

Original Article

Important Contemporary Literary Sources of Adil Shahi

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Introduction:

This research paper highlights historiographical trend that was current during the reigns of the Adil Shahi Sultans of Bijapur. The paper also traces the development of various historical writings such as general histories, monographs, chronicles, etc. The paper also provides very useful information for the research students of the Important Contemporary Literary Sources of Adil Shahi in particular.

The Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur was centred on modern Bijapur district in Karnataka, in the western region of the Deccan Plateau. Earlier it had been a province of the more extensive Bahmani kingdom. The Bijapur kingdom was established in 1489 and ceased to exist as an independent entity on its annexation by the Mughal Empire on 12 September 1686. The founder of the Adil Shahi dynasty, Yusuf Adil Shah, started his career as a Bahmani sultan-appointed governor of the province. In fact, even though he declared independence during his governorship, he and his son continued to title themselves as 'Adil Khan'. Khan, meaning Chief in Mongolian and later adapted to Persian, conferred a lesser status than Shah which indicated royal rank and title. It was only Yusuf Khan's grandson who first used the title Shah after which the term Adil Shah started to be used commonly to indicate the ruling monarch of the Bijapur kingdom.

Literature during the Adil Shahi dynasty (1490–1686) of Bijapur flourished primarily in Persian, Dakhni Urdu, and Marathi, patronized by the sultans. The most vital Important Literary Sources of Adil Shahi of Bijapur in the capital.

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Muhammad Qasim Ferishta:

After making some changes it was renamed as Nauras Narma". The former name is connected with Ibrahim Adil Shah II and the later with the new capital, Nauraspur, founded by his patron. But the work is generally referred to as Tarikh-i-Farishta by Mohammad Qasim Hindu Shah, named Farishta". He compiled the general history of India from the earlier times, at the behest of Ibrahim Adil Shah II and presented it to him on 1606 A.D. But later on it was supplemented with details up to 1623 A.D.

Farishta was born at Astarabad, on the borders of the Caspian Sea, about 1570 A.D. His father, Ghulam Ali Hindu Shah was the tutor to Prince Miran Husain, son of Murtaza Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar. He left Ahmadnagar on the dethronement and murder of the parricide Miran Husain in 1589 A.D. and withdrew to Bijapur where he was introduced by Dilawar Khan, the regent to Ibrahim Adil Shah II. He stayed at Bijapur from 1591 A.D. to his death in 1623 A.D. However,, Farishta fought on the side of Bijapur in the battle which preceded the downfall of the regent, Dilawar Khan and was taken prisoner by Jamal Khan the general of Ahmadnagar and somehow affected his escape shortly and was again introduced to the King by Inayat Khan of Shiraz about the year 1593 A.D.

Ibrahim Adil Shah II presented him a copy of Raudat-us-Safa of Mir Khawand and bade him to undertake the compilation of a comprehensive history of India, with Raudat as the model. He also remarked that no competent person had written a general history of the Muslims in India, except Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad's Tabaqat-i-Akbar Shahi and even his work was too brief and imperfect as regards the Deccan. Farishta's monumental history deals with practically every Muslim monarchy of medieval Deccan, which to the greater extent was based on facts and devoid of falsehood and flattery.

Farishta divided his work into twelve chapters besides introduction and conclusion. The work commences from the early Islamic period, for which he says that he had consulted thirty-five different histories of the past. Although it is a general history of the whole country, provincial dynasties have not been neglected. A detailed account of some of them is given in the book. While dealing with the history of India he divided it into three Maqalas". The third Maqala, divided into six Rauza, deals with the kingdom of the Deccan. Though the second Rauza was completely dedicated to the history of Adil Shah Dynasty from its foundation, the political relation with the Bahmanis, during the evolution of the Adil Shahi Kingdom finds place in the first Rauza,

which was devoted to the Bahmani Sultans. The history of each Adil Shah ruler from Yusuf Adil Shah to Ibrahim Adil Shah II is described in a chronological manner and bringing his narrative up to the year 1606 A.D. Farishta is our chief source for the nobles history of the Adil Shahi Kingdom of Bijapur from its inception and evolution to its annexation to the Mughal Empire in 1686 A.D.

