vaishnava temple, Prasanna Krishnaswami temple in 1825 on the grounds that there was no temple for Krishna, which was also his own name.[67] Another Sri Vaishnava temple, Varaha Swami temple in the Hoysala style, was said to have been ruined in Srirangapattana and moved into the fort and reconstructed by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in 1809.[68] The Maharaja also restored and glorified several temples in the city, often by adding splendid *gōpuras* (towers) to the original structure. However, the restoration of temples in this period was a part of the traditional religious endowments by the king. Although the idea of *dharma* continued, these restorations were undertaken in an entirely different context during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

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67   *Mysore Archaeological Report*, 1919, p. 18, cited in Persons (1930, p. 84).

68   *Mysore Archaeological Report*, 1918, cited in Persons (1930, p. 83).

The cost of repairing the temples, which previously had been regarded as simply a part of the religious endowment to enable the temples to continue daily worship and occasional festivals, was for the first time regarded as necessary from an aesthetic point of view. In 1928, the state government directed an annual provision of Rs. 20,000 and an additional Rs. 10,000 for a period of five years for the construction and repair of Muzrai institutions and buildings "of architectural interest".[69] Out of Rs. 30,000 allotted annually, Rs. 2,000 was earmarked for disposal by the Palace authorities for the execution of repairs required for Muzrai institutions under their management. Prior to this Government order, the Palace authorities complained that the amount of the annual Tasdik grant for the Palace institutions was fixed in 1899 and was comprised of charges only for the establishment and expenses of daily worship and special worship, and did not include any of the sum required for repairing and keeping the structure in good condition. The Palace therefore had to advance a large sum of Rs. 37,000 to get the work done,[70] a decision which the Palace authorities vigorously defended whilst requesting reimbursement from the state.

> The Palace Institutions are primarily important ones being situated in the Capital city and it is incumbent on the part of the Government to bear the repair charges of these Institutions even though the entire management of these Institutions have been handed over to Palace with their Tasdik grant.[71]

The restoration and repair of temples in the fort was therefore a part of the beautification of the capital city. Temples of diverse styles, scales and sects were now surrounded by the newly designed compound wall. Five huge fort gates were constructed in a harmonized style with these walls. For each one of the gates, a temple for Vinayaka (otherwise called Ganesha, remover of obstructions) and a temple for Anjaneya (Hanuman, guardian of Vishnu) was either constructed or restored.

The curious composition of temples which attracted our attention in the first place was in these various stages gradually completed during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. The temples, which do not face towards the east (as customary) but towards the palace, were constructed or reconstituted during this period, except for one called the Trinesvarasvami temple. It is said to be especially auspicious for Shiva temples to face towards the west,[72] which is probably the cause of this temple doing so. Also, two Goddess temples, the Gayatri Temple and the Bhuvanesvari Temple, which face towards the palace not towards the east, were constructed in the 1940s and 50s. The transformation of the fort into the ideal representation of a Hindu capital was thereby finalized at last, shortly after Indian Independence in 1947.

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69   Government Order, dated 10 February 1928, *Proceedings of the Government of Mysore*, 1928.

70   The official letter from the Palace Huzur Secretary to the Finance Secretary to the Government, dated 4 August 1927 (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1928).

71   Document submitted on repair charges of the Muzrai institutions under Palace management (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1928).

72   From oral communication with priests of the temples in Mysore Fort.

THE CONCEPT OF *DHARMA* AND ITS DILEMMA IN MODERN SPACE

The fort of Mysore was transformed into a largely empty space in accordance with modern ideas of hygiene and sanitation, and the palace and temples all emerged in a renovated form. This new space in the fort was created, as we have seen, by a combination of modern ideas of improvement and traditional ideas of *dharma* working together. However, the co-operation of the two ideas was not always trouble-free.

As discussed in the introduction, the king's duty is to protect *dharma*. But the question remains unanswered; what is *dharma*? It is difficult to define *dharma* as anything more than that "which wise twice-born men praise".[73] The wise twice-born, the Brahmins, were represented in Mysore by three sects: the Smarta (*smārta*, followers of Advaita philosophy, Shaiva), the Madhva (*mādhva*, followers of Dwaita philosophy, Vaishnava), and the Sri Vaishnava (*śrī vaiṣṇava*, followers of Visistadvaita, Vaishnava). The Brahmins who belonged to these three sects were not only given several privileges, such as *agrahāras*, *inām* lands or villages and cows, which secured a source of their livelihood, but also were to be entertained by the king during certain rituals in which the Brahmin population of the city was given santarpaṇe, ritual mass feeding. For example, on the occasion of the annual eḍekaṭle, the ancestor worship ritual, for the late Maharaja Chamarajendra Wodeyar (1881–1894), thousands of Brahmins were fed in three different places in the city.[74]

