

VIJAYANAGARA AND BAHMANI KINGDOM (PART-3)

B.A. PART-3, PAPER-5

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POLITICAL HISTORY-VIJAYANAGARA

Saluva Dynasty :

The last ruler of Sangma dynasty, Virupaksha , was dethroned by a minister, *Saluva Narsimha*, who set up the next dynasty.

- ◉ Saluva dynasty ruled from 1485 to 1505. Saluva Narsimha was able to restore law and order and suppress rebellions. He established control over the *nayakas* and prevented the disintegration of the empire. At this time the Vijayanagara state was involved in a constant conflict with the Bahamani kingdom and the Gajapati rulers of Orissa. Saluva wasn't very successful against them and it seems that the Gajapatis managed to extend their control till the Nellore district.

POLITICAL HISTORY-VIJAYANAGARA

- ◉ The last ruler of this dynasty was *Imadi Narsimha*. He was a young boy and power was exercised by his regent, a prominent courtier known as *Narsa Nayak*. Narsa Nayak was an efficient military commander, who suppressed rebellions, resisted the Gajapatis and Bahamanis and also established control over the Raichur doab region.
- ◉ *Narsa Nayak* died in 1503. By this time the Saluva dynasty was on its decline. On Narsa Nayak's death power was captured by his son *Vira Narsimha in 1505* marking the beginning of the *Taluva dynasty*.

POLITICAL HISTORY-VIJAYANAGARA

Taluva Dynasty:

The Taluva dynasty lasted from 1505 to 1562. The most important figure was *Krishna Deva Raya (1502-29)*. Under him the Vijayanagara Empire reached its peak. He established control over the *nayakas* and dealt with the Bahamanis and Gajapatis. He was involved in a successful conflict against Bijapur. He was also a patron of culture, art and poetry, and wrote a book known as *amukta malyada*. His period was followed by a period of decline. The last ruler of his dynasty was the weak *Sadasiva*. Real power was exercised by a noble, Rama Raya. He intervened in the internal affairs of the Deccani kingdoms and played them against each other. In 1561 they all formed an alliance against Vijayanagara and in 1565 they defeated Vijayanagara at the *Battle of Talikota*.

POLITICAL HISTORY-VIJAYANAGARA

Aravidu Dynasty:

- ◉ The last dynasty was the **Aravidu dynasty (1570-1644)**, which was set up by *Tirumal*, a brother of Rama Raya. After that it entered a phase of decline. Most areas became independent and *nayakas* grew very powerful, and effective authority of the state was limited. In 1636 and 1640s Bijapur and Golconda expanded southwards defeating many *nayakas*.

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

Monarchs of Vijayanagara were great patrons of education and learning. It witnessed *tremendous growth and development of Dravidian languages* – Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam besides Sanskrit. The reign of Krishnadevaraya was a glorious epoch in the literary activity of the Vijayanagara period. *Krishnadevaraya's court was adorned by eight literary luminaries known as Ashtadiggajjas.*

- ◉ The Vijayanagara age witnessed remarkable development in architecture, art and painting.
- ◉ The ruins of the old capital of the empire, Hampi proclaim to the world that the Vijayanagara emperors were great builders.

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

- ◉ The Vijayanagara temples are generally sumptuous, lofty, imposing and grand in layout, design and conception. They are provided with several architectural adjuncts like pillared *mandapas*, *Kalayanamandapas*, *prakara* walls with pillared corridors, separate shrines for gods and goddess, subsidiary shrines for the *Parivara devatas* and lofty *gopura-dwaras*.
- ◉ The most important temples of the Vijayanagara style were found in the Hampi.
- ◉ *Vittalaswamy and Hazara Rama temples* were the best examples of this style.

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

- ◉ The *Varadaraja and Ekambaranatha temples* at Kanchi stand as examples for the magnificence of the Vijayanagara style of temple architecture.
- ◉ The metal images of Srikrishnadevaraya and his queens at Tirumala are examples of *casting of metal images*.
- ◉ The *art of painting* also received due recognition and patronage at the hands of the Vijayanagara emperors. The best preserved paintings are found in the *Virabhadraswmi temple at Lepakshi*.

The Vijayanagara period is one of the brilliant chapters and also represents the last great Hindu phase in the annals of India. The empire at its zenith, embraced the whole of south India and some parts of the Deccan. It is known from the inscriptions, literary works and the information given by the foreign travelers that the Vijayanagara kings organized sound and solid administration, developed agriculture, observed religious toleration, fostered trade and industry, promoted literature, art, architecture and painting.

(To be continued)