He supplies details of the nobles' conflicts, disputes, hostilities and their relations with various ethnic groups as well as the Deccan States and the conclusion of treaties or agreements etc. Elaborate and minute details of the campaigns which are use till for the interpretation of the nobility are given. As an eye-witness for the events of late 16th and early 17th century, Farishta's graphic and concise account is fairly reliable and authentic. But there are exceptions. Thus for events which are not contemporary to him or known to him personally he is not certain and makes vague statements. For instance, he is not definite as to whether Yusuf Adil Khan declared independence in 1489 or 1489-90 A.D. He does not give the exact date. His account is incomplete at some places. He has committed many a slip in his brief description of the history of the Qutub Shahis.

He says that Muhammad Quli Qutub Shah ascended the throne in

1581 A.D. at the age of 12, when he himself gives the date of his birth as 1567 A.D. Again, writing in 1609-10 A.D. he says that the envoy of Shah Abbas Safawi of Iran, Aghuzlu Sultan, was still in the Deccan waiting for the acceptance of the proposal of marriage of the Shah's son to Muhammad Quli's daughter Hayat Bakshi Begum, although the princess had already been married to Sultan Muhammad. Another drawback of Farishta's history is that he has not fully narrated under Bijapur the account of its relations with other states.

Some events of diplomatic relations between Bijapur and Ahmadnagar or Golconda are not fully detailed under the history of the Adil Shahs. Common events are differently narrated at different places. Thus, in some cases, accounts from two different parts have to be correlated in order to render the history intelligible. For instance the agreement of 1572 A.D. between AH Adil Shah I and Murtazza Nizam Shah I, is incomplete in both the parts of the history of the two kingdoms.

The agreement is complete only when its terms given in different sections are combined together. In the same way he makes certain wrong statements when he is relating the history of the Bahmanis. In spite of these and other shortcomings Farishta's history contains a mass of facts, figures

and dates unsurpassed in the existing chronicles of medieval India.

In 1794 A.D. Captain Jonathan Scott published his translation of the history of Farishta at Shrewsbury. It was its first translation and then the Persian text was edited by John Briggs with the help of Mir Khairat Ali Khan Mushtaq and published in two volumes by the Government of Bombay in 1831-32 A.D., two years before the Persian text was published, appeared in 1829 A.D. in four volumes the monumental English rendering of Farishta's history by Briggs. The work was published in London. It was later reprinted in India.

The Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow also published the Persian text in two volumes in 1855 A.D. and also an Urdu translation. This translation of Fida Ali was also published by the Osmania University, Hyderabad.

Rafi-Ud-Din S'hirazi:

The second contemporary chief history was Rafiuddin Ibrahim Shirazi's "Tadhkirat-ul-Muluk". Ibrahim Shirazi, Rafi ud Din was had born about 947/1540-41, historian of the Adil Shahi Dynasty of Bijapur. He travelled from Persia to India as a merchant, and from the age of twenty served Sultan Ali Adil Shah' as a steward (Khansalar) and scribe. In 1005/1596-97, he received from Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah an appointment as ambassador to

Ahmadnagar, he also held posts as governor of the Bijapur fort and treasurer. He was born about 1540-41 A.D. and came to Bijapur as a merchant and gyrated into Adil Shahi service in the time of Ali Adil Shah I, rising to the post of Royal Secretary and Mint Master. Not only had this he also held the offices of Governor of Bijapur and Steward (Khansalar) of Prince Path Khan. He rose in the estimation of Ibrahim Adil Shah II who sent him on an important diplomatic mission to Ahmadnagar in 1597 A.D.

The history of the Adil Shahi Dynasty covered by Rafiuddin is almost the same as that covered by Farishta. It records the history from the beginning of Yusuf Adil Khan's career to the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, up to 1611 A.D. Though it is primarily a history of Bijapur in nine chapters, but the author prefaces it by a short history of the Bahmanis and ends it with an epilogue on the Mughals from Timur to Akbar.

So, in the first chapter it records briefly the history of Bahmanis, from chapter two to chapter five are devoted each to the first four Adil Shah rulers, i.e., Yusuf Adil Khan, Ismail Adil Khan, Mallu Adil Khan, Ibrahim Adil Shah I respectively; in the sixth chapter he deals with the Sultans of Gujarat, Nizam Shahi's of Ahmadnagar, and Qutub Shahis of Golconda: seventh chapter is the continuation of the history of Ali

Adil Shah 1 from the fifth chapter, chapter eight records the history of Ibrahim Adil Shah I reign; while the ninth chapter briefly touches the Mughal and Safawid rulers of Persia with whom the Adil Shahis had close relations.

