PREFACE

The present study of the copper coinage in the Marathawada region during the Bahmani sultanate and its five provinces (later independent states) in the Deccan has its unique importance. As such, up till now no study of coinage in the earmarked region is made. Hence such specialized study of the region was long over-due. Though, the Marathawada region formed as the core area of the medieval Deccan territories. And from the beginning of the seventeenth century the area became a centre of political activities of the ruling Muslim states of the Deccan and the north Indian Mughal imperialism. The political instability of the Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar rang the alarming bells to the other Deccani states, and they began to find the means by conciliation or wars for their survival, in case the Mughals spread their tentacles. Though, the Mughal campaigns and later the conquests of the major parts of the Nizam Shahi kingdom (that included the Marathawada region) resulted in the pillaging of the vibrant political and cultural fabrics of the one of the successive states. But the Mughal conquest of the Marathawada and then making of Aurangabad as the capital of the Mughal Deccan brought immense importance to the region. From here the further onslaught and the conquest of the Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur in 1686 and the Qutub Shahi kingdom of Golconda in the succeeding year by the Mughals were materialized. Even after the decline of the imperial authority in the Deccan, owing to the virtual declaration of independence by Nizamul Mulk Asaf Jah (one of the members of the Mughal peerage) and up to the shifting of the
capital by him from Aurangabad to Hyderabad, the former city and so to say the Marathawada region occupied a prime status in the history of the Deccan.

The present work is considered to be of comprehensive nature and of its own kind which fills a lacuna in the Marathawada history in particular and the Deccan history in general. In furtherance to the numismatic findings, the study reconstructed the political, administrative and socio-economic aspects of the Marathawada region. The survey and intensive dealing of the source materials led to delve deep into the complicated political, economic (trade and commerce, etc.) and numismatic matters, and that made to make a synthesis and present a systematic account based on original sources i.e. collection of coins of the Bahmani sultanate and its off-shoots of the Qutb Shahis dynasty of Golconda, the Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar, the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur, the Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar and the Imad Shahi dynasty of Berar.

Earlier, some numismatics, historians and the scholars (names mentioned below);

1. C. J. Brown
2. R. Burn
3. O. Corrington
4. Sir Walter Elliot
5. P. L. Gupta
6. J. R. Hunnargikar
7. R. P. Jackson
8. P. M. Joshi
9. H. Kaus
10. Muhammad Abdul Wali Khan
11. Muhammad Ismaeel
12. D. Rao
13. H. K. Sherwani
14. B. V. Shetty
15. E Abdul Majeed Siddiqui
16. E. E. Speight
17. G. P. Taylor
18. F. J. Thanawala
19. H. M. Whitell
20. R. K. Bright
21. A. S. Athavale
22. D. Raja Reddy
23. P. Suryanarayana Reddy
24. Stan Goron
25. J. P. Goenka
26. Martin Marie Hamilton

And others dealt with the gold, silver and copper coinage; however they singularly studied either the coinage of individual rulers or sometimes of the dynasties. And most of the times it is found that a single coin is intensively mattered. Further most of the studies were lacked the scientific approaches, as at that time the facilities were not available or sufficient, as a result the scholars dealt the coins as they felt deemed fit.
The present study explored as a whole the knowledge of copper coinage of the principal dynasties of the medieval Deccan that ruled the Marathawada region. It gives us the details of the kings in the region, chronology, extension of the territories, religions, customs, dresses, hobbies of the rulers and the ruled, brisk trade among the states, and with the foreign countries, prosperity of the kingdom, language and the script, artistic taste of the people, science of metallurgy, etc. Further, the knowledge of coinage helped to corroborate the evidence gathered from other powers. It is noticed that from the coins that some of the kings made use of the coinage to exhibit their state policies, religious beliefs, even used it to appease the people and the religious stalwarts.

The application of the scientific methods in dealing of the copper coins thereby accrued great benefits to know the metrological details like weights, sizes, shapes, type of metal, etc. During the course of study it is noticed that dealing the medieval coins was an arduous task, most particularly in deciphering of the legends and the dates cited therein. Each coin is dealt with great care and its legend is read with great accuracy, and even compared with the legends of other coins. Further, my own knowledge of Arabic language greatly served me to understand in proper way the Arabic legends cited in the coins of the kings of the Bahmani dynasty and other successive states. These Arabic legends are written mostly in the praise of God, and bore the prayers in which the kings sought blessing of Him. The legends are just not mentioned for namesake; however, they are meaningfully depicted in the then political, religious and cultural backgrounds. The legends are so suitable that they served the purpose or objects of the ruler, who
struck the coins. The successive Deccani states mostly preferred the Persian language and legends in their coinage in comparison to their predecessor state of the Bahmanis. Hence their coins are quite pregnant with the Persian legends. It had happened for the reasons that the Persian of Gharibudiyar group, who observed the Asna Ushri tenets of the Shia Islam dominated in the first half of the life span of the successive states. Here we find that in the course of time the Arabic legends began to gradually disappearing. Even, in the course of study, in the interpretation of the matters of the coins, it is tried to ascertain that in which type or background or circumstance the ruler issued the coin. What made him to execute his scheme of coinage, his intention or object in issuance of a particular coin, etc. Such types of interpretations, hitherto, are scare in earlier studies.

The study of copper coinage is very interesting, as it is found that every king issued the copper coins that marked his accession, independence and exercise of authority. The gold and silver coins are rare. The kings, who ruled for a longer period with imperative styles and brought prosperity in their respective kingdoms dared to coin money in the yellow and white metals. The scheme of coining money in the costly metals also marked the possession of enormous wealth by the ruling dynasties and sound financial health of the states. However, the copper coinage was widely used by the rich and poor alike as it was the common currency of the south Indian kings from the ancient times known in history. Therefore in almost all areas of the Marathawada region the copper coins of the kings of the ruling dynasties understudy are found.
Though in the Marathawada region the imperial dynasties of the Khaljis, Tughluqs and the Mughals reigned, and even some of their coins were minted at the important towns of the region, but the present study shed light only on the medieval copper coinage of the Bahmanis and their principal provinces. In the course of research it is noticed that from the region the copper coins of almost kings of the Bahmani dynasty are found, even the coins of minor or titular kings are not missed. Further, the equal amount of coins of the Qutb Shahis, the Nizam Shahis and the Adil Shahis are respectively gathered for study. However, the coins of the Barid Shahis and the Imad Shahis are totally uncommon, though the dynasties actively involved in the politics of the medieval Deccan and ruled considerably period. Further, the reason to be taken for the depreciation of their coinage, gives the indication that the dynasties were passing through abnormal times. It is true to the dynasties of the Barid Shahis and the Imad Shahis that they disappeared from the political scenario of the Deccan very soon comparable to their other powerful Deccani counterparts.

Thus, in this research work or study all efforts are put diligently and brought forth the latent knowledge that will enlighten in great deal regarding the history and culture of the Marathawada region. It will help further to reconstruct the history of the region in many ways.