CHAPTER TWO

STATE AND CONDITIONS IN VIJAYANAGARA
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

MAP - I: VIJAYANAGARA EMP. R.
Geneology of Vijayanagara Empire

A) Sangama Dynasty (1336-1485)

Sangama
(A Chieftain in Hoyasala Kingdom)

1) Harihara-I (1336-56)
2) Bukka-I (1356-77)
3) Harihara-II (1377-1404)
4) Bukka-II (1404-06)
5) Devaraya-I (1406-22)
6) Vira Vijaya (1422)
7) Devaraya-II (1422-46)
8) Mallikarjuna (1446-65)
9) Virupaksha (1465-85)
10) Prauda Deva (1485)

B) Saluva Dynasty (1485-1505)

1) Saluva Narasimha (1485-90)
   (Chief of Chandragiri and minister of last Sangama ruler)
2) Timmaraya (1490-91)
3) Inmadi Narasimha (1491-1505)

C) Tuluva Dynasty (1505 - 1570)

Narasa

1) Vira Narasimha (1505-09)
2) Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29)
3) Achyutadeva (1529-42)
4) Venkata-I (1542-43)
5) Sadashiva (1543-70)

D) Aravidu Dynasty (1570-1632)

1. Tirumala (1570-72)
   (Penugonda as his capital)
2. Sri Ranga (1572-85)
3. Venkata-II (1585-1614)
4. Sri Ranga-II (1614)
5. Ramadeva (1614-30)
6. Venkata-III (1630-42)
7. Sri Ranga - III (1642 - 52)
The illustrious empire of Vijayanagara was founded by the sons of Sangama in the south of Tungabhadra in A.D 1336. From then onwards the kingdom was ruled by the kings of four dynasties for a period of more than three hundred years which is an epoch making event in the annals of medieval South India.

The dynasties that ruled here include sangama dynasty (A.D 1336-1485), Saluva dynasty(A.D. 1485-1505), Tuluva dynasty (A.D 1505-1570), and the Aravidu dynasty (A.D.1570-1652).

NATURE OF STATE

It is appropriate here to discuss the nature of Vijayanagara state to know about the conditions of people. Diverse opinions have been expressed by different scholars over the nature of state. Various theories have been applied such as feudal structure, segmentary state, military fiscalism etc., Robert Sewell interpreted the system as changelessness of structure as part of the Vijayanagar polity. His notion is that the kingdom became the ‘saviour’ of the south for 250 years and the rise of Vijayanagar kingdom was ‘no miracle’ but ‘the natural result of the persistent efforts made by muslims to conquer all India’.¹ But in reality, Vijayanagar was involved in war not solely with Islamic powers but also with many Hindu states. Nelaturi Venkata Rama-rayya looked at the system as one of military tenure under a central government. D.C Sircar and Nilakantha Sastri also talks about the state being based on military tenure.³ This is because
of the prevalence of Nayankara system and the prevalence of nayaks as warrior chieftains. It is appropriate to note here that nayaks were asked to assist the Vijayanagara rulers at the time of war as loyal subordinates, but military duty played only a minor role in the selection of a nayak by the rulers. Therefore the view that the state is based on military tenure may not hold true. Burton Stein discussed the Vijayanagar state as an imperial structure wherein the balance of power between the central and state and all other loci of power as tilted overwhelmingly in favour of the former. But when he talks about pyramidal segmentation he did not analyse the centre and locality relationship.

The entire political system was interpreted by T.V Mahalingam as a bureaucratic set up with divisions like central, provincial (rajyas) and local government. Most of the historians interpret the political structure as a centralised bureaucratic system. Burton Stein reacts and says that this interpretation depended on the ancient and often didactic Sastras on government and also on the literary accounts of Nuniz and Paes who have used bureaucratic terms like governor in their description of the political system. The system of sub infeudation was applied to Vijayanagara state by Karashima. He observes a difference of grade among nayaks in relation to the central power which may suggest the existence of infeudation.

The argument, whether the Vijayanagara state is a feudal one
or not assumes importance because of the existence of military tenures and the economic obligations involved but certainly Indian feudalism is different to that which existed in Europe at that time. Coming to the point, though the king is at the apex of the administration, the presence of nayakara system and the ayagar system at the provincial level weakened the authority of the king. Though, the feudatories seem to obey the king's orders at the initial stages, their hold over military troops and lands sustained their position. It ultimately loosened king's grip over administration and led to oppression at the lower levels of society.

Women's participation in the state stabilisation process is worth mentioning. During this time, the festival of Mahanavami is considered to be a great ritual event which projected the king as a glorious and conquering warrior, possessor of vast riches that is displayed by him and his women (queens and maids of honour).

