



African Diaspora in Medieval Deccan: A Historical Analysis from 14th to 17th century

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The African Diaspora in Medieval Deccan offers a new insight about space, political culture, ethnogenesis and Military Labour Market in History of India as well as it provides a new understanding of medieval India from perspective of regional History. This paper traces History of African Diaspora in Medieval Deccan from 14 to 17 century. Tracing issues of Migration in Medieval Deccan, it examines processes of ethnogenesis in African Diaspora and analyses role of space and political culture in shaping contours of ethnogenesis in Medieval Deccan. Further, the paper analyses dimensions of Military Labour market in Medieval Deccan in determining participation of African Diaspora and its impact on evolution of politics in Medieval Deccan. Although, the presence of African Diaspora in the Indian subcontinent has been dated since 10th century onwards, particularly participation in politics from Delhi Sultanate to Bengal is very well documented in primary sources of Ibn Battuta, Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, Jahangir and Others. Similarly, M.N.Pearson¹, K.N.Chaudhuri², B.N.Nicolini³ and others have analyzed the trading and cultural activities from eastern coast of Africa to Western Coast of India in Indian Ocean. But, the continuous presence of African Diaspora is documented with reference to Medieval Deccan from 14th century onwards in the primary sources such as The Burhan-i-Maasir, Tazkirat-ul-mulk, Akbarnama, Tuzuk-i-jahangiri, The English Sources, The Portuguese sources etc. These sources provide very important information about unfolding of social and political processes in Medieval Deccan and interaction with other spaces of Indian subcontinent as well as medieval world.

¹ M.N. Pearson, *Port, Cities and Intruders: The Swahili Coast, India and Portugal in Early Modern India*(London: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 104-05.

² K.N.Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in Indian Ocean: An Economic History from Islam to 1750*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 34.

³ Beatrice Nicolini, *Makran, Oman and Zanzibar: The Three Terminal Cultural Corridor in The Western Indian Ocean, 1799-1856*(Leiden, Brill, 2004), 36-40.



Methodology-

The paper examines history of African Diaspora in Medieval Deccan with reference to ethnogenesis and military labour market. Considering Military labour market as important institution of identity formation as well as vertical mobility of social groups, history of African Diaspora has been traced by analyzing images of Africans, participation in politics and impact on identity of medieval Deccan. The primary sources used for this research paper are Alberuni's India, Ibn Batutta's Travels in Asia and Africa, Tarikh- i- Firoz Shahi, Text of Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Letters of Foreign Travelers and secondary sources such as books of Shanti Sadiq Ali, Richard Eaton, B.G.Tamaskar, H.K.Sherwani and Research papers of Sanjay Subhramaniam, Cynthia Talbot, Philip Wagoner etc have been used.

1. Medieval Deccan as Frontier and Transregional Zone

David Chappell says that frontier zone is a transformative space and can be identified by the arrival of new identities with existence of indigenous identities. The arrival of new identities can be outcome of various factors such as wars, trade, slavery, voluntary as travelers, sufi saint etc. In case of Deccan, The arrival was open from the geo-political axis from Lahore to Deccan as well as Indian Ocean. On the one hand, Delhi Sultanate, periodically through invasions and continuously through shifting of capital to Daulatabad in 1327, initiated forceful interaction of various communities such as Turks, Khaljis, Afaqis, and Hindustanis in Deccan. Similarly, the trading Diasporas were settled on western coast of India since 10th century in Deccan. Simultaneously, the African Diaspora continuously migrated as a voluntary act or forced act from Eastern coast of Africa, particularly from Ehabasan zone of Abyssinia (Now referred as Ethiopia) to India. The Africans migrated from Ehabasan areas of Ethiopia have been referred as Habshi in Medieval India, though the meaning of Habshi changed over a period of time. The settlement of different identities in frontier zones leads to making of self & Other, and open new horizon for ethnogenesis. Depending upon the framework used for construction of self and other, the evolution of ethnogenesis is shaped. In case of Deccan, ethnogenesis was shaped by both internal as well as external factors; no doubt, it was a complex process as well as open to transmutation.



