

In a concluding segment on the 3-part Deccan theme

SACHI, Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India

Invites You to an Illuminating Presentation

Cultural Encounters: The Innovative Islamic Architecture of the Deccan

with

Dr. Helen Philon

Co-founder, Deccan Heritage Foundation



Interior views, The Great Mosque, Gulbarga, Gulbarga City, Karnataka, India, 1407 CE
Photo credit, S.N. Barid. A Wikimedia Commons file

Between the 14th and 18th centuries, a multitude of magnificent buildings were erected in the Deccan region of India by the Islamic Sultanates. The patronage of the Muslim dynasties resulted in some of the most dynamic and intricately detailed palaces, forts, mosques, and tombs in the country. Yet many of these architectural treasures remain relatively unknown.

The talk will highlight the visual diversity of the region's Islamic architecture, especially focusing on the Bahamani kingdom, with Gulbarga and Bidar, the first Islamic court cultures to emerge in South Central India. By 16th century, six breakaway kingdoms succeeded the Bahamanis, as later Sultanates emerged.

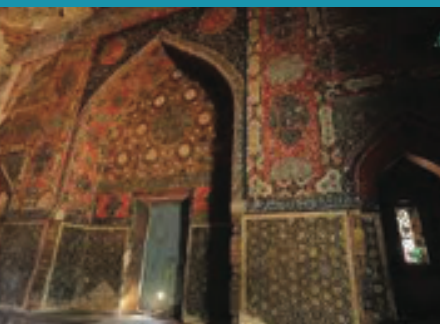
Dr. Philon's discussion on the architectural heritage of the Bahamanis and the more versatile cultural legacy of the Adil Shahis (a prominent group that succeeded the Bahamanis with their capital in Bijapur), illustrates how the complex cultural environment of the Deccan with a Hindu and multiethnic Muslim community, was a place where Persianate and Hindu traditions were reciprocally re-interpreted, shaping the identity of the Sultanates.

**Tuesday
April 27, 2021**

11:00 AM PST

**A Virtual Zoom Webinar;
Advance registration required
To Register, [please click here](mailto:info@sachi.org)**

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Fresco interiors of the tomb of Sultan Ahmad Wali Shah,
built 1436, Ashtur, Bidar, Karnataka, India
Photo credit: Peepul Tree



Inlay work, Rangeen Mahal ceiling, Bidar Fort,
Bidar, Karnataka, India; circa 14th-15th cen. CE;
Salar Jung Museum collection, Hyderabad, India
Photo credit: Alish Bennett



Decorations of Rangeen Mahal, 16th century renovations,
Bidar Fort, Bidar, Karnataka, India
Photo credit: Peepul Tree



Helen Philon is an independent scholar of Pre-Islamic Persian Art. She earned her PhD on Early Islamic Deccan architecture of the Bahamani Kingdom from SOAS, London. She served as Curator of the Islamic Art Department at Benaki Museum in Athens, Greece for 10 years. Her husband's appointment as Greek Ambassador to India led Philon to resign from her museum curatorial role to enable her to join him on his diplomatic mission. It is during this time in India that Helen Philon's interest was sparked by the diversity and originality of the various cultures that flourished in the Deccan. She has travelled widely throughout the Islamic world, focusing the last twenty-five years on Deccani architecture and its interaction with vernacular cultures.

In 2011, Dr. Philon co-founded with Dr. George Michell, the Deccan Heritage Foundation in the UK and in India. In 2014 the American Friends of the Deccan were co-founded in New York.

She is presently working on a book on the Architecture of the Bahamanis.



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