Paes says that during the time of the festivals the maids come in a regular order one before the other, in all perhaps sixty women fair and strong, from sixteen to twenty years of age. It is difficult to estimate the costliness and weight of the bracelets and jewels. Moreover the weight of the ornaments is so great that they take the help of others. In this way they proceed three times around the (king's) horses, and at the end retired into the palace.
The king observed many singing and dancing processions of womenfolk, fire work displays and games apart from receiving homage and returning gifts, exchanging of honours, the sacrificial reconsecration of the king's arms which strengthened the mighty power of the king and the Vijayanagara state. It is appropriate here to discuss some of the policies like commercial policy, trade policy, taxation policy, and Irrigation policy which had a strong impact on the lives of people. In the local level, the temple played an important role as an socio-economic entity apart from its religious functions. Its role in the said society has also been highlighted in due course.

I. AGRICULTURAL POLICY

The Vijayanagar empire was a land of peace and prosperity. The empire enjoyed self sufficiency in all matters of food articles. It was possible only due to the liberal irrigation policy pursued by the rulers. The prime base of the economy depended on agriculture, the state realised the importance of the canal system and provided irrigation facilities for agricultural improvement. Krishna Deva Raya in his famous work Amuktamalyada says that 'the extent of a state is the root cause of its prosperity and that if it is small its prosperity would increase only when tanks and irrigation canals are constructed and favour is shown to the poor cultivators in the matter of taxation and services'. One method the state followed to improve the produce is by deforestation and forming new villages and the other by
affording greater **facilities** for increasing production in existing villages.

Irrigation **may** be done by storage works or tank irrigation, river or canal and dam works and well and lift works. The Vijayanagar rulers attended to all these works. **Instead,** they encouraged private individuals to undertake such works by giving concessions and remissions in the matter of taxation on the lands so irrigated.

According to an epigraph of A.D. **1368,** Bhaskara Bavadura constructed a huge tank with many sluices in the modern Cuddapah **district.** In 1388 A.D., under the orders of Bukka II, the hydraulic engineer (jalastra) Singa Bhatta led the river Henne through a channel to the Siruvara tank apparently for affording irrigation facilities. The Vijayanagar rulers converted valleys into tanks for irrigation purposes. During the time of Narasingaraya **maharaya,** a valley in the Anantapur district was converted into a tank and named Narasambudhi. Similarly in A.D. **1533,** a big tank was formed from the river Arkkavati.

The state undertook the construction of canal works with two fold objects. One was to increase the revenue of the state by levying taxes on such works and the other was to encourage the farmers to grow commercial crops such as sugarcane, cotton, arecanut, betel leaves, **pepper,** cardamom and other spices which fetched more income not only to the government but also to the
agriculturists. The growth of cash crops increased foreign trade.

The state encouraged private individuals in the irrigation works. Dasavanda grants were given to them which means the grant of one fourth of and out of the total irrigated area under a tank which was repaired after a breach or extended or maintained or constructed to an individual who undertook this work. Kattu-kodige was also a land grant in the irrigated area. When Harinideva vodayar constructed a tank in Mysore district, he was given a grant by Deva Raya II and when the tank was extended by him another grant was given to him. In A.D 1513, one Sovarya received a dasavanda grant in consideration of his having constructed a tank. The small common channels in the villages were dug by the local people themselves. In A.D 1486-87, the residents in and around Tiruvamattur (North Arcot) sold portions of their lands to the local temple treasury for the purpose of digging a channel from the river leading to the irrigation tank of the village.

It was necessary not only to build new tanks but also to repair them. Many provisions were made to supervise them. In A.D 1513, two tanks in the Chennapatna taluq of Bangalore district went into repair. For that purpose, a village was granted for the maintenance of these tanks and it was ordered that six carts were to be kept for their maintenance, four for one and two for the other that earth should be put on the bunds every year and the tanks kept in good condition.
The state helped the people in maintaining such irrigation works in proper condition, remitting certain taxes such as vibhute-kanikai, jodi and sula-vari. Concessions were made during the times of drought and flood. In A.D 1402-03, when some villages near Valuvur were lying fallow since the time of the river Cauveri washed away the demarcation bounds, silted up the irrigation channels and in consequence the tenants had abandoned the fields, the state restored the channels, repaired the boundary banks and rehabilitated the villages with tenants on certain favourable conditions and fixed graded rates of assessment. 21

At times the income from the tanks was utilised for their maintenance. In certain cases, the village assemblies consented to maintain a cart driver who was to look after the upkeep of a tank. They acted as the trustees of the endowments made for the maintenance of the tank and met the expenses of the same perhaps from the interest on the capital. It is interesting to note that the properties of those who died without heirs were also used for the repairs of the tanks. 22

If a group of people had spent some money on the repair of tanks and wells, water was to be distributed among them in proportion of the expenditure incurred by them. When a dam was damaged, the temple authorities made a grant of land to some brahmins for restoring the dam. For instance, the Davangere
inscription of A.D. 1410, says that the expenses incurred in connection with the annual repairs of the wells and tanks were borne in proportion of two-thirds by the temple and one-third by the brahmins and therefore the water of the channel was also to be distributed in the same proportion.