The religious offices in the Palace, and the Sanskrit colleges supported by the Palace, and later by the state, all limited their appointments and admissions to Brahmins who belonged to one of these three sects. This monopolization of religious posts and knowledge by the Brahmins was later fiercely contested by the other religious sects, especially the Jains and Lingayats who claimed to be equal to the Brahmins.[75]

It is worth mentioning that the Mysore kings were generous towards religions other than Hinduism, although most religious endowments were given to Hindu institutions. They acted, at least in public, according to the idea of *rājadharma*, which defines the role of the king as a protector of all of his subjects and his country at large. The following speech made by Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV gives us some idea about how he tried to manifest himself as an ideal king who supports not only his own religion but all of his subjects' religions. The speech was delivered in Urdu, which is quite different from his mother tongue, Kannada, on the occasion of the opening of a mosque for the Muslim section of His Highness's Body Guard Troop in 1922.

> It will give me great pleasure if the Musalman community makes full use of the mosque and if they constantly resort to it for prayer and meditation. This mosque is situated on one side of the lines; the Hindu temple is on the other side. Each ministers to the spiritual needs of its followers. Each is symbolic of

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73 Heesterman 1985, p. 115.

74 In January 1916, on the occasion of the eḍekaṭle, 8,180 Brahmins (4,550 Smarthas, 2,350 Madhvas, and 1,280 Sri Vaishnavas) were fed in three places, the Government Anna Chattram, the Tulasi Thotam, and the Sankara Matha respectively (KSA/MPD PCO file no. 1898–1915).

75 The Jains appealed to the Palace for a post of *dharmadhikari*, and the Lingayats demanded the admission of Lingayat students to the Sanskrit Colleges, which limited admission only to Brahmin students.

that unity in diversity, which will, I hope, become in an increasing measure a pleasing characteristic of the motherland, with all its diverse castes and creeds. To a devout Hindu they represent but one of the paths leading to the same goal. If by providing them (you) with a mosque and by coming and taking part in the function, a Hindu like myself encourages them (you) to become truer Muslims practising the high principles and following the noble traditions of their (your) religion, I feel happy and amply rewarded. (. . .) I hope that you will bear mind the fact that you are Mysoreans first and all the rest next, owing a duty to the state, and that you will always work together for the common benefit and for the prosperity and advancement of the state in all possible ways.[76]

His tolerance and prudence in religious matters would certainly deserve Mahatma Gandhi's praise of his rule as "Rama Rajya" (the Golden Age ruled by Rama).[77] His belief that being more religious does not necessarily lead to communal hostility, but guides people to the same goal and enables them to work together for the prosperity and advancement of the state can be a strong aphorism for present-day society. The Indian ideology that the king transcends all the differences of religions and sects and unites them from above was clearly alive and persuasive in the modern discourse of nationalism in Mysore. However the transformative effects of religious revival on modern space were limited by the fact that modern ideology and traditional Indian idioms of politics and religion did not always work together so well. A history of a small goddess shrine standing just outside the fort helps us to understand this dilemma and the paradoxical nature of *rājadharma*.

The Kōṭemāramma temple, formally known as the Bisilumāramma temple, was a shrine of a local goddess of heat (*bisilu*) who is believed to have strong powers to cure diseases such as smallpox and chicken pox.[78] The local goddess, called here Bisilumāramma, is widely worshipped as a village goddess (*grama dēvate*) in different names and forms by all Hindus and especially by the lower castes, *dalits* (untouchables), and women. They are often independent and single, unlike other Hindu goddesses who are often presented as consorts of great Hindu gods. The devotees bring to such a village goddess special offerings called *tampu* (cooling food) to cool her down, and sometimes perform animal sacrifice (*bali*) to please her.[79] It has always been a problematic issue how to treat these indigenous forms of religious belief within a modern space, especially a bloodthirsty goddess such as Bisilumāramma.

Village goddess worship, although regarded as an indigenous and non-Brahminical tradition, lies at the very core of the ritual of kingship in Mysore. The Wodeyar's *kula dēvate* (family god) Cāmuṇḍēśvari was a local mother goddess who became the protector of the country under the patronage of the Wodeyars. During the state festival of Dasara, in which the goddess Cāmuṇḍēśvari kills the buffalo-demon Mahśāsura and restores peace to the

76 This speech was originally given in Urdu, and translated into English (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1918).

77 *The Hindu* 1 June 1936, quoted from Manor (1975, p. 37).

78 Māramma is also known as Mari and Māriyamman in Tamil Nadu, and Marīāī in Maharashtra, all terms derived from the Sanskrit *mārī*, meaning "plague, pestilence, epidemic pestilence personified" (Masilamani-Meyer 2003, p. 381).