Rafi ud din account of the reigns of Ali Adil Shah I and Ibrahim Adil Shah II is most valuable and authentic, because he was an eye-witness and had served both these Sultans under various capacities. Being a noble and an official of Bijapur, his account of the other nobles and officials occupies a unique and special position.

It is interesting to note that he did not suffixes the royal titles of "Shah" to the first four Adil Shah rulers and call them by their name without using the epithet Shah, while Farishta had used this epithet from the very beginning of Yusuf Adil Khan's reign. Rafiuddin, who was not only a historian but a very high profile noble, well versed in politico-diplomatic relations, calls the first two rulers by their Bahmani titles as "Majlis-i-Rafi" Yusuf Adil Khan or Ismail Adil Khan, while to Mallu and Ibrahim he suffixes the title of "Khan" only. Although there are definite inscriptions of the fourth ruler Ibrahim I wherein he is called Shah and this is partly correct, because from 1536 A.D. Ibrahim Adil Shah I was a full-fledged sovereign and adopted the title of "Shah". However,,

from the fifth ruler Ali Adil Shah I onwards he started suffixing the title of 'Shah'.

It is also interesting that he has traced the genealogy of the founder of the dynasty, Yusuf Adil Khan to Mahmud Beg of Sawah in Central Asia, not to Mahmud, the Ottoman Sultan as is sometimes asserted. Being an eye-witness some accounts of him are different from that of Farishta.

For instance, Farishta attributes the origin of the confederacy against Vijayanagar in 1564 A.D. to Ali Adil Shah I, whereas Rafiuddin who was not only an eye-witness but was associated with Ali Adil Shah and was present in the battle of Banihatti, records that Husain Nizam Shah was the father of the confederacy. He also gives an account of Malik Amber, throwing new light on his life and career, and has some highly interesting observation on the Ellora cave" temples.

But there are certain matters which the author has included on Hearsay and they have to be discounted. Thus, like Farishta he gives a position of authority to "Gangu Pandit" during the rule of the founder of the Bahmani dynasty and narrates some supernatural stories about Hazrat Sirajuddin Junaidi, the patron saint of the early Bahmanis. On the whole some of the details in 'Tadhkirat-ul-Mulucs are well

worth consideration and fill in certain lacunae left by other chroniclers.

Except for the first chapter of the book, which was published in the Hyderabad Journal "Tarikh" many years ago, the book has not seen the light of print while some manuscript are found in the Salar Jung library at Hyderabad and in the British Museum. The late Sir Jadunath Sarkar had also a copy and it was probably made for him from the British Museum copy. Only the portion relating to the Bahmanis has been translated into English by Major King as a supplement to his translation of portion of the Burhan-i-Maathir

Muhammad Hashim Fuzuni Astrabadi:

The third contemporary chief history was in the form of a comprehensive historical monograph of the reign of Muhammad Adil Shah, at whose instance Muhammad Hashim Fuzuni Astrabadi had written "Futuh-i-Adil Shahi" in 1640-43 A.D. He supplements the facts recorded in the history of Farishta. As its name shows it is the history of the Adil Shahi Dynasty and it is particularly valuable as the source book for the reigns of Ibrahim Adil Shah II and Muhammad Adil Shah, to whose accounts Fuzuni was an eye-witness.

The work is divided into six chapters, in chronological order, are

devoted to the first six Adil Shah rulers, i.e., Yusuf Adil Shah, Ismail Adil Shah, Ibrahim Adil Shah, Ali Adil Shah, Ibrahim Adil Shah II and Muhammad Adil Shah. The last two chapters are more comprehensive in their treatment than the preceding ones, and these chapters cover two-third space of the monograph. At the end of the fifth chapter are notices of the poets who lived at the court of Ibrahim Adil Shah II and also gives glimpses of the literary life at the court and add to our information about Malik Amber

Fuzuni is an indispensable source for the nobles of Bijapur and their role in shaping the relations with the Mughals, Ahmadnagar and Vijayanagar. It gives certain unique accounts which shaped Shah Jahan's policy towards Bijapur. For instance, the letter of Mustafa Khan, addressed to Abul Hasan Bijapuri envoy at Shah Jahan's court, which reveals a secret agreement between Adil Shah and Shah Jahan and which compelled the latter to be kind and friendly towards the former

He faithfully quotes numerous controversial versions of an incident and then finally attempts to give his own version. However, he sometimes ends the controversial account abruptly. The Futuh-i-Adil Shahi is the earliest source available on the history of the later period of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, from 1606 to 1627 A.D. It is an exclusive and independent

history of the Adil Shahi Dynasty and it is certainly far more comprehensive and richer in details than the brief work of Rafiuddin.

