



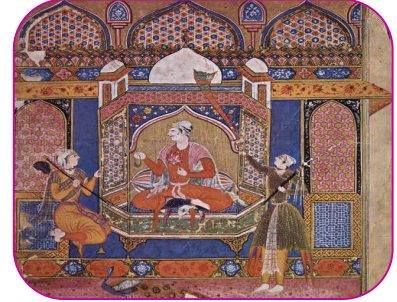
A STUDY OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION UNDER BAHAMANI AND ADILSHAHI KINGDOM

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ABSTRACT

In the immense cycles of time it is but natural to witness the rise and fall of vast empires integrating forces build up empires while they crumble and fall down to pieces when the disintegrating political processes set in. permanency does not seem to be a factor in the progress of time. The older always seem to make room for the younger and more vigorous to be the causes what they may. History seems to be simply a repetition of the problem of adjustment and readjustment of countries in the political vocabulary. While there are many causes which fall under the keen observation of clever historians for the rise and fall of nations and empires, there may be still many more causes embedded in the womb of time, which elude his mental grasp and which are nevertheless as strong and potent-if not stronger as those which he is able to identify in their creation or destruction. The history of Bahamani Kingdom is full of political adversities, invasions and wars, usurpation and dynastic changes, but still it stuck to its noble ideals and achieved them with strenuous and steadfast efforts. Plentifully resourceful and fabulously opulent, the kingdom had a well established government, efficient administrative institutions, internal peace and security of life, facilities for the welfare and advancement of her subjects, agricultural growth, prosperous trade industries, towns and cities with teeming population, freedom of religion, amenities for education and learning⁽¹⁾. It is in this background the present paper makes an attempt to study the central government under the Bahamani Kingdom.



KEYWORDS: Central Administration, Bahamani Sultan, Ministers, Wakil al-Saltanat, Majlis-Khalwat, Darbar.

INTRODUCTION:

The head of the state was called the Sultan. According to prevailing Muslim ideas sovereignty was supposed to reside in the entire Muslim population of the kingdom and the sultan, was in theory supposed to be elected by them in practice, however, the franchise was restricted and became confined to a few notable men and eventually to only one man. The right of nominating his successor by the dying king was usually recognized. In theory there was no hereditary succession and the office of the Sultan was within the reach of any Muslim who could prove his fitness⁽²⁾. In practice it was restricted to the members of the ruling family. As was the case with other Muslim states, the law of succession in Bijapur was an amalgam of precept and practice. The sultan enjoyed absolute power in strict Islamic theory the true king of a Muslim state is God. The Sultan in his agent on the earth to enforce the divine law as expressed in the Quran⁽³⁾.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

- To Study the Central Administration.
- To know the power of Sultan.
- To analyze the duties of Ministers.

- To know the strategy of Ulemas.
- To explore the administration of justice under Bahamani Kingdom.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study is historical as well as analytical and based on the historical records, which consists of primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected from lithic records, monuments and other unpublished works. The secondary data were collected from State Archives of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh., various books, journals and articles etc. are also used in the present study. The primary and secondary source material has been of great help in the development of the present paper.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The present study is aimed of examining and Evaluating the Central Government of Bahamani Kingdom. The present study falls in the area of central administration during Medieval Deccan, which in turn falls within the range of political history of Medieval India. The researchers in the field of political history nominated historical research during the pre-independent period. The post independent period however witnessed a short decline in the study of political history. But the study of Central Government under Bahamani Kingdom will be widen the scope of political history of Bahamani Empire for further research.

A critical review of the existing literature and also the aims and objectives of the study on hand brings forth the importance of the study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Studies on Central Government under Bahamani Kingdom are in general are numerous. However, specific studies like the present one are few and far between.

Suryanath U Kamath, in his famous book titled Karnataka State Gazetteer (Part I) has given the history of Central Administration of Bahamani Kingdom which still appended to the his works, excellent as the work was for the time and for the sources and historical material at their disposal, it suffered from the neglect of the evidence available in the various forms in literature, which go a long way towards filling up the many gaps that in respect of that history.

Among the general studies **Ishwari Prasad** "Medieval India" deals with the Central Administration Division under Bahamani Kingdom in a Pan-South Indian Context. This study also deals under the veneer of a uniform political system during Bahamani's rule.

Salma Ahmed Farooqui's book entitled "A Comprehensive history of Medieval India" is one more scholarly work on the history of Bahamani Empire. This book explains the establishment of Central Administration, organization aspect related with the Bahamani's rule.

Sherwani H.K. "Mohmud Gawan's Political Thoughts and Administration" is one more qualitative work on the administrative system in the rule of Bahamani Kingdom. In this work author has elaborated the central government under Bahamani's rule.

Thus, it becomes clear from the above studies that, they have concentrated much on the political and administrative aspect of Bahamani Empire. Though there were some vague studies concentrating on the political history but they were related to particular reason and no effort has been made exclusively to study the central administrative system under Bahamani's rule at macro level, therefore this research study has been initiated to fill the research gap on central government set-up during the Bahamani's.