79 Fuller 1992, p. 46, p. 85.

world, the Maharaja invokes her in the role of chief sacrificer.[80] Throughout the nine days of celebration, he daily sits on the throne into which the goddess is incorporated. The Maharaja's sitting on the throne in public is not a simple display of his power and authority but signifies a sacred communion of the kingship, the goddess, and the king himself.[81] The Dasara festival, therefore, clearly shows that the worship of goddesses is an indispensable factor for kingship and the king himself, whose duty it is to perform rituals to protect his country from evil and to ask the goddess's power to destroy evil and to recover peace. However, when the king needs external authorities – Brahminical ideology, the king's alien origin theory which gives mystic nature to their rule, and perhaps recognition by the British paramountcy – to establish his transcendent position in the day-to-day running of society, the local and indigenous forms of belief are found to be not always compatible. The Brahminical gods secure their omnipresence by the fact that they are transcendent and lie above local society. The raison d'être of local goddesses, however, is rooted in particular, discrete localities. Moreover, the Brahminical notion of *dharma* severely rejects animal sacrifice as being against the dharmatic rule of *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), which prohibits the taking of any life. (This though is a paradoxical part of *dharma* since the Veda, on which the notion of *dharma* is said to depend, is believed to focus to a large extent on the idea of sacrifice.)[82]

Brahminical ideology often deals with these local gods and goddesses in two ways. It sometimes incorporates them into the Brahminical pantheon by metamorphosing them into *avatārs* (manifestations) of great Gods; otherwise it denies them as trivial and savage beliefs. The goddess Cāmuṇḍēśvari is a case of the former. After the Maharaja returned to Mysore in 1799, he gave a huge amount of benefaction to her both in money and land. He not only magnified the scale of the temple by adding a huge *gōpura* (temple tower), but also invited Diksit Brahmins (Shaiva) from Madras Presidency and encouraged them to introduce more sanskritized rituals.[83] They sanskritized her original name, Cāmuṇḍi, into Cāmuṇḍēśvari, and incorporated her into the Great Gods' pantheon as an avatar of Pārvati, wife of Śiva.

Bisilūmāramma is a rather more peculiar example. Unlike Cāmuṇḍi she was not sanskritized, but she was not completely excluded by the Palace authority either. The *Annals* say that her temple was situated in the fort even before the transfer of the capital in 1799.[84] However during the dismantling of the congested parts in the fort, this temple was shifted from inside the fort to outside its southern wall. According to Palace records, Rs. 1,768 was spent on the construction of a new temple for this goddess in 1924.[85] The reason

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80 In popular Hinduism, the homology of the war and sacrifice is very common (Fuller and Logan 1985, p. 80).

81 Hayavadana Rao, 1936, pp. 147–48. On Dasara rituals in the present day Palace, see Swami Sivapriyananda and Gajendra Singh Auwa 1995. On Dasara or Navaratri in general, see Biardeau 1984, Fuller and Logan 1985, Fuller 1992, pp. 106–27.

82 Heesterman 1985, pp. 81–82.

83 Goswami and Morab 1991 (1975), p. 2.

84 *The Annals*, vol. 2, p. 90.

85 Letter from the Assistant Engineer in the Palace Maramath Office to Huzur Secretary, dated 17 October, 1924 (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1924). According to the letter, they first finished constructing the new temple, installed the image, and then demolished the existing temple in the fort.

why they had to move the temple outside the fort was not clear. Yet one can speculate that the Palace authorities or the City Trust Board had the intention to make the fort "clean" both in terms of hygiene and Brahminical ideology. Bisilumāramma temple, where people perform *bali* (animal sacrifice) for the goddess, and non-Brahmin priests, occasionally even women, officiate during temple rituals, could not be considered to be a "clean" temple from either the point of view of modern hygiene or Brahminical ideology.

The Palace's attitude towards the goddess's temple was not simple though. They decided to exclude her shrine from the fort, but at the same time included her as one of the Palace Muzrai institutions. This ambiguous and rather uncertain decision reveals not only something about the nature of the Palace's management of religious institutions but also the people's expectations of the king's role in society, especially his administrative intervention. A series of petitions sent to the Palace from the people in charge of the Bisilumāramma temple in the late 1920s sought the king's intervention in their dispute. The people who were in charge of temple affairs were of the Raja Parivara caste[86] and most of them were working in the Zillo Katcheri, a semi-military department in the Palace which regulated and undertook all arrangements connected with escorts and processions. The petitions were sent by a woman named Manchamma. She was the widow of Hirode Sidda Nayama of the Raja Parivara caste, a man who had served a long time in the Palace Zillo Katcheri. She sought help from the Maharaja to settle recent disturbances among them concerning the management of the temple. There were three groups – Hirode Sidda Naik, Tope Mancha Naik, and Jodi Sidda Naik – who in turn took responsibility for the worship and service of the goddess as *pūjāri* (priest), but after her husband's death two men took over the entire management of the temple and misused the temple income, including the income from *koḍuge* land (a type of *inām* land) granted by the Maharaja. She claimed that these two men ignored all the residents of the village, who used to share the responsibility of the temple, and asked the Maharaja to solve this problem.