Each chapter of the Futuhat appears to be an expansion of the corresponding chapter of Tadhkirat. The only known copy of the Futuhat is in the British Museum, and a photo state copy is in the Bombay Record Office, while a hand written copy was in the library of Sir Jadunath Sarkar. It is probably due to the uniqueness of the manuscript that it is rarely mentioned by research scholars.

Zuhur Bin Zuhuri:

The fourth contemporary chief history of this period is "Muhammad Nama" by Zuhur bin Zuhuri, popularly known as Mulla Zuhur. It is mainly the history of Muhammad Adil Shah's reign (1626-56 A.D.); but it also gives an account of the later period of Ibrahim Adil Shah II's reign and thus supplements Tadhkirat. An interesting feature of this book is that it gives the dates of certain social functions, marriages, Uruses of Muslim saints and construction of some royal palaces.

It thus throws considerable light on the social history of Bijapur. It is the only source giving minute details of Bijapuri nobles and their relations with the rulers of Kamataka, Ginji, Thanjavur, Madura, etc.

Thus, describes the southern campaign of Muhammad Adil Shah. It is also an important source for the campaigns of Shahji and Shivaji in the South. The historical account of Muhammad Nama is divided into ten chapters.

The first chapter mentions the hostilities with Ahmadnagar and conquest of Parenda, siege of Bankapur, chapter two gives elaborate details of hostilities with the Mughals, communications with Abdullah Qutub Shah of Golconda in respect to the Mughal hostilities and marriage of his sister with Muhammad Adil Shah, dual policy of Khawas Khan in helping Ahmadnagar against the Mughals and at the same time invading its territory, and the role of Bijapuri Commander, Murari Pandit in setting up a new Nizam Shah; the third chapter mainly deals with the internal affairs of Bijapur, the fourth chapter deals with circumstances which led to the conclusion of the so-called Treaty of 1636 A.D, between Shah Jahan and Muhammad Adil Shah.

The terms of the Treaty given by Zuhur are identical with those given by Lahori. The fifth, sixth and eight chapters are devoted for Bijapur's Campaign in the South; while the seventh is partly devoted to the Mughal Campaign in Deccan and the Karnataka affairs. Chapter nine and ten deals with the important social affairs and the

private life of the officials of Bijapur which throws light on the life style of the nobles and their participation in the enrichment of culture and traditions.

Mulla Zuhur ends his account abruptly in 1654 A.D. Thus, he leaves a lacuna for the last years of Muhammad Adil Shah's reign. Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi has utilized a part of Muhammad Nama in his Basatin-us-Salatin and also gives the information that Muhammad Adil Shah commissioned Mulla Zuhur to compile a history of the reign on the basis and model of Rafiuddin Shirazi's Tadhkirat-ul-Muluk.

A copy of Muhammad Nama is preserved in the collection of Sir Jadunath Sarkar which is itself a copy of the manuscript stocked in the Kapurthala Library. dated 1782 A.D. There are two other copies of Muhammad Nama, one in the Bijapur Museum and another in the Salar Jung Library, Hyderabad.

Qazi Nurullah:

"Tarikh-i-Ali Adil Shahiyah" is the fifth chief contemporary sources by Qazi Nurullah and also called Insh-i-Adil Shahiyah owing to its ornate composition and diction. It is the second historical monograph among the chief contemporary sources. written at the order of Ali Adil Shah II. It deals with the history of Ali Adil Shah II and narrates events from his birth to the ninth years

of his reign. i.e. 1666 A.D. when Jai Singh and Shivaji invaded Bijapur, but they were repulsed. Qazi Nurullah, whose ancestors migrated to Bijapur from Gujarat on its occupation by the Mughals in 1573 A.D.

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