A STUDY ON CENTRAL GOVERNMENT:

- **The Sultan (King)**

The Sultan was accepted as the supreme lawmaker, the fountainhead of justice, the chief executive and the supreme commander of the army. In short, he virtually held the position of the Imam of the faithful the basis of his power was military and religious. A few sultan of Bahamani defied he Quaranic law and yet no one dared to remove them because they had the support of a powerful army and there was no

constitutional device to remove an erring king peacefully from the throne. The Sultan was thus a thoroughgoing military autocrat and the government of Bahamani was a centralized despotism. During the minority of king or when the king was weak and indolent sovereign power was wielded by the nobles. The nobles fought bitterly for power and civil wars took place on many occasions ⁽⁴⁾. In normal times the king was respected and obeyed by the nobles.

The Bahamani kings used all the paraphernalia reserved for independent sovereigns they had the throne, the chhatra, the court and a host of courtiers. The khutba was read in their name and they issued gold coins at a later stage. Drums were beaten five times a day for their enjoyment ⁽⁵⁾. All the Bahamani rulers, with the possible exception of one or two, were hard working men. They remained busy from early morning till night. Both Farishtah and Zubairi give us a glimpse of their daily routine. The Sultan passed the early hours of the morning in the company of learned men. All rulers of Bahamani were passionately devoted to learning, art, and distinguished men of all branches of knowledge-shed luster on that court. During this time the Sultan also received reports from different parts of his kingdom brought by the reporters and messengers most of these reporters were Brahmins and had free and uninterrupted access to the king ⁽⁶⁾.

- **Darbar (Court)**

The King studied the reports preparations received from different parts of kingdom for the open “Darbar” which occupied the next three hours of the day. Except on Fridays, the “Darbar” used to take place daily. No one was allowed to sit in the Darbar. The nobles used to stand on the right and left on the throne according to their ranks. The Darbar served the purpose of a council of state and was useful in ascertaining the trend of opinion, among the officers of the kingdom. It was open to all. Anyone could come and lay his grievances before his sovereign. Complaints could be made ven against the highest official of the state. The proceedings of the Durbar lasted till the time of the noon prayers ⁽⁷⁾. After it the sultan retired for rest for two hours. The rest of the day was utilized in discussing matter of state with the ministers. On certain days the Sultan held a review of the troops in the morning.

- **The Majlis-Khalwat (Personal Section)**

Though an autocrat, the king needed advice on certain occasions. For this purpose he had a large circle of advisers, many of whom were non officials and they constituted what is known as the Majlis-Khalwat. It consisted of the Sultan’s personal friends, his trusted officers and some of the notable “Ulema”. They were called upon to give advice to the sultan from time to time. Their advice was not binding on him.

- **MINISTERS**

Besides this body there were ministers to assist the sultan in the work of administration. Their number was never fixed and it varied from time to time. They were appointed by the sultan were responsible to him. Their position was only advisory and they held office during the sultan’s pleasure. Except the Qazi, every minister was invariably a military officer. Their position was, therefore, determined by the contingent of soldiers they kept for royal service. These ministers had no independent position. They were no more than the secretaries of modern times ⁽⁸⁾.

- **The Wazir or Wakil al-Saltanat (Prime Minister)**

The prime minister of Bahamani kingdom was called Wazir of Wakil al-Saltanat. He was king’s deputy and his authority was only next to the sultan. All firmans issued by the king bore his seal in he bottom left and corner ⁽⁹⁾. In all matters, internal an external, the king consulted him and usually his advice was respected. He enjoyed great authority and sometimes even exercised the power and prerogatives of the sultan with certain restrictions. He appointed important offices in the name of the sultan and heard complaints against all officials. He acted for the king Wakil-al-Saltanat was generally appointed as regent and

in that capacity enjoyed unlimited powers. He could dismiss any officer from service, confiscate any estate and declare war against or make peace with a neighboring kingdom at his own will. When placed in such enviable position he sometimes thought of doing away with his master⁽¹⁰⁾.

Besides being in charge of the general administration, the Wakil-al-Saltanat was particularly the head of the finance department. In this capacity he was responsible for laying down rules and regulations for revenue settlement and fixing rates of other taxes and for controlling the expenditure of the realm⁽¹¹⁾. In addition he had to superintend the civil servants. He controlled the military establishment also. He was also responsible for the distribution of stipends and subsistence allowances to learned men and the poor people. The Wakil-al-Saltanat was also the commander-in chief of Bahamani kingdom. He was responsible for the proper upkeep and maintenance of an efficient army.

CONCLUSION / FINDINGS:

From the analysis of the administrative systems prevailing in the Bahamani kingdom it could be stated that the central government during the Middle Ages was only the apparition of the ruling king. No plant grew under the banyan trees of the kings. The king as it were, was the revolving moon round the earth. The King provided brightness and guided all the deliberations. The palace and the Durbar occupied a prominent place. Pomp and show as essential and each, king depending upon his taste, gave a new colour and a fashion. The glitter of the court inspired both reverence and awe among the people. The rulers of Bahamani Kingdom followed the traditions of Islamic law in administration. The king was the head of the state and he was regarded as the god's representative on the earth. He was the lawmaker, the highest administrator, the supreme commander of the army and the highest judicial authority in the state. The Bahamani kingdom was theocracies, for its political and administrative institutions were in theory, derived from Islamic law and sanctioned by it. The Bahamani kingdom was an Islamic state in which all the powers were concentrated in the hands of the Muslim nobility. Hence, it could be said that the administration adopted by the Bahamani kingdom was based on its theology but was later modified according to the real administrative necessities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

There is wide scope for the Research Scholars and Teachers to conduct a Research on Central Government set up during Bahamani kingdom. Present study is having good future towards minor and major research projects.

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