CHAPTER VI

BARID SHAHI COINAGE
Gateway to Bidar fort
CHAPTER VI
COPPER COINAGE
OF THE BARID SHAHI DYNASTY

• Brief History
• Copper Coinage

Brief History:

The Barid Shahi kingdom of Bidar was the smallest of the five states that had been disintegrated from the greater Bahmani kingdom. It was surrounded on the east, north, north-west and west respectively by the states of Golconda, Berar, Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Though the Adil Shahi and Nizam Shahi dynasties of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar covered more than 3/4th of Maharashtra under their administrative control, however, the rule of the Barid Shahis of Bidar covered roughly the present districts of Nanded and a part of the district of Osmanabad. In all the following nine rulers are known from the dynasty.

Qasim Barid-I (1489-1504)

Qasim Barid was the founder of the Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar. Originally he was a Turk, hailed from Georgia. He entered in service of Muhammad Shah Bahmani-III, in his early boyhood. On account of his dint of merit he rose to the highest position in the kingdom. He proclaimed his independence at Ausa and Qandhar.¹ but the Bahmani king Mahmud Shah made terms with him and in 1492 confirmed him in the post of Mir Jumla (prime-minister). During the reign of Mahmud Shah Bahmani (1482-1518), the real power of the state passed into his hands. He died in 1504, and he was succeeded by his son Amir Barid.
Amir Barid (1504-1542)

Like his father, Amir Barid too wielded unbridled sway over the Bahmani kingdom. After the death of Mahmud Shah in 1518 the four succeeding Bahmani kings became tools, one after another, in his hands. He was in fact a king-maker, changing various Bahmani kings at his pleasure, but he could not set them aside, because, he feared that usurpation of the crown might unite other Tarafdars (provincial governors) in the defense of the scions of the Bahmani line. In 1528 Kalimullah Shah Bahmani, the last Bahmani king fled to Bijapur and thence to Ahmadnagar, in order to save himself from the clutches of his prime-minister. With his flight, Amir Barid became practically independent. However, he never formally declared his independence nor did he assume the title of Shah. It was because of qalimullah Shah, who was still alive.

In 1527, Amir Barid aided Burhan Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar against Alauddin Imad Shah in capturing the fortress of Patheri. The allied armies also took the fortress of Mahur and ravaged Berar. When Sultan Bahadur of Gujrat advanced for the help of Berar, thence Amir Barid retired to Parenda. Later Amir Barid was tampered with the loyalty of the Bijapur troops. To punish him, Ismaeel Adil Shah marched to Bidar. Seeing this, Amir Barid retired to Udgir. But later, he was captured by Asad Khan, a Bijapuri commander. He was released when Bidar was handed over to Bijapur. He promised to aid Bijapur against Vijayanagar to recover the Raichur Doab (an area between the Krishna and Tungabhadara rivers). Seeing the pathetic conditions of Amir Barid, Ismaeel Adil Shah restored Bidar to him, after getting Kalyani and Qandhar.

**Ali Barid-I (1542-1579)**

The new king, Ali Barid-I assumed the title of Shah and adopted other royal insignia. Thus the tale of the five succession satellite states of the Bahmani kingdom was complete. The appearance of the Bahmani state brought considerable turmoil with the various states often fighting among themselves.

In the beginning of his reign, Ali Barid joined hands with Golconda, Ahmadnagar and Vijayanagar and attacked Bijapur. He besieged Sholapur. However, Ibrahim Adil Shah-I succeeded in gaining over Sadashivaraya of Vijayanagar and Burhan Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar and dealt severely with Jamsheed Quli of Golconda. Later, when Burhan Nizam Shah tried to renew the confederacy against Bijapur, Ali Barid refused to be a party, hence the former attacked kingdom of Bidar and reduced the fortress of Ausa, Udgir and Qandhar. In 1547, Burhan Nizam Shah took Kalyani. In 1564, a confederacy of the Deccan Sultanates was formed in which Ali Barid was also drawn. The issue was fought out in January 1565 in decisive battle of Talikot, which resulted in complete defeat and disintegration of Vijayanagar.

After sometime when the hostilities were renewed among the sultanates, Ali Adil Shah-I helped Ali Barid against Golconda and

**Ibrahim Barid Shah (1579-1587)**

Ibrahim Barid Shah succeeded to his father Ali Barid. His rule was short-lived for 7-8 years only.

**Qasim Barid Shah II (1587-1591)**

Qasim Barid Shah-II succeeded to Ibrahim Barid Shah. His rule too did not last long, which ended just in four years. During his time the strength of powerful neighbouring states was growing and the Barid Shahi dynasty was leading a fairly precarious existence over a shrinking territory.

