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### **ABSTRACT**

The Purpose of the present work is to study the historical, cultural, architectural aspects of the monuments of the Muslim period of a particular place i. e., Gulbarga, a historical town and the headquarters of the district in the state of Karnataka in Southern India on the basis of published and unpublished works, inscriptions, farmans and a field study of the monuments. The town of Gulbarga was a celebrated capital of the Bahmanis after the decline of the Hindu dynasties in the Deccan and later it became a famous religious centre for the Muslims in the Deccan. The study covers the period of 400 years of the city of Gulbarga to get a full picture of the cultural activities especially the building of monuments.



**KEYWORDS** :*historical, cultural, architectural, Hindu dynasties.*

### **INTRODUCTION :**

#### **Gulbarga Period:**

The genesis of the Bahmani dynasty may be traced to the several insurrections that the broke-up the Delhi Empire towards the close of the rule of Muhammad bin Tughluq. The officers in the province of Daulatabad had failed to collect the revenue due to the empire. When the emperor's punishments seemed imminent, some of the rebels contrived to escape to Gulbarga under the leadership of Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, who styled himself Zafar Khan. Gathering for himself a large army, he went to Daulatabad, where Nasiruddin, who had been earlier proclaimed as king of the Deccan by the rebels, abdicated in favour of Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, who proclaimed himself the ruler in August 1347 A.D and assumed the title of Sikander-i-Sani Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah-al-Wali. The title 'Bahman Shah' is mentioned in the Gulbarga mosque inscription and it is also found on the coins of the dynasty.

#### **Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah (1347–358 A.D)**

Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, the founder of Bahmani kingdom was descendent from the Persian ruling family of Kakuyds of the Iranian dynasty of Bahman and Isfandar, leading right up to

Bahman Gaur Hasan migrated to India from Ghaznah, then a province of Khurasan, in Iran, where Alauddin Hasan established a new dynasty, on the disintegration of the Tughluq empire, on 3rd August 1347 A.D, he adopted Iranian dynastic title of "Bahman" and hence his sobriquet "Bahman Shah", and consequently the dynasty was called "Bahmani". Alauddin Hasan naturally inherited the glorious traditions of the legendary kings of Iran with rich heritage of Islam, and there he introduced in the Deccan.

### **Muhammad-I (1358-1357 A.D)**

Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah died in 1357 A.D and was succeeded by his son Muhammad-I, who was a sound and industrious administrator. Muhammad-I instituted a council of eight ministers. He took strong measures for suppression of brigandage by the splendid court maintained by Muhammad-I. In the beginning of his reign, he was content with the silver throne which belonged to his father, but in 1363 A.D, he replaced this by a magnificent 'Turquoise Throne' sent to him by the ruler of Telangana.

### **Muhammad-II (1378-1397 A.D)**

The strongly cemented structure left by Muhammad-I was put to a severe test by the succession of five rulers who came to the throne one after the other within a short space of 22 years, and if we were to exclude the comparatively long and peaceful reign of Muhammad-II which lasted 19 years, the average of the other four rulers would not come to more than a few months each. The struggle for the throne demonstrated that the kingdom founded by Alauddin Hasan Shah and strengthened by Muhammad-I was well worth a struggle, and the series of murders and dethronements did not really come to an end till the accession of Tajuddin Firoz Shah to the throne on 1397 A.D

### **Bidar Period**

#### **Shihabuddin Ahmed-I (1422-1436 A.D)**

However, Saintly the new king Shihabuddin Ahmed was innocent, the death of his brother Tajuddin Firoz Shah he might have been, he must have heaved a sigh of relief when he heard that his brother was no more. At the very outset of his reign he had to undergo the shock of the death of his benefactor Hazrat Khwaja Sayed Muhammad Gesudaraz which occurred within a month of his accession.

#### **Alauddin Ahmed-II (1436-1458)**

The new Sultan was a man of a different calibre from that of his father, and was weak-willed and pusillanimous. He could not cope with the new problems of administration which arose out of the further influx of Afaquis from over the seas. In 1453 A.D Alauddin Ahmed-II was confined to his palace with an injury in the legend, this resulted in rumours being spread that he was dead.

#### **Alauddin Humayun (1458-1461)**

Alauddin Humayun who was eldest on succeeded to the throne, who had been known for his cruelty; his savagery earned for him the title of tyrant. About this time, the ruling Muslim aristocracy had split it self into two rival groups, 'the Deccanis' and 'the Afaquis'. They came to settle down here, some at the invitation of the Bahmani Sultans and others of their own accord.