The contemporary research works of Richard Eaton⁴, Philip Wagoner⁵ and others have examined Medieval Deccan as Frontier as well as Transregional Zone offering new insights about self, other and ethnogenesis. Richard Eaton has classified Medieval Deccan as a 'shattered zone'⁶. Referring to Muhammad Qasim Ferishta regarding nomenclature of various units of Deccan on linguistic lines, Richard Eaton argues that overlapping of linguistic, religious and political formation in the making of authority was a remarkable feature of Medieval Deccan. It can be conceptualized as a space providing sustenance to co-existence of multiple identities having conflicts as well as convergence such as Turks, Khaljis, Afaqis, Habshi, Hindustani etc. No doubt, the existence of multiple identities having conflict as well convergence can also be mapped out in North India during Medieval period. Ibn Battuta, a prominent traveler in medieval India explaining court etiquettes followed in the court of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, says that care was taken about identity of a person visiting to the Sultan. If the person was Muslim, the chamberlain would announce by saying "Bismillah"⁷ and if the person belonged to Non-Muslim background, the Chamberlain would announce "God Guide Thee"⁸. Similarly, Ibn Battuta refers to the universal role of the Sultan during famine as "the sultan ordered that every person in Delhi should be given six months provisions from the granary at the rate of pound..... small or great, freeman or slave"⁹ But, the range and scale of diversity in convergence and also conflict among multiple identities offers new insight about Deccan from 14th to 17th century.

The multiple identities of Deccan were shaped by the geo- political and social processes and its led to crystallization of society into a Melting Pot. Exploring this aspect, Cynthia Talbot has analyzed about nature of space in Medieval Deccan and argues that ethnicity played crucial role

⁴ Richard Eaton, *A Social History of Deccan 1300-1761*(New Delhi; Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁵ Philip B. Wagoner, Sultan Among Hindu Kings: Dress, Titles and Islamicization of Hindu Culture at Vijayanagar, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.55, No.4, (Nov, 1996).

⁶ Eaton, *A Social History of Deccan*, 2-8

⁷ Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, trans. H. A. R, Gibb (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1929),199.

⁸ Ibid., 199.

⁹ Ibid, 203.



in areas of convergence and conflict in Medieval Andhra. Referring to Rayavachakamu(a Telugu chronicle of 16 century), Cynthia Talbot¹⁰ argues that the existence of powers was situated in coexistence and it is also visible in the multiple classification of powers such as Lord of Man(Narpati), lord of Elephant(Gajpati) and lord of Horses(Ashvpati). Similarly, referring to Vilasa Grant of Prolaya Nayak , Cynthia Talbot has emphasized absence of articulation of identities on religious lines and presence of identities on ethnic lines such as ‘Turks(Turuska), Persian(Parsika), Greeek(Yavana)’¹¹. Another aspect of melting pot has been analysed by Velcheru Narayan Rao and Sanjay Subhramanyam with reference to Nitishastras and Dharmshastras. It has been argued that the governance in Medieval Deccan was based on idea of justice and coexistence; also documented in the text “Amuktamalyada”¹². Discussing the Invasive role of Delhi Sultans from 14th century with reference to Devagiri, Warangal, Hoyasals, Richard Eaton classifies Medieval Deccan as a Islamicate zone or transregional sultanate. Islamicate has been conceptualized as a process shaping cultures of other identities without erasing existing sign and symbols or elements of religious formation in other ethnic groups. Richard Eaton says that the zone of Islamicate was largely centered around politics, political formation and legitimacy of kingship.

Specifying Islamicate as outcome of Islamicization in Vijaynagar State, Philip B Wagoner argues on the basis of examining emergence of political culture and making of authority through court culture, mode of dress, and assertion of authority through new titles. He argues that the rulers of Vijaynagar state used the dresses such as “kabayai and Kullayi”¹³ as mode of asserting authority, not existing in Deccan prior to arrival of Sultanate based kingship. Definitely, kabayai

¹⁰ Cynthia Talbot, *Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu –Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India, Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.37, No-4(Oct, 1995), 708.

¹¹ Ibid,708.

¹² Velcheru Narayan Rao and Sanjay Subramanyam, *Notes on Political Thought in Medieval and Early Modern South India, Modern Asian Studies*, Vol.43, No.1, 198.