**Ali Barid Shah-II (1591)**

Qasim Barid Shah-II’s minor son under the title of Ali Barid Shah-II came on Bidar’s throne. But the relative of an infant king, named Amir Barid usurped the throne.

**Amir Barid Shah-II (1591-1600)**

Amir Barid Shah-II reigned a declining state for nine years. In August 1600, Ahmadnagar was occupied by the imperial troops of the Mughals. Now, alarmed by the external danger from the north, Bijapur, Golconda and Bidar began preparation to face the enemy. In ensuing encounters against the Mughals, Bidar’s role was not remarkable.

**Mirza Ali Barid Shah-III (1601-1609)**

Amir Barid Shah II was expelled by another member of the Barid Shahis named Mirza Ali Barid Shah-III. He ruled for nine years with no remarkable achievements.
Amir Barid Shah-II (1609-1619)

Amir Barid Shah-III was the last ruler of the Barid Shahi dynasty. He maintained the family traditions of hostilities with Bijapur. Hence to punish him Ibrahim Adil Shah-II marched against Bidar. The Bijapur forces took Bidar and its ruler along with his sons. They were carried off to Bijapur, where they lived out their days under surveillance. Bidar was annexed to the Adil Shahi kingdom.  

Copper Coinage:

The Barid Shahi state of Bidar had a perilous existence. It survived for about a century, before it was absorbed by the Adil Shahis of Bijapur in 1619. Had there not been constant strife amongst the neighbouring states and their almost constant trouble with Vijayanagar, Bidar, perhaps would have been soon grabbed by one of the Deccani states. Just to survive, the Barid Shahi kings adopted a policy that suited them. They took best advantages of the perpetual strife that existed among other Deccani states and sided the powerful friends against the enemy. That policy resulted in survival of the state at least for a century.

Though the state short-lived, but the Barid Shahi kings issued copper coins in names of their masters and of their own. It is unthinkable that any coin would have been issued by Qasim Barid Shah-I in his own name. During his time the Bahmani king, Kalimullah Shah was nominally occupying throne at Bidar. It was only after his flight in 1528 that Amir Barid-I (successor of Qasim Barid-I) might have issued coins. In this regard Muhammad Qasim Farishtah wrote in his book Tarikh-e-Farishtah that Amir Barid was a Sahib-e-Sikka (a king of coin), which suggests that he did strike coins. But no coins of this period
are yet known. Only the statement of Farishtah stands as evidence in this connection.

It is doubtful that whether any coins were issued in the reign of Ali Barid Shah-I, though he calls himself Shah in his inscriptions. It was bold step of calling himself Shah, even during the life-time of his Bahmani master. It can be presumed that as Shah, he could well have used the prerogative of striking coins. Numismatist Abdul Hameed Siddiqui has attributed a coin to the period of king. According to him it bears the following legends;

Obverse  
*Al Muwayad Bi Nasr Allah Baridul Mulk*

(Baridul Mulk, who is strengthened by the help of God)

Reverse  
*Al-Sultan Al-Adil Amir Barid Shah*

(a just king, Amir Barid Shah, Bidar)

Date: X62 (A.H. 962, A.D. 1554)

The date (9) 62 is coupled with the title *Baridul Mumalik*, which was conferred by the Bahmani rulers on Qasim Barid-I, and his son Amir Barid Shah-I, and the appellation Shah added to the name of Amir Barid Shah-I. But the numismatists D. Raja Reddy and P. Suryanarayana Reddy doubt the attribution of the said coin to Ali Barid Shah-I.

After doubtful attribution, with certainty it can be said that the fourth ruler of the dynasty Ibrahim Barid Shah to have struck coins in the later part of his reign in the name of his own dynasty. In his earlier coins, he retained the name of the Bahmani king Kalimullah Shah on the obverse; it is only on the reverse that he placed a new legend *Bi-Amr-e-Sultan Barid Shah* (an act of Sultan Barid Shah). It means, he retained the name of his Bahmani master, Kalimullah Shah, and also stated that
the striking of coin was his act. Such coins are dated in A.H.993 (A.D. 1558). In the same year Ibrahim Barid Shah dispensed with the name of Kalimullah Shah and introduced another Bahmani legend on it. It reads thus;

Obverse       Al-Muwayad Bi-Nasr Allah Al-Ghani
              (Strengthened by the help of the Rich [Allah] or Wealthy)
Reverse       Bi amr Al-Sultan Barid Shah Bani
              (An act of Sultan Barid Shah, the founder)

