



ARCHIVAL AND LITERARY HERITAGE OF BAHMANIS OF BIDAR

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ABSTRACT :

The Bahmanians of Bidar adopted all administrative practices of the Iranian and Persian as the official court language. They were patrons of Persian language, culture and literature. The archival heritage of Bahmanis of Bidar may be classified into two sections i.e diplomatic and administrative documents. Diplomatic correspondences are preserved in various Insha sources. The Insha and Farmans are valuable data of the Bahmanis. The institutions popularize Persian language. Intellectual attainment reached its zenith during this period.

KEYWORDS: Archives, diplomatic, farmans, zenith.

ARCHIVAL HERITAGE:

The Bahmanis adopted all administrative practices of the Iranians and Persian as the official court language. This was because Iranians and other polymaths constituted bulk of the nobility. Thus all official records including the royal *Farmans* were in Persian¹. The official orders and communications at the centre and provincial level were in Persian. For the conduct of official administration was in accordance with the guidelines laid down in *Riyaz-ul-Insha* of Bahmani Wazir Khwaja Imaduddin Mahmud Gawan in 1475 A.D, which is a manuscript of Persian diction followed in the writing of correspondences etc².

There was a separate department called *Darul-Insha* under a *Dabir-ul-Mumalik* or *Munshi-ul-Mumalik*, who was responsible for all official correspondence. For their drafting and issuance *Nazir-ul-Mumalik* was responsible for the drafting of diplomatic correspondence³.

The archival heritage of the Bahmanis of Bidar may be classified into two sections one is diplomatic correspondence and another administrative documents and these were in Persian. Most of the diplomatic correspondences are preserved in various *Insa* sources⁴. While the administrative documents are extremely rare, a few of them are recorded. The diplomatic correspondences of the Bahmani Wazir Khwaja Imaduddin Mahmud Gawan are preserved in his *Riyaz-ul-Insha* or *Manzir-ul-Insha*⁵.

Bahmani documents are extremely rare. Hardly a few have been recorded. They are preserved in the A.P. State Archives, Hyderabad. Nine out of six are royal orders *Farmans* of the Bahmani Sultans; while three are official orders. Some may be with descendents of several Sufi saints of the period spread over the Deccan.

The earliest one is a Farman of Sultan Firoz Shah Bahmani, dated 25th Ziqada 808 A.H corresponding to 4th May 1406 A.D, bearing Tugra, regarding the grant of land as *Inam* to Moulana Muhammad, Qazi at the kasba Kalyanabad (Modern Basavakalyana), in perpetuity, with later renewal of the grant. It



bears a *Tugra* of Allah Ala Hamdu Oola of Abul Muzaffar Firoz Shah Sultan and has three seals which are unintelligible⁶.

Another Farman is of Sultan Shamsuddin Humayunm Shah dated 9th Jamadi-I, 883 A.H corresponding to August 1478 A.D, bearing *Tugra* regarding the royal approval of the succession (*Sajjadagi*) and stating that during the life time of Mian Minallah, he had not only nominated the succession to Mian Kalimullah but had entrusted the responsibilities and duties of the *Sajjadagi*. In this regard royal orders were issued. As such Kalimullah may perform the duties in accordance with the previous practice⁷.

A Farman of Sultan Shihabuddin Mahmud dated 7th Shawwal, 893 A.H corresponding to 14th September 1488 A.D addressed to *Hakim-i-Shara (Qazi)*, and officers (*karkuns*) present and future, informing that they should act in accordance with the *Farman* and *Ahadnama* (agreement) of Mirza Habibuddin Shah Muhibullah Hussaini⁸. Mean while, Mian Abul Muhammad s/o Ahmed has brought another farman about which Shah Muhibullah is not aware of. In this Farman it is stated that Mian Safirullah has no right to serve (*Bandagi*) to *Makhdum-i-Jahani*. However, in this regard, writings to makhdum-i-Jahani along with royal Farman are available with Mian Safirullah⁹. The Farman which Abul Muhammad had obtained is contrary to the facts and may be treated as cancelled.

LITERARY HERITAGE:

Persian was the literary language of the ruling class under the Bahmanis. The founder of the Bahmani kingdom being Iranian origin, after his accession¹⁰, there was a continuous flow of poets, scholars and saints to the Deccan from Iran, Iraq, etc., The establishment of educational institutions at Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Elichapur, and other places during Alauddin's period promoted the cause of Persian literature and languages¹¹. These institutions popularize Persian among the youth,. Alauddin seems to have instituted an annual festival on the occasion of *Nauroz* on which day he used to give audience to poets and eminent scholars, thus popularizing Persian language and literature. The most significant of these were Ismai¹², the author of the *Futuh-us-Salatin* and Shaikh Ainuddin Bijapuri who added supplement to the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*. The renowned persons who were attached to the Bahmani court were, Mulla Moinuddin Haravi, Hakim Alimuddin Tabrezi, Hakim Nasiruddin Shirazi, Lutfullah Sabzwari, Mufti Ahmed Haravi, Mir Muhammad Badakshi, Sharif Samarqandi, Saifuddin Ghorri and Fazlullah etc¹³.

Intellectual attainment reached its zenith during the times of Sultan Tajuddin Firoz Shah Bahmani. He was a great patron of literature, a poet himself and had knowledge of different languages. With the pen name Uruji, later changed to Firoz, he composed *Ghazals* before accession¹⁴. Muhammad Qasim *Fersihtah* has recorded his two *Ghazals* and a quatrain. His period was significant in the development of Persian literature. With strong contacts with Iran he invited a large number of scholars from Iran and Khurasan¹⁵.

During Sultan Shihabuddin Ahmed-I's reign, Iranian scholar Adhari was assigned compilation of the history of the Bahmani rulers in verse under the title *Bahman Nama*. Earlier Mulla Dawood Bidri had compiled history of Bahmani dynasty in prose.

Khwaja Imaduddin Mahmud Gawan, the illustrious Minister and Scholar greatly contributed to the development and spread of the knowledge of Persian and literature. He laid the foundation of the famous Madrasah at Bidar and made arrangement for the visits and teaching by the foreign scholars¹⁶. Such as Jalaluddin Dawami. For the great efforts of Mahmud Gawan, Bidar became a famous seat of Persian culture and education. His creditable contribution is to Insha writing his own Riyaz-ul-Insha which is a unique literary heritage. Mahmud Gawan also compiled a similar work Manazir-ul-Insha¹⁷.

As a cumulative effort of patronage of Persian by the Bahmani rulers and their ministers etc., Persian had the maximum opportunity to develop in its various facets. Such as poetry, prose, *Insha* historical literature, technical and administrative works etc.

REFERENCES:

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3. *Ibid*, p.173
4. M.A. Nayeem, *The Heritage of the Bahmanis and Baridis of the Deccan*, p.200

5. *Ibid*, p.209
6. Yusuf Khan, *op.cit.*, p.15
7. *Ibid*, p.16
8. *Ibid*, p.17
9. *Ibid*, p.18
10. Muhammad Qasim Ferishtah, *Tarikh-i-Ferishtah*, p.197
11. *Ibid*, p.191
12. Moulana Isami, *op.cit.*, p.203
13. *Ibid*, p.207
14. Haroon Khan Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan*, p.243
15. *Ibid*, p.247
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17. Ghulam Yazdani, Trans, *Riyaz-ul-Insha*, p.171