¹³ Wagoner, *Sultan among Hindu Kings*, 856.

and Kullayi were local translation of Arabic 'Qaba' and Persian 'Kulah' used for dresses and this mode of dressing for assertion of political authority was very well established in Arab and Persia during medieval period.



Fig.1 Kulah(Source- <https://www.emedals.com/a-fine-18th-century-islamic-indo-persian-nobleman-kulah-khud-helmet>)



Fig.2. Kabayi dress as long Tunic(Source- <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/sultan-ibrahim-i.html>)



Elaborating on another element of Islamicate, Philip B Wagoner has analyzed the titles Hindu-*raya-suratrana*¹⁴ as expression of assertion of authority within Indic framework and not as a religious because the text of medieval Deccan do not conceptualize arrival of new ethnic groups on religious lines. These titles have been referred in various sources such as “Satyamangalam Plate, Bevinahalli Grant 1551, Mopuru Inscription 1425 AD, Udayambakam Grant, 1528 CE”¹⁵ etc. In addition, he refers to claiming of political authority in medieval Deccan as Andhrasuratranah(Sultan of Andhra), Urigolasuratranah(Sultan of Warangal) etc. It testifies that legitimacy of political power as Sultan was accepted across various identities and Sultan based political authority was not challenge to sign and symbols of existing identities. This legitimacy was reinforced by universal acceptance of Sultanate based dresses, court culture and nomenclature of authority constructing open nature of space in Medieval Deccan.

Thus, the shattered zone of medieval deccan provided open space to new identities arriving from various parts of medieval world. The open space created line of convergence in the field of political culture; due to new realignments, medieval Deccan witnessed transformation of regional kingdom into transregional states during 14th century. Accordingly, the evolution of Deccani identity, horizon of identity formation and axis of ethnogenesis shaped from 14th century onwards.

2. Ethnogenesis in Medieval Deccan: 14th to 17th century

The axis and horizon of ethnogenesis continuously shaped by changing politics in Medieval Deccan from 14th century onwards. As politics offered space for interaction among various identities, particularly with reference to invasions and military conquest of Delhi Sultanate, ethnogenesis was determined by politics and changing contours of politics. The dominant factor which shaped the contours of politics in Deccan was invasions by Delhi Sultanate. These invasions aimed to extract maximum tributes from states in Deccan during 1310 to 1321 and

¹⁴ Ibid, 862.

¹⁵ Ibid, 862.



created an identity of Delhi Sultanate as invaders whereas Deccan as Tribute paying identity. Obviously, The Tughlaq dynasty of Delhi Sultanate changed the policy from tribute extraction to total annexation and it can be dated in eastern Deccan from 1323 AD onwards as the Kakatiya Kingdom was finally took over by Delhi Sultanate. Contrary to accepting military conquest, within next 20 years, most of the areas of Deccan started revolting against the rule of Delhi Sultanate. These revolts were very assertive in three corners of Deccan – The Amir-i-Sadah of Marhat zone, the Rayas of Tailang and Sangma brothers in south of Krishna river. On the one hand, Delhi Sultanate assumed identity of invader whereas Deccan assumed identity of rebel.

Analyzing the contours of rebellions and rebels, H. K. Sherwani has argued that the revolts of 1340s were by revenue collector(Amir-i- Sadah) of 100 villages who largely worked in cooperation with local people and they included various ethnic identities such as Bahauddin Gurshap(Tughlaq), Alau-ud-Din Hasan(Khalji), Sangmas(Hindustani) etc. Obviously, these rebels- words of Muhammad Qasim Ferishta- were erstwhile officers of Delhi Sultanate and dissatisfaction was as much due to mode of governance, assimilation of these officers with local people as well as ethnic identity of rulers. H.K.Sherwani says that the Tughlaq administration tried to suppress revolts brutally such as killing of '89 Amir-i-Sadah by Aziz Khammar in Gujarat'¹⁶. These Amir-i-Sadah belonged to different ethnic identities and were also offered protection by people of different ethnic identity such Bahauddin Gurshap(Tughlaq) was offered by Raya of Kampili as well as Tailang in 1340AD. But, nobody could protect these Amir-i-Sadah against the powers of Delhi Sultanate, and from 1347 onwards, Deccan was conceptualized by Sultans of Delhi Sultanate as zone of people revolted against Delhi Sultanate. Further, the axis of Identity formation was political and in opposition to Delhi sultanate from 1347 onwards. The post-1347 period in Medieval Deccan witnessed emergence of three States -