This type of coin is found from Marathawada region (Shivaji Meusium) Plate No. 28, Table No. 28, Fig.No. 566. The word Bani, means the founder, it is an Arabic term and is the nominative (drived) form of Bina meaning foundation. Ibrahim Barid Shah arrogated himself the credit of founding of the Barid Shahi dynasty. But Raja Reddy and Suryanarayana Reddy opined, “It is most likely that it was he who issued first the coins in the name of the Barid Shahi dynasty, which was imperative for the Muslim rulers to assert the independence of their kingdoms, and it was not an indication that he claimed himself as the founder of the dynasty.” Of the same king there are some other coins that bear the legends as under;

Obverse       Al-Muwayad bi-Nasr Allah
              (Strengthened by the help of Allah)
Reverse       bi-amr Al-Sultan Barid Shah (An act of Sultan Barid Shah)

Qasim Barid Shah-II, the fifth king of the dynasty issued copper coins that are known only of the year AH. 997 (A.D. 1588), which possess the legend as under;
Obverse:  *Al-Muwayyad Bi nasr Allah Al-Sultan*
  (The Sultan is strengthened by the help of Allah)
Reverse:  *Bi-amr Al-Sultan Barid Shah* (an act of Sultan Barid Shah)

Hurmuz Kaus and Abdul Hameed Siddiqui opine that the word *Al-Sultan* in the obverse legend represents denomination. But it seems the term is used for the ruling Sultan.

The next king, Amir Barid Shah-III also coined copper coins. From Marathawada region three coins in round shape bearing. (Plate No. 29, Table No. 29, Fig.Nos. 567- 569). Fig.No. 567,568, from Shivaji Museum. The legends are discussed below;

Obverse:  *Al-Muwayad bi nasr Allah Al-Malik Al-QawiAl-Ghani*
  (Strengthened by the help of Allah,
   Who is a Lord, Powerful, the rich)
Reverse:  *Bi amr Al-Sultan Al-adil Barid Shah*
  (An act of just king Barid Shah)

The obverse legend is Bahmani type, and the reverse legend begins with the royal title *Al-Sultan Al-Adil*, meaning the just king.

The Barid Shahi rulers adopted the Bahmani pattern in legends of their coins. Most of the obverse legends are imitative, and the reverse legends contained the name of the Barid Shahi kings. Regarding the coinage of the early kings of the dynasty I found references in the historical account, however, no actual coins were found. In fact the Barid Shahi coins are found from the reign of Ibrahim Barid Shah, the fourth king. The Baridi kings used the royal title *Al-Sultan Amir Barid Shah* on their coins, while on their inscriptions their actual name is found. Moreover, they used certain words such as *Barak* and *Bani* as a part of their regal title on their coins.12
In the legend of the reverse of the coin below the name of the king, a term occurs, which can be read as *Barika, Barik* or *Barak*. Out of the three words, *Barak* seems to be appropriate, because the word *Barak* along with the word *Barid*, give the meaning of post-carrier or messenger. This view is further supported by the fact that Qasim Barid Shah-I and Amir Barid Shah-I were conferred with the title of *Baridul Mumalik* (messenger of the empire). This explicitly shows that the family title Amir Barid, which was assumed by all members refers to the position of royal courier held by the earlier members of this dynasty.\(^1\)
Notes and References

1. Ausa and Qandhar are situated in the Marathawada, which had the impregnable forts in the medieval times.


BARID SHAHI COINAGE

- Photos
- Tables
- Chronology
- Map

All the figures Numbers mentioned in the tables and plates are same
The measurement has been taken from the far points.
The unit is (cm) and the weight unit is (g).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plate No; 28</th>
<th>Ibrahim Barid Shah</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ابراهيم بريد شاه</td>
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<th>Fig. 565 Obv.</th>
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<th>Rev.</th>
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Plate No; 29  Amir Barid Shah

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Plate No; 29

Amir Barid Shah

بيبير بدید شاه

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<td>المتولك على الله القوي Al-Mutawakkil AlaAllah Al Qawi</td>
<td>السلطان محمود شاه بن محمد شاه Mahmud Shah bin Muhammad Shah Al-Bhmani</td>
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Table 29. Amir Barid Shaha the Third

أمير بريد شاه الثالث
GENEALOGY OF THE BARID SHAHI SULTANATE

(1) Qasim Barid I (1489-1504)

(2) Amir Barid (1504-1542)
   (Also called Amir Ali Barid)
   = daughter of Sabaji Maratha
   = Bibi Sitti
   Khan-i-jahan

(3) Ali Barid Shah I (1542-1579)        Son        Son
   = Tani Bibi of Bijapur

(4) Ibrahim Barid Shah (1579-1587)

(5) Qasim Barid Shah II (1587-1591)

(6) Ali Barid Shah II (1591)
   Deposed and the throne usurped by a member of Barid family

(7) Amer Barid Shah II (1591-1600)
(8) Mirza Ali Barid Shah III (1601-1609)
(9) Amer Barid Shah III (1609-1619)