(a) LAND AND REVENUE POLICY

Regarding the land revenue assessments, Nuniz says that the peasants were allowed to retain only a tenth part of their produce, the remaining was squeezed either by the government or the feudatories as their share. Land revenue was mostly paid in kind.

According to tradition, land revenue was paid in kind in the proportion of half the produce, and this half was converted into money at a price most unfavourable to the cultivator. Taxes on certain types of niraramba or wet fields were assessed and collected in cash, because of the perishable nature of their yield, while on kadaramba or dry plots, taxes were collected in kind.

Land possession rights were enjoyed by women too as observed from the contemporary epigraphs. An epigraph dated A.D. 1401 from Basrur mentions that one Tuluva Heggaditi, the daughter of Kotesarah belonging to Jadar Bali was enjoying landed property yielding 106 mudis of rice.
An inscription from Kaikim in Bhatkal Taluq dated A.D. 1542 says that one Gummati Nayakiti, the daughter of Koteeyakka belonging to Honnabali was owning landed property worth 3 mud is of rice in a place called Salugeri.27

Other inscription dated A.D 1546 refers to Baliyakka, the daughter of Banasi was in possession of landed property worth 9 mudis in the place called Mavali.28

Lakkama Nayakiti, Isaramma Nayakiti, Gummata Nayakiti, Yenku Nayakiti and Sante Heggade were land owners in Bhatkal, Kaikiu and Mavalli regions.29

Some women became owners of landed property after their marriage. An inscription of A.D 1433 from Basrur states that Narayana Shetti donated a house site along with garden to Devakka on occasion of her marriage.30 Honamma shetti received a gift of land as kanyadana after purchase from her grand father Hireya-Honneya Kambali Odeya alias Bankiarasa in A.D. 1482.31

Royal sanction is given to some women when they received gifts in form of land. An epigraph dated A.D. 1547 from Mavalli says that one Bairamma Nayakiti’s gift of land which she got on the occasion of her marriage with Malu Naika received royal sanction.32 Women also enjoyed the property rights of land along with the male relatives. In A.D. 1433, Koteeyakka managed her landed property in Basruru along with her children.33 They were also engaged in landed transactions such as purchase, grant and
mortgage. In A.D. 1531, Sankamma from Kanyaka in Kundapur taluq sold a land yielding forty one mudi to one Timmi Setti. Possibly this could be the reason for many women figuring as donors as discussed in the later part of the thesis.

II. INDUSTRIAL POLICY

The empire was quite self sufficient and did not depend much on imports. The exports included cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices. The imports include certain luxurious items like horses, elephants, pearls, copper, coral, mercury, vermilion, china silks and velvet.

Industries related to agriculture, mining, weapons of war, perfumes, handicrafts, textiles, fisheries were some of the important ones. As machines were unknown, the skill of the individuals mattered much. Small number of craftsmen or artisans were employed and production was on a small scale. Generally, the raw materials were available in the locality itself. The traditional castes who were attached to their professions were seen in most of the occupations related to Industry. Next to agriculture, Industries fetched most of the revenue for the state exchequer.
III. COMMERCIAL POLICY

Vijayanagara rulers followed an effective commercial policy. Trade and Commerce stood as an important economic activity after agriculture and industries. The people who were engaged in commerce created markets for both luxuries and necessities. As the movement of goods from place to place required lot of protection and every step was taken to see that there was no disruption in the flow of goods. The well known maxim laid down in the Amuktamalyada testifies that-A king should improve the harbours of his country, and encourage its commerce. Horses, elephants, precious gems, sandal wood, pearls and other articles should be freely imported into his country. He should also arrange that the foreign sailors who land in his country on account of storms, illness or exhaustion are looked after in a manner suitable to their nationalities. The king should also provide the merchants of foreign countries with daily audience, presents and allowing decent profits. Then those articles will never go to the enemies.

Both foreign and indigenous communities handled the trade. The muslim merchants were the earliest commercial community, then replaced by the Portuguese in lucrative types of commerce. In The Portuguese trade received a great blow at the battle of Tallikota in A.D 1565 and since then the centre of gravity shifted to the east coast which is dominated by the Dutch, the Danes and the English. In spite of the fact that foreign trade was largely in the hands of foreign merchants, the native merchants as the settis or cettis of Karnataka, Tamil and Andhra regions took a
large share and generally traded in pepper, precious stones and costly wares. They followed the practice of buying in advance and acted through the middlemen or dubasis. Prices were determined according to the traditional practices. This is testified by Varthema’s account\(^{38}\) which gives a detailed description of the procedure followed in the determination of prices.