¹⁶ H. K. Sherwani, *The Bahamanis of Deccan*(Delhi: Munsiram Manoharlal Publisher Pvt. Ltd, 1985), 24



Vijaynagar state, Bahamani State and Tailang; it was also marked by conflict and coordination among the three states along with 'involvement of Malwa and Gujarat'¹⁷.

Richard Eaton has classified Bahamani State and Vijaynagar State as transregional sultanate exercising authority using Universal idioms of Sultanate for kingship. It was followed by polarization and diversification of nobility on various lines of ethnicity and power was visible from 14th century onwards. On the one hand, Sultan Tajuddin Firoz¹⁸ (1397- 1442) initiated inclusive policies for indigenous people and recruited Hindustanis in large numbers in the administration; on the other hand, the next Sultan Shihabuddin Ahmad(1422-1436)¹⁹ initiated large-scale recruitment of Afaqis(Persians/Westerners) in the administration of Bahamani state. Obviously, it led to intense polarization among nobility and the meaning of Decanni²⁰ changed as those opposing domination of Afaqis. The degree of polarization is crystal clear as the Sultan Shihabuddin Ahmad was forced to issue direction for standing location of nobility in the Court. Accordingly, the Afaqis were directed to stand on the right side of the Sultan whereas the Deccanis were directed to stand on the left side of Sultan. This process of ethnogenesis continued in the last decades of 15th century and Mahmud Gawan , Malik-ul-Tuzzar also tried to settle the conflict of Deccanis and Afaqis by reorganization of State into 8 provinces ; granting governance of 4 provinces to Afaqis and 4 provinces of Deccanis. Along with efforts of convergence, Deccan also witnessed rise of new ethnic groups in political system.

The important factor of ethnogenesis identity during 15th and 16th century was increasing participation and assertion of African Diaspora in Medieval Deccan such as by Dastur Dinar, Abhang Khan, Dilawar Khan, Malik Ambar etc. Dastur Dinar²¹ emerged as a successful Amir in

¹⁷ H. K. Sherwani, *Mahmud Gawan: The Great Bahamani Wazir*(Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1942),12.

¹⁸ Apart from recruiting Hindustanis in administration, Sultan Firoz got married to daughter of Vijaynagar ruler Devraya in 1407-1408 referred in H.K.Sherwani, *The Bahamanis of Deccanis*, 101.

¹⁹ Ibid, 132.

²⁰ Eaton, *A Social History of Deccan*, 69.

²¹ Shanti Sadiq Ali, *The African Dispersal In the Deccan: From Medieval to Modern Times* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1996), 52.



15th century and was in charge of Gulbarga in the reign of Sultan Shihabuddin Mahmud(1482-1513). In addition, the invasion of Mughal State in Deccan again led to churning of new identity in 1595 AD and African Diaspora became prominent in shaping identity of Deccan in 16th and 17th century. Obviously, the invasion of Mughal army created helplessness among some sections of nobility such as Miyan Raju, but the majority of nobility followed leadership of Chand Bibi and emerging leaders from African Diaspora. Infact Shanti Sadiq Ali has referred to Habshi leader Mujahid-ud-din Shamsheer Khan who questioned the fearful nobles, “ To fly from enemy army without contemplating battle and using the sword and spear and leaving plains of the dominion and all the subjects to be trampled upon by the enemy’s army does not command itself to men of sincerity and faith”²² Similarly, Richard Eaton has referred to statesmanship of Habshi Leader, Abhang Khan by appealing to Miyan Raju regarding Sadat Khan who had shifted to Mughals, “As he has turned traitor to Nizam Shah and gone over to the Mughals, do you act bravely because the reward of fidelity to salt is greatness. Guard carefully the territory and forts now in your hands and try to increase them”²³ Though, the army of Ahemadnagar fought with great determination, but it was defeated by Mughal Army, and Ahmednagar was captured by Mughal State by 1600 AD. As a result, Medieval Deccan lost all hope of resistance and independence due to domination of descendants of Taimur and Changez, yet, the Habshis under the leadership of Malik Ambar raised the banner of Independence and it was liberated totally from Mughals in 1610²⁴. It shows how the process of ethnogenesis in Medieval Deccan along lines of Afaqis and Deccanis in 15th century, suddenly changed as Deccanis vs Mughals in 16th century. This process of ethnogenesis was determined by politics and shaped by increasing participation of African Diaspora which has been always marked by Loyalty, sacrifice and people oriented till 16th century. Obviously, the participation of African Diaspora in politics of Deccan was a product of military labour market in Medieval Deccan.

