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THE GLIMPSIS OF VIJAYNAGAR

CHANDRAVADAN NAIK

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Abstract:

The history of the Hindu empire of Vijaynagar is closely entwined with that of the Muslim Bahamani Empire and the later sultanates of the Deccan for more than two centuries. The story of the Hindu Monarchy which proved a barrier of the armies of Islam is one of the singular interest and might be narrated with a fullness of detail rarely possible in Indian History. Several European and Muslim travelers from the 14th to the 16th Century have recorded the Historical traditions of the empire with vivid descriptions of the system of Government and the glories of the magnificent capital. The study of the polity manners, customs, and religion of the Vijay Nagar Empire merits particular attention because the state was the embodiment of the Telinga or Telugu Kanarese forms of Hinduism which differed widely from the more familiar forms of the north.¹

keywords:

GLIMPSIS, History, literature, Architecture, Sculpture.

INTRODUCTION:-

Under the influence of Sage Vidyanarya, whom they accepted as their guide both in temporal and spiritual matter, they came to believe that it was their duty to renounce islam and champion the cause of the ancient Hindu Dharma. The Hindu Society was chary in re-admitting within its fold those who were forced to imbrace Islam. They however got over these difficulties with the help of vidyanarya who arranged for their reconversion to Hindu religion. He convinced vidyateerth his own guru and the chief pontiff of the Advait Math at Sringeri, that the reconversion of his disciples was necessary for saving the Hindu dharm.

Harihara and Bukka were they taken back to Hinduism, and to mitigate any suspicion that might still lurk in the minds of the people, it was declared that Harihara was not ruling the kingdom of his own right but as a vicegerant of the god "Virupaksh" to whom it actually belonged. To lend colour to this declaration, Harihara was persuaded to adopt the name of the god Sri Virupaksha as his sign manual with which he had to sign all the state documents. Harihara was crowned in A.D. 1336 as the king of the new kingdom. Hampi-Hastinavati and to commemorate the event he laid the foundations of his new Capital Vijayanagar.²

VIJAYNAGAR KINGS

The Hindu empire ruled by four different dynasties such as

- 1)Sangam Dynasty (1336-1485)
- 2)Saluva Dynasty (1485-1505)
- 3)Tuluva Dynasty (1503-70)

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4)Arvidu Dynasty (1570-1649)³

The greatest among the rulers Vijaynagar Empire was Krishnadevaraya

KRISHNADEVARAY (1509-1529)

Krishna Devaray was a munificent patron of art and letters all the famous artists were in his employ to decorate his palace and temples. His fame as a patron of letters spread far and wide. He was known as the 'Andhra Bhoj' and true to his name he never failed to load with presents the numerous scholars, poets, philosophers, theologians, that flocked to his court in search of patronage. Though Krishna Devaray extended his patronage to the writers in all languages. Sanskrit as well as the south indian Verna Cultures he specially favoured Telugu and contributed much to the Development of its literature. The Augustun age of Telugu literature which began with the accession of Saluva Narasimha' burst forth in full splendour in the region of Krishna Devaray and the court became centre of light and learning in the country. Himself a poet the author of the Amukta Malyada ove of the greatest poem in the language, he loved to surrounded himself with poets and men of letters. His literacy court was adorned by a group of 8 eminent Telugu poets called the Ashtadiggajas or the elephants supporting the eight cardinal points of the literary world. Apart from his great encouragement to the Telagu poets and men of letters of his day Krishna Devaray rendered an important service to the cause of Telugu literature which had for reaching consequences.⁴

BATTLE OF TALIKOTA

The territory of Ahmednagar was ravaged and the triumphant army of Vijay Nagara destroyed the mosques and did not even respect the sacred Quran. The insult to Islam, and the naughty behavior of Rama Raya united all the Muslim rulers of the Deccan against Vijay Nagar. The combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmad Nagar, Golkonda, and Bidar inflicted a crushing defeat on the Vijaya Nagar army in the battle of Talikota on January 23, 1565. Ramaraya was captured and beheaded by the Sultan of Ahamad Nagar with his own hand. Finish to says the city of Vijay Nagar mercilessly destroyed The battle of Talikota weakened Vijay Nagara but it could not destroy Hindu Political power in the south. The Temporary coalition of the Sultan's did not ripen into permanent alliance. "Talikota was the climacteric but not the grand climacteric of Vijay Nagar empire"⁵

SOME ASPECTS OF ART:-

(1) Painting :- During the reign of Krishna Devaraya painting reached a remarkable state of realism. Vijaya Nagar Painters more realistic in the sense that they strove to imitate natural forms and colours. The best illustration of this tradition of realism can even now be seen in the thousand pillared Mandapa of Tirumala of Tirumala Nayaka whose forefathers were of course, Vijaya Nagar Feudatories.

(2) Architecture :- Architecture too in this period reached an excellence which perhaps it never achieved either better or after. It is known that Krishna Devaraya was a great builder erected in A. D. 1513 after his successful eastern campaign Hazara Rama commenced in the same year, and the Vitthalswami Temple are the most memorable.