### **Nizamuddin Ahmed-III (1461-1463 A.D) and Shamsuddin Muhammad-III (1463-1482 A.D)**

Alauddin Humayun's son, Nizamuddin Ahmed-III, was only eight years old and his mother managed the affairs of the state with the help of Khwaja Jahan and Khwaja Mahmud Gawan. During this time, the Hindu ruler of Telangana also Mahmud Khilji of Malwa invaded his kingdom. The former turned back, but the invasion of Mahmud Gawan posed a serious danger. The Bahmani forces had to sustain a defeat and the capital had to stand a siege. Ultimately, the ruler of Gujarat came to the help of the Bahmani kingdom and the combined forces were successful in compelling the Malwa army to retreat.

### **A Brief Sketch of Khwaja Mahmud Gawan**

The Bahmani kingdom which extended from sea to sea consisting of the four large provinces, (1) Gulbarga-Bijapur (with Raichur and Mudgal), (2) Daulatabad (with Bir, Junar and Chaul), (3) Berar (with Mathur) and (4) Bahmani Telangana, two were held by Khwaja Mahmud Gawan and Yusuf Adil Khan, both Afaquis and two others, Telangana and Berar, by Malik Hasan Nizam-ul-Mulk and Fathullah Imad-ul-Mulk. The leader of the Afaquis was Yusuf Adil Khan, who gathered around himself many Afaquis. In 1472 A.D, the Raja's of Belgaum and Bankapur tried to recover Goa for the Hindu empire.

### **Disintegration of Bahmani Kingdom**

A glimpse at the political situation in the Deccan, which was marked by political confusion and disintegration during the last two decades of the 15th century, is necessary to follow the trend of events which contributed to the evolution of the Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur.

The execution of Mahmud Gawan, the saviour of Bahmani kingdom and the architect of a grand empire on the 5th safar 886/5th April 1481 A.D struck a fatal blow to the Bahmani kingdom. Mahmud Gawan's last words,

He repeated the Quranic verses,

سُبْحَانَكَ هَذَا بُهْتَانٌ عَظِيمٌ<sup>26</sup>

Transliteration; Subhanak Haja Buhtan Azim

Translation; "God be praised I this is truly a great calumny"

"The death of an old man is of little moment, but to your Majesty (Muhammad-III) it will mean the loss of your character and the ruin of your empire", proved to be prophetic. Within a decade, the vast empire of the splendid edifice of the Bahmani kingdom presented a chequered scene. His death removed a dominating personality and let loose the forces of disintegration. This signaled the beginning of the decline and fall of the mighty kingdom.

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3. Sherwani, H.K., and Joshi, P.M., Ed, History of the Deccan Medieval Period, vol-II, p.156
4. Sayed Ali bin Azizullah Tabatabai, Burhan-i-Maasir, p.30, says that Tajuddin Firoz Shah had made the grandees of the kingdom pay homage to Hasan Khan
5. The title Shihabuddin occurs in a tablet which is now built into the prayer niche of an old mosque at

Rauza, a suburb of Sagar; see Sherwani, H.K., *The Bahmanis of the Deccan*, p.123

6. Shihabuddin Ahmed's sainthood is recognised by many, present day inhabitants of the Deccan, both Hindu and Muslim, the Muslims calling him Hazrat Ahmed Shah Wali and the Hindus 'Alam Prabhu' one sees in particular on the occasion of the Sultan's Urs, hordes of Hindu and Muslims, men and women, standing on the grave begging the dead king's intercession with the Almighty. It is related that his prayers once brought rain to the famine stricken Deccan. he was a great believer in the supernatural in Hazrat Gesudaraz and Shah Nimatullah Kirmani, *Ibid*, p.123

7. Immediately on his accession Ahmed gave a number of villages to Hazrat Gesudaraz, and this endowment was recognized by succeeding generation of the rulers of the Deccan, see Abdul Jabbar Malkapuri's *Tazkirat-ul-Auliya-i-Deccan*, p.107; who says that the deed is with the Sajjada Nasheen of the Mausoleum.

8. There is a difference of a few days in the dates of the death of Ahmed-II, according to Ferishtah, *Haft Iqlim* and *Burhan-i-Maasir*, but *Burhan-i-Maasir*, may be taken as correct that Humayun succeeded his father in 1458 A.D

9. Afnasey Nikitin, the Russian traveler, who visited Bidar in 1470 A.D described it as 'the chief town of the whole of Muhammadan Hindustan'

10. The sagacious Dowager Queen Makhduma-i-Jahan, wife of Humayun and mother of Shihabuddin Muhammad-III, Sherwani, H.K., *The Bahmanis of the Deccan*, p.199



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