> Your Highness – The Temple belongs to the Palace – The land belongs to the Palace. I request your Gracious Highness to kindly arrange for the disbursement of *mirāsu* (rights) and honours granted by the palace through the *yajamana* (chief) of the Village and not through these people and thus protect us poor and humble servants of Your Highness from the trouble and annoyance caused by these self-interested people.[87]

However, despite what Manchamma thought, it was no longer the case that the temple and its land belonged to the Palace. All the land in the fort and the surrounding area, where the Temple was, was now owned by the City Municipality. The temple was now one of the State Muzrai institutions whose management was indeed the responsibility of the Palace,

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86 They were described as Rachewar or Rajawar (*rācevāru, rājavāru*) in *The Mysore Tribes and Castes*. It also says that they formerly named themselves Bada Urs Makkalu (*baḍa arasu makkaḷu*), children of Bada Urs (the lower category of the royal caste, Urs). They insisted that they were of Kshatriya descent and the progeny of the Bada Urs, but this was not entirely recognized by the other castes (Nanjundayya and Iyer 1931, vol. 4, pp. 482–88).

87 A petition from Manchamma to the Maharaja Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV, dated 2 March 1929 (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1923–24).

but the Palace did not own it as she expected. Nevertheless the Palace did intervene in this dispute. They investigated the practice of the yearly turn of responsibility over the past ten years and made sure that this would continue as it used to.[88] Manchamma's claim shows that there was a popular notion of *dharma* in which the role of the king was to solve peoples' disputes and to bring peace to their daily life. According to this notion, the king was not someone who kept himself aloof from society and took responsibility only for the maintenance of the ideal *dharma*, but someone who could intervene to resolve material conflicts and disagreements and literally to restore peace and order to society.

Despite the fact that the Palace took responsibility for the Bisilumāramma temple's management, her temple was removed from the fort not only physically as we have seen, but also symbolically. One of the religious practices, which is continued till the present day, is the removal of the state sword from the palace whenever a festival (utsava) is performed and an icon of the god or goddess comes out from the temple in the fort. The idea behind this practice is to avoid any confrontation of two gods (the goddess in the state sword and the god in the temple) and to keep the sacred space of the fort harmonious and peaceful.[89] This practice was applied to the Bisilum*ā*ramma temple as well when it was inside the fort. But after her shrine was moved out of the fort, this practice ceased to involve Bisilumāramma.[90] Paradoxically though, at the same time she was excluded from the sacred space of the fort, she was renamed as Kōṭemāramma, or goddess of the fort, thus still clearly retaining importance in relation to this otherwise Brahminized, modernized and purified space.

CONCLUSION

As Guha pointed out, the two distinct paradigms – the British idea of improvement and the Indian notion of *dharma* – did indeed strengthen each other and create a modern space. A history of Mysore city, especially the spatial changes to the fort in the centre of the city, provides us with a concrete example of how these two paradigms worked together to serve the new regime. Spatial improvement realized the aesthetic of modern rule in the form of a hygienic empty space, which the authorities could easily control, and the notion of *dharma* created the ideal representation of *Rājadharma* (the king's duty) within this modern space. However indigenous forms of belief limited this collaboration of the two paradigms. Brahminical values could redefine and enforce themselves within modern administrative codes under indirect rule. Yet they failed to incorporate or to tame local and indigenous religions and customs, simply because the modern ideology of rule and traditional idioms of *dharma* worked so well together. The fate of the Kōṭemāramma temple within the fort reveals not only this limitation in cooperation between the two paradigms but also another notion of *dharma* which the people expected the king to exercise. In this alternative, popular notion of *dharma*, the king was expected to intervene to resolve

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88 List of turns of groups in Bisilumaramma temple, no date, but probably around 1930. (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1923–24).

89 From oral communication with the priests in temples in the fort.

90 Palace administration memo, dated 7 February 1925 (KSA/MPD Muz file no. 1923–24).

disputes within the wider society – an active and temporal engagement incompatible with both Brahminical ideas and the British desire to restrict his authority to purely private matters. The case of the Kōṭemāramma temple shows that at least at a symbolic level the Maharaja's public duties and involvement persisted. He thus functioned within the spheres of two entirely different and apparently conflicting notions of *dharma:* subaltern and Brahminical. The notion and functions of *rājadharma* survived not only with a doubly strengthened force to transform the urban space of modern Mysore but also as a necessary institution of everyday administration, although it was inevitably ambiguous in nature.

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