IV. TRADE POLICY

(a) Domestic trade

Many communities operated in domestic trade. They were Banajiga, Salumule Banajiya, Settis, Settiguttis, Mummaridandas etc., Commercial agreements were negotiated and the rates of custom duties were fixed. The government policy was to provide all facilities for commerce on the highways. Maintenance of law and order was ensured. The construction of aravattige or water sheds and rest houses were provided not only by the government but also by the private individuals. Santhes or weekly fairs flourished at local levels and promoted local trade. The policy of decentralisation simplified the administration of towns and the collection of commercial taxes. The presence of a higher official namely muddiah dandanayaka\(^{39}\) supervised the customs. The introduction of variety of coins like gadyana, hana, pana, honnu, kasu apart from gold, silver and copper coins facilitated internal trade. The decentralisation in the administration of trading towns was an indication of the liberal outlook of the rulers. The rulers believed that the prosperity of the empire depended upon the expansion of trade.
The imports included gold and silver for minting, horses and elephants for fighting, and for royal paraphernalia, spices, brass ware and textiles of attractive varieties for the common people. The articles of luxury catering to the members of the royal family and nobility included precious stones and pearls of special varieties.

The exports included rice, sugar in powdered variety, wheat, millet, cocoa nuts, dye stuffs, pepper, cloves, ginger, cinnamon, iron, precious stones, cotton manufactures, porcelain ware, special varieties of calico etc. From the quantitative side, exports exceeded imports and the balance of payments position was in favour of the state. The custom duties were levied on goods actually sold and not on all articles taken for sale. The taxes and duties were not collected directly by the state but auctioned to the highest bidders. This system seemed to be oppressive as the merchants and the government exploited to their own advantage.

Merchant guilds as tax farmers were empowered to levy taxes on goods manufactured, sold or transported. A record from Tripurantakam mentions about the gift of two taxes by the Virabalanja guild. When the king or his subordinates desired to gift the taxes to a temple, he had to obtain the permission of the guild or its president. An inscription of Siddhapuram taluq in Cuddapah district records the gift of a tax payable by all the 24 castes to one Lingayya 'with the permission of the Ayyavolu samasta pekkandru'. Each guild was empowered to collect
taxes also. Such was the political and economic power wielded by the merchant guilds.

Women also carried on commercial activities like business. Aramavalatta Nachiyar the elder sister of a kaikkolar approached the king Deva Raya II in A.D. 1433 with a grievance related to business and secured from him a copper-plate embodying a sarvamanya gift of a village and it was exempted from taxes.  

Women were involved in basket-making, tailoring, pottery, mat-making and garland-making. Women were associated with textile production. They were known as bandhanaris. Women took active part in the manufacture of arrows and bows, weaving cloth. Srinatha mentions in one of his famous catus that he saw a Balija woman (a woman of trading community.) Sale woman (a woman of weavers community), machikant (a woman of fisherman community) and Vaddekula vadhuti. (a woman of stone chisler’s community) who were going freely in the street.

(b) External trade

The rulers maintained cordial trade contacts with many countries Bukka I maintained trade contacts with China and sent an embassy. Deva Raya II invited Abdur Razzag, an ambassador from Persia in order to strengthen their mutual trade contacts. Krishna Deva Raya sent an embassy to the Portuguese at Goa in A.D. 1511. He also expressed his desire to get horses from Arabia and
Ormuz. The Portuguese readily agreed to supply horses to Vijayanagara rather than to the sultan of Bijapur. This indicates how the rulers were determined to maintain good trade contacts.

(V) Taxation Policy

Vijayanagara rulers followed an oppressive taxation policy. The prosperity of the empire can be explained through their taxation principles in the following lines. They collected variety of taxes ranging on the nature of lands. The villages were classified into eight types for tax purpose. They were 1) The brahmadeya villages 2) The devadana villages 3) The mathapura villages 4) The sarvamanya villages 5) The kodagi lands 6) Rakta-kodagal lands 7) Guttagi lands 8) The rest of the villages or lands. The first four types prevailed prior to the Vijayanagar times.

Almost all the Vijayanagar inscriptions refer to some income from land, assignment of land, remission of revenue, levy of fresh taxes or the renewal of obsolete ones.

Some taxes were also collected from the people who were newly settled in villages. They were: 1. Karanika 2. Talarika. There was a tax called pullari or grazing tax on the cultivators and pastoral communities who grazed their cattle and herds on pastures and woods. There was a tax on wood cutters for cutting
wood in the forest and selling it in villages or towns.\textsuperscript{49} A tax called dannayi-vartana\textsuperscript{50} was collected from all the inhabitants of the village to maintain the commander of the fort for the protection he was supposed to give to the people. The talavarika or kavalikatnam\textsuperscript{51} was levied on all the villagers for the maintenance of the talari or the village guard. Besides these, there were karanika vartane and rasaya vartane\textsuperscript{52}. They were collected for the maintenance of the karanam and the rasayam. Kappam\textsuperscript{53} was a tax collected from the barbers, washermen, goldsmiths and others.