²² Ibid,61.

²³ Eaton, *A Social History of Deccan*,118.

²⁴ Ibid, 118.

considered expert in sword, handling plot of the warfare and ready to change position as per requirement of the Sultan. In addition to the abovementioned, the military labour market of North India was highly segregated between Jamdars and Zamindars, and structured nature of military labour market was big challenge for people to rise at the highest level in the state.

Although, the rigid nature of military labour market and its associated contradictions of Identity have been dated to Delhi Sultanate and it is prior to arrival of Mughals. Mohammad Qasim Ferishta has referred to Jamaluddin Yakoot, Amir-i-I Akhoor & Abyssinian, but his rise was resented by the Turks, "... His rapid elevation to the first rank in the realm might naturally have excited envy had it happened to any individual but it became more mortifying when the favorite was merely an Abyssinian slave."²⁸ Similarly, Ibn Battuta refers to Governor of African origin as during the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, "The governor of Alabur was Abyssinian Badr, a slave of the sultan's him and his bravery passed into proverb."²⁹ Habshi dynasty under Habshi ruler³⁰ Saif al- Din Abu al-Muzzafar Firuz Shah II (1486-89) is very well attested in case of Bengal and Firozi Minar reflects shades of Habshi power in Bengal, particularly dodecagonal in first three stories of Minar.

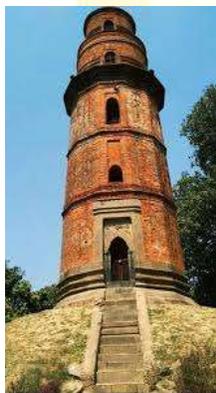


Fig. 3. Firozi Minar at Gaur, West Bengal(Source- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Firoz_Minar)

²⁸ Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, *History of The Mahommadan Power in India till the Year 1612*, Vol-I, trans. By John Briggs(Calcutta; Editions Indian, 1966),123.

²⁹ Batutta, *Travels in Asia and Africa.*, 224.

³⁰ Muhammad Mohar Ali, *History of Muslim of Bengal Vol IA*(Riyadh: Department of Culture & Publication, Imam Muhammad Ibn Sail Iskemir University, 1985),180.



Despite evidences about participation of African Diaspora in military labour market of Medieval North India, but evidences deny acceptance and participation in military labour market. Contrary to this, the acceptance and participation of African Diaspora was continuously visible after 14th century in Medieval Deccan. Being a Frontier zone, it constantly required recruitment of skilled people to defend the state from invasions of Delhi Sultanate or states from North India such as Malwa or Gujarat. This process has been documented from time period of Shihaudin Ahmad and becomes prominent during wazirship of Mahmud Gawan. He continuously invited skilled people from all fields to enrich and strengthen Bahmani State. Infact, Mahmud Gawan came as a trader in 15th century and got transformed as a Wazir of Bahmani State. Similarly, Malik Ambar came as slave to Deccan in 16th century and emerged as Prime Minister(Malik-ul-Tuzzar) of Ahmednagar State and symbol resistance against Mughal Invasions till 1620s. Unlike the African Leaders such as Jamal-Ud-Din Yakut, Siddi Maula, Sultan Firoz of Bengal, the African Leaders of Deccan were assimilated in the nobility as member of Deccani Nobility and were incorporated in local identity of Deccani.

