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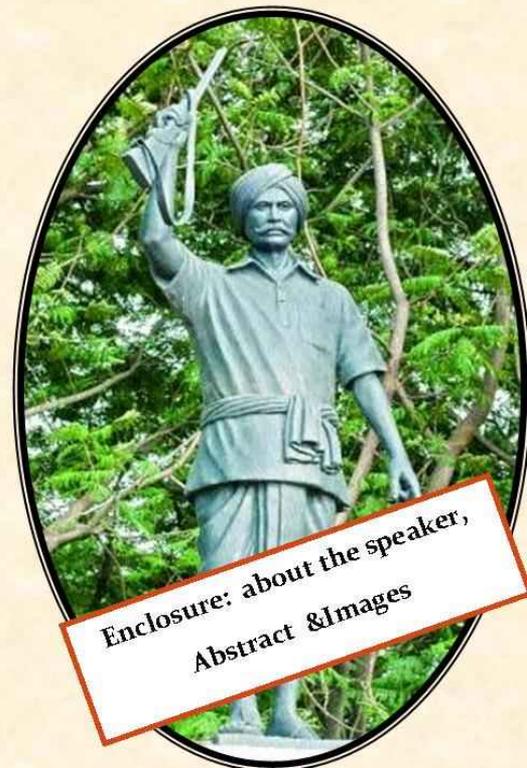
Old Borderlands

*Law, State, and Autonomy in the Hyderabad Deccan
c. 1800-2010*



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Enclosure: about the speaker,
Abstract & Images

Room No: 326

Committee Room, CHS, SSS-III

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Old Borderlands: Law, State, and Autonomy in the Hyderabad Deccan, c. 1800-2010

ABSTRACT: Expansive spaces of lawlessness and autonomy persist in the Deccan plateau even as various states have endeavored to fix, rationalize, and secure external or internal borders. This paper examines the making, unmaking, and endurance of borderlands between the erstwhile Asaf Jahi Hyderabad State and other political entities. In the mid-eighteenth century, Hyderabad was capital of a state that saw its territories plundered, and at times extended, by conflicts and treaties with expansive European (British and French) and South Asian (Maratha and Mysorean) states. By 1800, ceding lands and some domains of power to the British Raj, Hyderabad's Nizams emerged as rulers of a sovereign state with territorial borders and internal autonomy. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth Nizam—Raj borderlands, characterized by forbidding terrains and overlapping jurisdictions, posed impediments to imperial consolidation. Borderland spaces provided refuge to military entrepreneurs, varied peripatetic groups, alleged hereditary criminals, and other communities whose livelihoods were marginalized or criminalized in the colonial order. In 1947-48 when Hyderabad remained separate from, then was forcibly integrated into, the postcolonial Indian republic, these borderlands were a space for widespread unregulated state and popular violence. India subsequently struggled to pacify what were now internal provincial borders, which remain spaces for state avoidance or resistance, particularly in a Maoist idiom. By identifying the productive relationship between frictional environments, political regimes, and lawless spaces in Hyderabad's borderlands, this paper develops frameworks for historicizing dynamics there and on comparable internal and external political frontiers in South Asia and beyond.

Eric Beverley is Associate Professor of History at State University of New York, Stony Brook, USA, where he teaches courses on South Asia, the Muslim world, colonial and postcolonial studies, and other topics. His research on modern and early modern South Asia and the Indian Ocean world examines topics ranging from sovereignty and the making of the global state system, to colonial urban studies and the history of law and crime, to transnational connections and urban diversity. His book, *Hyderabad, British India, and the World: Muslim Networks and Minor Sovereignty, c. 1850-1950*, was published by Cambridge University Press in the UK in 2015, with a South Asia edition from CUP-India in 2016.

Images: 1. Balkrishna Chapekar, Maratha anti-colonial activist who fled into Hyderabad borderlands after assassinating plague commissioner in 1890s .2. image of slain North Telangana Naxal guerilla leader, "Comrade Swarupa," early 1990s 3. statue of Kumaram Bhim, Gond insurgent leader in north of Hyderabad State who agitated for forest rights in 1930s-40s