The Rayarakha of Alavakona village in Cuddapah district gives details of shops and looms paying taxes to the state.\textsuperscript{54} Salt industry continued to be a state monopoly, yielded good revenue.\textsuperscript{55} Merchant guilds were empowered to levy taxes on goods manufactured, sold or transported. A record form Tripurantakam mentions about the gift of two taxes by the Virabalanja guild. Each guild was held responsible for the collection of taxes. Occasional disputes arose about their payment. Weavers were to pay a tax called maggari.\textsuperscript{56} The tax was paid by the oil pressers was called the ganugari.\textsuperscript{57} The sunka or toll was an excise duty payable on all goods passing from one place to the other.

A number of tolls like sthala sunka, malige sunka, addagada sunka, karta sunka, margadaya, viralam etc., are mentioned in the inscriptions. A tax known as vetti or vetti-vemula was collected for the maintenance and support of the village vetti, one who
offered for free labour. Another impost, khaddayam meant compulsory purchase of goods at exorbitant rates.  Addagada sunkam was a tax paid by the sellers of sheep. Washermen had to pay a tax for the use of tanks or canals belonged to the state. Goldsmiths were taxed for testing the coins collected as revenue. Toddy tappers paid a tax known as eediga gutta. The boy is or members of the hunting community, dwelling in forests belonging to the state paid the boyi-sunkam. Each owner of a house paid the house tax called illari. Grama katnam was a levy collected from all the members of the lower castes.

There were some illegal taxes also whose nature and meaning is not ascertained. They were nagaribirade, asivechalu and biradulu, kapurapupannu, tirukatnalu, tyagam, biradde bideke, tere terege, ampanam etc.

Social institutions like marriage also were not exempt from excessive taxation. It affected all the castes. A tax of two panas has to be paid on every marriage. The parents of both the parties were taxed for erecting a pandal, for taking out the bride and the bridegroom in a procession etc. This tax must have affected the poor who remained unmarried for a long time.

A tax known as samaya-sunke or kula-siddhaya was levied. The state used to appoint influential persons as heads of castes especially lower castes. They were to enforce caste rules, try cases of violation and impose fines on offenders. On occasions,
they received presents. Athavana tantra says that 'In virtue of the monopoly granted to him by the state, he derives much income from the community. He is required to pay a portion of this income to the **government** as a tax which is called **samaya-sunka**'.

The Vijayanagara kings even cashed the **superstitions**. There was a superstition that famines and epidemics were caused by village goddesses and the king should protect the people. Accordingly, dues were collected from the villages which were known as **maharaja guttalu** or **maharaja tevalu**.

**Dommaras**, a tribe of professional acrobats were collected **dommari pannu**. **Vipravinodins**, the brahmin entertainers were paid **vipravinodi pannu**. The barbers and other lower castes paid **pannu, kanike khaddayam, nagaribirade, anuvecham, siddhayam, dommari pannu** etc., Taxes were collected from **devadasis** and courtesans known as **lanja sunkam**. It was collected in cash.

It is said that When the hand of the oppressor became very heavy and ruinous, the ryots, no longer able to put up with tyranny either formed voluntary associations to resist his exactions, or more frequently deserted their homes and migrated to a neighbouring province, where conditions governing life were less intolerable. The government made constant attempts to induce such ryots to return to their farms by offering them liberal concessions. The ryots **were** not also inclined to return as they had completely lost their faith in the promises made by the
representatives of the government. It was evident from this that what was a normal evil became great exaggerated during the administration of weak monarchs such as Achyuta, owing to the rapacity of amaranayaks and tax-gatherers, whose nefarious activities the imperial government was not able to check. The exploitation continued during the reign of Sadasiva Raya also.

There were number of instances of remission or abolition of taxes due to the migration of people. Saluva Narasimha sent a expedition to suppress the tyranny of a local chief, Sambeta Guravaraju, who inflicted inhuman punishments to those who did not pay taxes. During the reign of Achyuta Raya, the people of Kavutala sima (Adoni taluq) abandoned the village and migrated to Bijapur. They were recalled again and an inscription dated A.D 1533 testifies to this. During the reign of Sadasiva Raya, the people of Chyabala in Anantapur district deserted the village as a result of oppressive taxation. It seems that people used the weapon of migration as a most effective weapon to redress their grievances.

The taxation policy of the Vijayanagara rulers reveal that wide disparities were prevalent between higher and lower sections of population. Infact at one level, we find the nobles and other higher sections of society amassing lot of wealth at cost of the poor.