The open ended nature of military labour market was due to political situation of Deccan as well as participation in trading activities of Indian Ocean. It is evident with reference to the articulation of authority in terms of merchants as wazir was referred as Malik-u;-Tuzzar(Prince among the merchants), further, the survival of Deccan was highly dependent on the capacity to counter the might of state in North India. Therefore, the Military labour market of Deccan was not outcome of social process rather political process and it was independent of social or religious binaries. Due to this reason, the forces who rose to occasion, whenever Delhi Sultanate or Mughal State offered challenged, shaped the military labour market and accordingly, participation was determined. Known as loyal, skilled warfare and brave in military labour market till 16th century, and the African Diaspora was enriched with skill of statesmanship by Malik Ambar in 17th century.



4. Mughals, Malik Ambar and Deccani Identity in 17th Century

Moving on from an identity of slaves, soldiers, Amirs etc, The seventeenth century represented a new dimension added a new dimension of Statesmanship to African Diaspora and role model for other ethnic identities. The arrival of descendants of Taimur & Changez Khan posed immense challenge to any state in medieval world, obviously, the Deccani identity was again rearticulated in the context of arrival of new political power ready to take over political system of Deccan as happened in 14th century. For medieval Deccan, 17th century could have been reproduction of early 14th century, contrary to this, the Mughal Army faced unexpected and stiff resistance under leadership of African Diaspora. Muhammad Qasim Ferishta explained pathetic situation of Ahemadnagar after defeat by Mughal Army by 1600. Yet, he argues that the statesmanship of Malik Ambar facilitated to independence of Ahemdnagar from Mughals. Definitely, Malik Ambar came into prominence as part of army led by Chand Bibi and Abhang Khan fighting against invasion of Mughals in 1590s. Gradually, Malik Ambar understood reality of politics, and accordingly, in order to settle political power of Ahemadnagar in order, Malik Ambar made alliance with Mughals to defeat the nobility opposed to centralization of power in Ahmednagar such as Miyan Raju Deccani. At the same time, after defeating Miyan Raju and realizing political crisis in Mughal State due to death of King Akbar in 1605 AD, Malik Ambar refused to be subordinate of Mughals and resisted any attempt of occupation Deccan by Mughals under Jahangir. Yet, he realized real nature of politics in Mughal State and made cordial relation with prince Khurram(Shah Jahan). Muhammad Qasim says, “ At length he gave up the places taken from the Moghuls to the prince Shaw Jehaun, to whose interest he became attached and continued loyal. After this he remained unmolested by Delhi and conducted his affairs with much glory.....”³¹ Apart from getting tributes from neighboring states of Deccan, Muhammad Qasim Ferishta says that Malik Ambar was the best politician, financier of his age, his land being best cultivated and people of his country happy than any other land of Deccan. It not only testifies acceptance of Africans as rulers but also larger acceptance by various ethnic identities of

³¹ Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, Trans. by Jonathan Scott, *History of Dekkan*(London; Shrewsbury, 1794),401
Accessed on September 1,2020, <https://archive.org/details/ferishtashistory01firi/page/n5/mode/2up?q>



Deccan; this acceptance was a fundamental change in the identity of Africans as well as Deccanis.

On the other hand, the Pain and agony of Jahangir unable to defeat the Habshi Leader is continuously reflected in the Tuzuk –i- Jahangiri. The text repeatedly informs about continuous preparation for victory of Deccan, but every time, the army of Mughals is defeated. In one of the battle started by Mughals under the leadership of Raja Bir Singh Deo, Ray Chand, Ali Khan Tartar and others, Jahangir finds solace as the army of Deccanis was on the backfoot. The battle was characterized by Jahangir as battle ‘between army of Light and Darkness, the city established by Malik Ambar as city of owlsh people, having buildings on dark earth, Ambar as Black fortunéd...’³² Whatever may be the case, Muhammad Qasim Ferishta³³ informs that after death of Malik Ambar, both sons of Ambar- Fateh Khan and Changez Khan were incorporated into The Mughal Empire; Fateh Khan, when he became ill, was given ‘pension of Two Lac of rupees’ and Changez Khan was given mansab of ‘2000 with title of Munfoor Khan.’ Mughal Quoting Asad Beg, envoy of Akbar at Court of Bijapur, B.G.Tamaskar³⁴ says that Malik Ambar was keep in high regard as brave and discreet man, offered prayers in common with more than thousand, his charities are beyond description.’ From total rejection of African Diaspora in Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri to incorporation of Africans (both sons of Malik Ambar) as royal groups in Mughal State shows acceptance of African Diaspora in military labour market of Mughals.

