

SOUTHERN DYNASTIES

The sultans' failure to hold the Deccan and South India securely resulted in the rise of competing southern dynasties—the Muslim Bahmani Sultanate and the Hindu Vijayanagar Empire.

**Judicial System under the Sultans of****Delhi**

The Sultan would sit at least twice a week to hear the complaints; against the officials of the state. The Qazi-bMumalik used to sit with the Sultan to give him legal advice. Decisions were made according to the Shariah. Cases of non-Muslims were decided according to their particular religious laws.

Revenue System under the Sultan of**Delhi**

The revenue structure of the empire followed the Islamic traditions inherited from the Ghaznavids. Only in the details of agrarian administration, it was modified in accordance with local needs and practices. The state depended on agricultural produce. Three methods of assessment were sharing, appraisal and measurement. The first was simple crop division; the second was appraisal of the quantity or value of the state demand on the value of probable crop yield and the third was the fixation of the demand on the basis of actual measurement of land. Revenue was taken and people in the form of cash, or kind. Jazia tax was imposed on non-Muslims. Women, children, old, mentally and physically disabled people, monks, and priests were exempt from Jazia.

Army System under the Sultans of**Delhi**

The army was administered by the Ariz-Mumalik whose duty was to provide horses and rations to the soldiers. His office maintained the descriptive roll of each soldier. He was to assign different tasks to the soldiers and also was responsible for the transfer of military personnel. Even officers of the court who held military ranks received salaries from his office. He was Collector General of the army. He exercised great influence on the state.

The Bahmani Sultanate (1347-1527)

Zafar Khan, a former provincial governor under the Tughlaqs, revolted against his Turkish overlord and proclaimed himself sultan, taking the title Alu-ud-din Bahman Shah in 1347. The Bahmani Sultanate, located in the northern Deccan, lasted for almost two centuries until it fragmented into five smaller states in 1527. The Bahmani Sultanate adopted the patterns established by the Delhi overlords in tax collection and administration, but its downfall was caused in large measure by the competition and hatred between the cleccahi (domiciled Muslim immigrants and local converts) and the paradesi (foreigners or officials in temporary service). The Bahmani Sultanate initiated a process of cultural synthesis, which is visible in Hyderabad, where cultural flowering is still expressed in vigorous schools of Deccani architecture and painting.

The Vijayanagar Kingdom (1336-1646)

Founded in 1336, the empire of Vijayanagar (named after its capital Vijayanagar, 'City of Victory', in Karnataka) expanded rapidly towards Madurai in the south and Goa in the west and exerted intermittent control over the east coast and the extreme south-west. Vijayanagar rulers closely followed Chola precedents, especially in collecting

agricultural and trade revenues, in giving encouragement to commercial guilds and in honouring temples with lavish endowments. Added revenue needed for waging war against the Bahmani sultans was raised by introducing a set of taxes on commercial enterprises, professions and industries. Political rivalry between the Bahmani and the Vijayanagar rulers involved control over the Krishna-Tungabhadra river basin, which shifted hands depending on whose military was superior at any given time. The Vijayanagar rulers' capacity for gaining victory over their enemies was contingent on ensuring a constant supply of horses—initially through Arab traders but later through the Portuguese—and maintaining internal roads and communication networks. Merchant guilds enjoyed a wide sphere of operation and were able to offset the power of landlords and brahmins in court politics. Commerce and shipping eventually passed largely into the hands of foreigners, and special facilities and tax concessions were provided for them by the ruler. Arabs and Portuguese competed for influence and control of the west coast ports, and in 1510, Goa passed into Portuguese possession.

The city of Vijayanagar itself contained numerous temples with rich ornamentation, especially the gateways, and a cluster of shrines for the deities. Most prominent among the temples was the one dedicated to Virupaksha, a manifestation of Shiva, the patron deity of the Vijayanagar rulers. Temples continued to be the nuclei of diverse cultural and intellectual activities, but these activities were based more on tradition than on contemporary political realities. (The first Vijayanagar ruler, Harihara I was a Hindu who converted to Islam and then reconverted back to Hinduism for political expediency.) The important temples of

Vijayanagar style are Vithalswami and Hazara temples at Hampi. It was the Vijayanagar rulers who initiated the practice of inscribing the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata on the walls of these temples. The temples sponsored no intellectual exchange with Islamic theologians because Muslims were generally assigned to an 'impure' status and were thus excluded from entering temples. When the five rulers of the Bahmani Sultanate combined their forces and attacked Vijayanagar in 1565, the empire crumbled at the Battle of Talikota.

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