Therefore all these policies and the taxation brought in a lot of prosperity to the Vijayanagara state.
TEMPLE AS A SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENTITY

Another important factor for the prosperity of the kingdom was the temple. During Vijayanagar times, temple was a powerful socio-economic entity that influenced people's lives in a big way. It was in fact the citadel of economic power enjoying a status co-equal to that of the state. It was the one institution that received a generous patronage of both the ruler and the ruled. In turn, temple mobilised developmental funds within a region. In some places, endowments of money were loaned by the temple to commercial firms for a perpetual interest of around 20 per cent. In some other places, the funds were invested in their own temple villages. The earnings on such invested funds would come in form of a greater income from the major share of income.

Apart from the gift of villages and lands, temple received part of villages, gardens, house sites, tanks, canals, gold, ornaments, clothes, utensils, taxes, lamp stands and lamps either to be burnt daily or on particular occasions. The purpose of gift making is that of religious merit. Generally, the donors aspired for merit for themselves or their ancestors or for their masters and overlords in making these gifts. Other offerings were made during special occasions like sivaratri, vaikunta ekadasi, rama navami etc.,

Here, it is significant to note that the Vijayanagar kingdom
has a politico-economic system based chiefly on land tenure and there was a tendency to grant land in lieu of cash salaries even to temple employees. These grants of land to temple employees, transferred the responsibility of cultivating the lands to employees who in turn gave the lands for lease to local cultivators enforcing the strict usage of fixed units of measurement to measure the grain etc.,

Temple played an important role through excavation and maintenance of irrigation works by giving loans and reclamation of lands etc., It also mobilised its resources of land and money for relief work during famines.

The crops grown on temple lands provided the ingredients for food offerings referred to as prasadam made to the god daily as a part of the temple ritual and also on innumerable festive occasions. The temple was the largest consumer of goods like rice, pulse, pepper, ghee, oils, salt, cardamom, fenugreek, turmeric, khuskhus, sandal paste, camphor, saffron, musk, betel Leaves and arecanuts. The food offerings were then distributed among the temple functionaries as maintenance allowance. The consecrated food was considered sacred and its consumption brought religious merit to the devotees. There was a regular trade in consecrated food as the temple leased the right to sell prasadam to private individuals or empowered the donors to see their share of the consecrated food.
The temples enjoyed an enormous income in form of taxes, house rents, rents from shops etc. The taxes were either collected by the temple authorities directly in certain villages or levied under instructions from the government. Inscriptions provide a large number of taxes that flowed into the temple treasury. As temples became larger, more elaborate and more costly, public subscriptions or additional taxes were sometimes levied to provide additional revenue to the temple.

The temple as an economic institution helped the economy of the state in various ways. It attracted a large number of pilgrims and the 'pilgrims clienteles' stimulated trade. This created the environment of 'pilgrim-associated trade' during special festivals. In addition to the regular fairs or 'santhes' held in the vicinity of the temple, the periodic fairs acted as links between local trade and itinerant trade organisations and added to economic prosperity. R.s Sharma points out that with the practice of collecting tolls levied on sale of commodities or on shops by the temples, the 'temples' came to wield some control over the economic activities of the artisans and merchants which they could regulate in their narrow interests.

More and more people began to associate with the temple as the big temples and celebrated shrines in the region maintained large establishments consisting of administrative officials. Though it is difficult to ascertain the exact number
of temple servants but it is known that even smaller temples maintained as many as ninety servants is known from epigraphical evidences. 86

The temple acted as a mediator in local disputes and brought about social solidarity and cohesion among sectarian and caste groups and families. For example, in A.D 1381-82, two parties of Araiyars who fought with each other resulting loss of trustees of the temple of Kelandi Nayakkar agreeing to maintain friendly relations. 87

The temple was the citadel of village life. However it was mainly patronised by royal and merchant classes. Owing to the continuous internecine warfare during the period, the Hindu rulers felt that liberal grants of land to temples was the best means of safeguarding property. Income from land ensured consistency and as temple lands were leased out to tenants irrigation became a local responsibility. Thus, temples played a purposeful role.

Religious progress

The Rayas were generally Vaisnavas (particularly after the first dynasty) but tolerant in their outlook. They attempted to reconcile sectarian conflicts and ensure harmony. Even Kasivilasa Kriyasakti, a _yasupata_ saint who rivals Vidyaranya in the support he gave to Vijayanagara and the cause of the Hindu revival and
who is acknowledged as their guru by several princes of the first Vijayanagara dynasty was very tolerant in his general outlook and not only approved of his disciples supporting Advaita and Vaisnava institutions but himself made endowments and grants to temples of Visnu. All types of religions found encouragement.

Sometimes public debates were held like that in which Vallabha Charya, the founder of a vaisnava sect is said to have vanquished smarta scholars in the reign of the celebrated Krishna Deva Raya. Royal patronage was extended even to Islam. Deva Raya II (A.D. 1442-1446) built a mosque in his capital for the use of muslim soldiers.