Beyond Indian subcontinent, it was also recognized by Western World such as Spain, Portugal, French, Dutch etc.; B.G.Tamaskar has used primary sources of Trading companies of Portugal, French, Spain, Dutch and presented various images of Malik Ambar. Tamaskar³⁵ says that

³² Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri or Memoirs of Jahangir*, trans. by A.Rogers & H. Beveridge, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909), 314, Accessed on September 1,2020 -

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.62934/page/n1/mode/2up>

³³ Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, *History of Dekkan*, 402-403.

³⁴ B.G.Tamaskar, *The Life and Work of Malik Ambar*(Delhi; Idarah-I Adabiyat-I, 1978),312-313.

³⁵ Ibid, 312-322.



Dutch Pieter Gilles Van Ravesteyen(1613 AD) – Ahemadnagar as governed by Ambar and commander of three armies of Ahmadnagar, Golconda and Bijapur, French Pietro Della Valle- Ahmadnagar as Malik's country, administer country with great fidelity, Portuguese - Malik Ambar will never give territory to Mughals nor officers of King Malique'. Analyzing merit based approach of Malik Ambar as a civil administrator, Tamaskar refers to S'iva –Charitra-Sahitya , 'Bahiro Ganapati Majumdar was directed to listen to voice of peasants, visit to people for understanding pain and agony and without tour , promotion cannot be given'³⁶

Apart from tactfully dealing with trading diasporas such as keeping away British from Deccan whereas allowing other traders to operate in Deccan and handling the Mughals carefully, Malik initiated policy of social engineering in Medieval Deccan. It is visible not only in act of Malik Ambar leading successfully combined army of Bijapur, Golconda and Ahmadnagar but also, his initiatives to expand the horizon of Deccani identity at court by recruiting Mahrattas in large numbers. Referring to Basatin-us-Salatin of Mirza Ibrahim, Shanti Sadiq Ali³⁷ says that the army of Malik was consisted of 10,000 Marathas in 1609 to 40,000 plus Deccanis by 1620's. Similarly, Richard Eaton³⁸ has referred to honouring leaders of Marathas by adopting nomenclature of villages in the name of Leaders such as Malpura, khelpura, Paraspura etc.' Thus, the seventeenth century witnessed a articulation of Deccani identity as a political entity open to diversity under leadership of African Diaspora carrying forward the legacy of resistance with diplomacy.

Conclusion

The case study of African Diaspora in Medieval Diaspora provides a new insight about Medieval Indian History. Starting journey from 10th century onwards in North India to Medieval Deccan in 14th century, African Diaspora provides a larger understanding about social processes and political cultures describing political cultures of Delhi Sultanate or Mughal State as structured

³⁶ Ibid, 208.

³⁷ Shanti Ali, *African Dispersal In Medieval Deccan*, 86.

³⁸ Eaton, *A Social History of Deccan*, 123.



and rigid in nature limiting participation of new ethnic identities, particularly African slaves till 16th century. In a way, regional history of Medieval Deccan provides invasive and conquest oriented images of Delhi Sultanate or Mughal State. It also shows that the continuous interaction of Mughal State with Deccan through invasions and continuous stiff resistance by Deccan under Africans forced the Mughal state to change policy of invasion to policy of accommodation. Since Jamal-ud-din Yakut, as argued by Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, The state of North India in medieval period resisted participation of African Diaspora as leaders or statesman, but it was remarkably changed by 17th century due to accommodation of both sons of Ambar in Mughal State. But, the legacy of resistance with diplomacy initiated by African Diaspora continued in Deccan in post-seventeenth century as an outcome of social engineering with Marathas etc., and continuation of ethnogenesis on the lines of politics along with expansion of horizon. As a result, the legacy of resistance with diplomacy initiated by African Diaspora continued to be axis of ethnogenesis in Deccan during 17th and 18th century.