(3) Sculpture:- on the walls of temples or of other buildings was displayed the sculpture of the Vijayanagara craftsmen, probably in the whole range of the South Indian Sculpture it would be difficult to find a match to vie with the variety of Vijay Nagar Sculpture. In order to prove this one should go primarily to Vijay Nagar not to mention Srisailam, Vellore or Mudbidri, or ever Bhatkal where are unravelled in stone a social history in stone of this age.

(4) Music :- Krishna Devaraya himself was also an accomplished musician. In 1514 Barbosa States on what occasions Krishna Devaraya used to delight in song. "They bath every day in pools of water and sing and play to their instruments and in a thousand ways amuse the king". As the sculptures shows, the drum, the horn, the pipe, the kolata-stick, were all used in producing this music.

(5)The Theatre :- There is little doubt that the theatre existed in the times of Krishna Devaraya Drama like. "Jambavati Kalyanam" written by the emperer himself were staged in honour of the spring festival. A lady "a patri" evidently a dancing girl, took part and such was their skill in acting that they were awarded gifts of

land.

(6) Dancing :- Dancing girls kept alive the art of dancing in all mornings of the “ Mahanavami” when Krishnadevaraya was in the chapel of the house of victory, during all car festivals, such dances were organized by a mutual understanding and practice, by the women themselves. It may here be noted the carving showing these dancers are among the most beautiful of the sculptures in Vijay Nagara for the lithness of form, faultlessness of expression and the beauty of execution.

(7) The Dancing saloon: - Women of the palace danced in public after they had mastered this art in a regular school of dancing. How they were able to learn and correct their own faults can be realized after reviewing paes's excellant account of this dancing hall.

The designs of these panels show the position at the ends of dances in such a way that on each panel there is a dancer in the proper position, at the end of a dance, this is to teach the women. So that if they forget the position in which they have to remain, when the dance is done they may look at one of the panels where is the end of that dance.

(8) Amukta Malyada :- A work written by Krishna Devaraya with the help of his court poets is as important a contemporary literary evidence for the reign of Krishna Devaraya.⁶

TELUGU LITERATURE UNDER THE VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE

The emperor Krishnaraya was an accomplished scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu and he wrote his 'magnum opus' 'Amuktamalyada' in Telgu.

In the court of Krishnadevaraya flourished the 'Astadiggajas' the eight elephants who supported the world of (telugu) literature.⁷

They were said to be

- 1) Allasani Peddana – Poet – wrote – Andra Kavita Pitamaha.
- 2) Nandi Timmana – Poet – wrote – Parijatapaharanam.
- 3) Ayyalaraju Rambhadrakavi – Author of Rajasekhara Charitra.
- 4) Dhurajati – Wrote – Kalahasti
- 5) Mallana – Author of – Sakalamathasara Sangraham and Remabhyuda
- 6) Pigali Suranna – Raghava Pandaviram
- 7) Ramaraja Bhushana Vasucharitra.
- 8) Tenali Ramkrishna Kavi – Udbhatradhya Charitram.

ADMINISTRATION:-

The Raja was assisted by a council of shifting composition and power, as usual, some offices tended to become hereditary or to be concentrated in one office – that of Pradhani. There was a large secretariat and the usual Officers of a royal household are mentioned.

The empire was divided into a small number of great provinces. Often under members of the royal family, and into further subdivisions.

The Naiks – nobles or tributary rulers – held these subdivisions on condition that they provided a fixed contingent of troops and a certain amount of revenue. The provincial governors and Naiks could do much as they pleased within their territories, though they were themselves at the mercy of the king who was a most absolute autocrat. The King combined in him all legislative executive, Judicial, and military powers. In fact his authority knew no bounds. Krishna Devaraya, the most famous king of Vijaynagar empire himself writes. “A crowned king should always rule with an eye towards dharma”⁸.

The king was assisted by a body of ministers in the discharge of his official duties . These ministers were appointed by the king and held office during his pleasure.

The king used to hold his court periodically, which was attended by the nobles, priests, astrologers, musicians and scholars. The court of the vijaynagar rulers was known for its grandeur.⁹

The Kingdom of Vijayanagar served a high historical purpose by acting as the champion of Hindu religion and culture against the aggressions of the Muslim in Southern India. The patronage of the rulers was extended not only to Sanskrit, the lingua franca of the Hindus, but also to the local languages – Telegu, Tamil and Kanarese. We have already referred to Madhava and Sayana, who occupy a prominent place in the history of medieval Sanskrit literature. Krishnadeva Raya wrote books in Sanskrit and Telegu and his

court was adorned by eight Telegu poets. Telegu literature was also patronised by the Kings of the Aravidu dynasty. There was no religious persecution in this great Hindu state. Barbosa says, “The King allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without enquiry, whether he is Christian, Jew, Moor or Hindu”. The religious zeal of the Kings found expression in great temples, which have been described by the Western experts as perfect specimens of Hindu architecture. The ruins of the city of Vijayanagar still excite the wonder of scholars and artists.¹⁰

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