Krishna Deva Raya being the devotee of vaisnava repaired and rebuilt the temple of Virupaksha (Siva) at Hampi after his accession. He made gifts to the saiva as well as to vaisnava temples. The temples of Kanchi, Tirupathi, Simhachalam and Ahobalam (all vaisnava) as well as those of Tiruvannamalai, Cidambaram, Kalahasti, Srisailam, and Amaravati (all saiva) received liberal grants of land from him. Even Jains were found in his service.

Barbosa records that the king allows freedom to every man whomay come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering and annoyance and without inquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Heathen. Great equity and justice is observed by all. The same policy was continued by Achyuta Raya
also. The Vijayanagar sovereigns and the nayaks of the empire often made substantial endowments to the Dargas of muslim saints where miracles were believed to be performed and horoscopy was studied.

Some records mention about a Christian diwan of Deva Raya II as early as A.D 1445. After the coming of the Portuguese, the Jesuits made converts from the people especially from among the paravas of the pearl fishery coast who were eager to escape the expression of the muslim monopolists of the industry by transferring their allegiance to Christianity and seeking the protection of Portugal.

Vaisnavism received special patronage and Tirupathi became the most important centre of vaisnavism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Telugu vaisnava tradition mention Tatacharya who was the guru of Krishna Deva Raya. The jiyars of Ahobalam matha played and important part in spreading srivaisnavism and Van Sathakopa Jiyar, the founder of the matha was in close touch with the court. Several vaisnava families like the Kandadai and Paravastu took to regular missionary work in the cause of vaisnavism and secured a large number of disciples and made vaisnavism, the most influential faith in the country. The other branch of vaisnavas, the madhvas had influence as they produced great teachers like Aksobhya muni, Brahmanyatirtha, Vyasa raya) tirtha and others. The great saint Purandaradasa was a convert of
Vyasaraya enriched the faith by hundreds of devotional songs. He was said to be the greatest expounder of the faith. Though Madhvaism failed to attract many adherents in spite of the great teachers it produced, it made a notable contribution to popular religion by attaching importance to the worship of Hanuman. Madvaism lost its importance after Krishna Deva Raya.

Many of the temples maintained a number of Lingayat mathas, the most important of them being located at Srisailam, Sangameswaram and Ummattur. The monks propogated Lingayat faith and studied the agamas and allied literature that had grown since the days of Basava in the twelfth century. They used the local language in order to attract the masses. Jainism continued to be important in some centres particulary in the Tuluva rajya, where Sravana Belgola is situated. There was an important Jain matha and another at Kancipuram in the Padaividu rajya. The head of the matha had absolute authority in all matters including the selection of the successor. The inmates of the mathas had no voice in their management and were under the complete control of the respective heads. As a rule, the mathas were centres of learning and took a prominent part in promoting education both religious and secular and morality among the people.

There was an increased stress on theism due to the spread of vaisnavism and lingayatism gave an impetus to temple building and organisation. The temple entered the daily life of the people than ever before. Vijayanagara kings, true to their ideal of tolerance, have been anxious to protect their subjects, irrespective of their castes and creeds.
Cultural Progress

The Vijayanagar rulers patronised Telugu, Sanskrit, Tamil and Kannada poets. Many fine works were produced during the period. The reign of Krishna Deva Raya was of special importance in this branch of activity. It marked the dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India. He himself is a scholar, musician and a poet. He wrote Amuktamalyada in Telugu in the introduction of which he refers to five Sanskrit works written by him. His court was adorned with eight poets known popularly as ‘Ashtadiggajas’.

Telugu

Vidyaranya and his brother Sayana wrote more than a hundred works relating to Srauta, Smarta, Vedanta, Dharma sastra, Mimamsa, Astrology, Medicine, Grammar and History. They also wrote a commentary on the Vedas which is called Sayana Bhasya.

Somanatha is the author of Uttara Harivamsa which he dedicated to god Hariharanatha. He also wrote Vasanta vilasa and Haravilasa. He possessed many titles viz., Sakala Bhasabhusana, Sahitya Rasopasana, Samvidhana Chakravarti, Navinaguna Sanadha and Sarvajna.90

The Asthadiggajas were-
Allasani Peddana       Manucharitra
Many Sanskrit works were produced during this period. The works attributed to Vidyaranya are Vyavahara Madhaviya, Vivarana Prameya Samgraha, Brahma Vidasirdvada Paddhati, Kovanmiki Viveka, Manu Smriti Vyakhya, Panchadasi, Kalamadhaviya, Ayurvedanindana, Samkara Vijaya, Kalanirvanaya etc.

