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**Title Of Thesis : Art & Architecture in Bhopal State, 1750-1947**

### **Abstract**

Bhopal, the capital town of Madhya Pradesh, is also known as 'the City of lakes', as it has many lakes and hills. It was founded by the Raja Bhoj of Dhar and named after him as Bhopal.

At the time of the decline of the Indian Mughal Empire, of the various episodes which accompanied the phenomena of disintegration in the early part of 18 century, few are more remarkable than the formation of the state of Bhopal. As one of the principal states in India, Bhopal state takes a place of front rank position among the British India. One of the reasons attributing to it's unique position, being that this state had almost an uninterrupted chain of female Nawab's inheriting the throne from their mothers. The role of its women rulers proved vital for its existence as no serious conflicts between the rulers of the Bhopal state and the Britishers arose during the reign of the Begum Nawabs.

Another aspect of Bhopal's unique position was its development of Islamic cultural reforms which lasted through the whole 19<sup>th</sup> century. This development included major architectural projects, economic development, administrative reforms, educational and literary efforts, which gained admiration not only within India, but also within the British political circles.

The architectural development in Bhopal state can be related to the overall architectural evolution in India. With the advent of Muslims in India, they brought their new and refreshing tradition of Islamic buildings in India. The conquest of India by the Muslims, made an effective and distinct impact on the indigenous manifestations of social and culture life, which

resulted in the expressions of art and the development of new style in architecture. This new development, incorporated not only certain new modes and principles of construction, but depicts the religious, social and cultural needs of the adherents of Islam.

This study covers the period after the Zenith of Mughal art and architecture, and the development and progress of regional amalgamation of art and architecture. There has been surprisingly little detailed research so far on the nature and course of the development on art and architecture in Bhopal region. This thesis attempts to trace the rise and growth of architecture in Bhopal.

Bhopal was ruled by four famous Begum's and their contribution was the maximum in the over all development of the state. This thesis, brings to light, the various aspects of architectural forms developed during the reign of the Nawab's in Bhopal. The new form of architecture which Bhopal had developed in due course of time through ideas, cultural trends, thought process of the people and exemplary role of the rulers, has contributed greatly to the rich cultural heritage of present day India. The Nawab's of Bhopal had built many forts and palaces, which are treasures of architectural splendour.

The rulers of Bhopal extended liberal patronage to art and architecture. The monuments erected during the reign of the Nawab's, tell the story of the vicissitudes through which, the history of the city has passed. The city of Bhopal has created a niche in the world with it's distinct history and its contribution to art and architecture. Bhopal is a living testimony to it's culture.