The works of Sayana are Dhatu-vriti, Subhashita, Sudhanidhi, Purusharta Sudhanidhi, Ayurveda Sudhanidhi, commentary on the vedas, commentaries on the Satapatha and Taitteraya, Alakmara Sudhanidhi, Prayaschi Sudhanidhi, Yagna Tantra Sudhanidhi. The son of Sayana, Madhava is the author of Sarvadarsana Sangraha composed in the time of Jayatirta.

Krishna Deva Raya was a great poet in Sanskrit and wrote many poems viz., Madalasa caritra, Satyavadhu parinayam, Jnanacintamani, Rasamanjari, Sakalakatha sara samgraha, Suktinaipuni Jnanachintamani and a drama by name Jambavati Parinaya.
The Dvaita tradition was represented by Akshobhyatirtha and Jaya tirha. Akshobhya is said to have written Madhava Tattvasara Samgraha and defeated Vidyaranya in dispute when Vedanta Desika was the arbitrator.

Ganga Devi, the wife of Kampa was the authoress of Kamparaja Vijayam. Narahari, a disciple of Vidyaranya commented upon the Kayya-prakasa and wrote the Naishadha-dipika. Under the patronage of Bukka II, Lakshmana pandita wrote a medical work, Vaidyaraja vallabha.

Kannada

The development of Kannada literature was mainly confined to the Tuluva country and primarily enriched by the Jain writers. Gobbi Mallanarya and Sarvagna murthi were the two well known kannada poets of the age. Kallarasa wrote Janavasya or Mallikarjuna vijaya or Mallikarjuna.

To conclude, the state received a lot of wealth through its exports and taxes and thus attained a lot of prosperity, the temple also added to this prosperity. This prosperity was channelised in attaining cultural effloroscence.
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4 Burton Stein, op.cit., P.409.

6 Burton Stein, op.cit., P.380.

7 Noboru Karashima, South Indian History and Society, Studies Inscriptions, A.D. 850-1800, Delhi, 1984, P.161.


9 Robert Sewell, op.cit., P.263.

10 the rents of the nayaks are paid at this time (Burton Stein, op.cit., P.389.)

11 Burton Stein, op.cit., P. 389.

12 Amuktamalyada, Canto IV, V, 236.


14 Epigraphia Carnatica, X, GD.6.

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35. Longworth Dames, Barbosa I, New Delhi, 1989, PP.189-198.
37. Amuktamalyada, Canto IV, V, 258.
41. Cuddapah district Inscriptions, Madras, 1972, P. 189.
42. Mysore Epigraphical Reports, of 1919, P. 103.
4 Srinadha Kridabhiramam, P.74.

44 Chatus of Srinadha, P.130.

45 Catus of Srinatha, P.133.

46 Catus of Srinatha, P.134.

47 Srinadha, Kridabhiramam, P.81.

48 1. Brahmadana villages - villages given to individual brahmans.
   2. Devadana villages - villages given to temples.
   3. Mathapura villages - villages given to mathas.
   4. Sarvamanya villages - villages given to one or other groups.


50 South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. XVI, Nos. 115, 123 and 139.

51 South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. IX, No. 663; Vol. XVI, Nos. 34 & 63.

52 South Indian Inscriptions, IX, Nos. 663 and 681.


54 K. Satyanarayana, op.cit., P. 265.


56 South Indian Inscriptions, XVI, Nos. 79, 103, and 113.

57 South Indian Inscriptions, XVII, Nos. 79, 103 and 201.

58 South Indian Inscriptions, XVI, Nos. 103 and 113; Nellore District Inscriptions, Vol. II, Kanigiri (20).


61 South Indian Inscriptions, XVI, No. 304.

62 South Indian Inscriptions, XVI, No. 140.


64 K. Satyanarayana, JAHRS, op.cit.; op. cit., 173.


N. Venkata Ramanayya, op. cit., P. 224.


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Burton Stein (ed.), All the King's Mana, Madras, 1989, P. 163.

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The taxes include dhanyavargam, kodai, ponvari, vasalvari, tarikkadamai, partkadamai, sandaimakamai, kuttakai, nityamule visannadu, talarikkam, madarikkam, peraym, narasaranyasavargam, teppattu-sarakku, melakai agamai, kadai (summer taxes), ayam, aruppu, ullaham, peraym magamai, mulaiviam and targu. Refer T.T.D.I., Vol. 11, No. 4, 53, 54, 65, 133, 80, 159; Vol. V., No. 154.


R.S. Sharma, op. cit., PP. 126-127.

They include service staff, priests, dancers, singers and instrumentalists, pauranikas, vedic scholars, conch blowers, sacred parasol bearers, lamp lighters, potter, washermen, astrologers etc., Other temple servants like senapati durandhara, parupatyagar, vinnapam and the vettirapanis, artisans, devadasis, vasal kollar for performing various duties.

South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. XVI, No. 246.


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