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RESEARCH ARTICLE

SOCIETY UNDER MINOR DYNASTIES OF MEDIEVAL ANDHRA

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Abstract

The history of Andhradesa subsequently would have taken entirely a different turn. Perhaps, there would have been no Muslim rule in Andhradesa. But destiny willed otherwise; the Velamas were irrepressible; mighty and brave they refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Kapaya Nayaka and co-operate with him in fighting the Muslims. In the long run necessarily, they reaped the fruits of their unwise policy of not helping Kapaya Nayaka. For, the history of Telingana from A.D. 1369 till its annexation to the Bahmany kingdom is the history of the Velamas struggling for bare existence with the Bahaman Sultans of Gulbarga.

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Introduction:-

MusunuriKapayaNayaka was a distinguished warrior, illustrious general, a great patriot and an eminent ruler in medieval Andhradesa. An adventurous noble, he was ardently devoted to Dharma and religion of the land and his cherishing of independence was rendered into action in the great revolt against Muhammad Bin Tughlak, in Telingana. Throughout his career, KapayaNayaka preserved the integrity of Telingana and the independence of the Hindus which he regained by making great sacrifices. But if KapayaNayaka and RecharlaAnavotaNayaka and Mada Nayaka could set aside their individual interests and join and work together for the maintenance of the supremacy of the Hindus and welfare of the mass of Hindu population in Telingana, the history of Andhradesa subsequently would have taken entirely a different turn. Perhaps, there would have been no Muslim rule in Andhradesa. But destiny willed otherwise; the Velamas were irrepressible; mighty and brave they refused to acknowledge the supremacy of KapayaNayaka and co-operate with him in fighting the Muslims. In the long run necessarily, they reaped the fruits of their unwise policy of not helping KapayaNayaka. For, the history of Telingana from A.D. 1369 till its annexation to the Bahmany kingdom is the history of the Velamas struggling for bare existence with the Bahaman Sultans of Gulbarga

Objectives

1. To find out political conditions of Andhra
2. To find out culture of Andhra
3. To find out religion of Andhra

End of the Musunuri dynasty

MusunuriKapayaNayaka's fatal death brings to a close the rule of the MusunuriNayakas over Telingana. Neither his descendants nor other princes of the Musunuri family are known. For ToyyetiAnavotaNayaka, a cousin and representative of his in the coastal area was killed in fighting by Bhaktiraja of the Telugu chodas.

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Salient features in the new Kingdoms

As in earlier days, in this period as well, whenever possible, the capitals of kingdoms and headquarters of provinces are found located either on hill tops or river-banks e.g. Rekapalle,(1) the capital of ProlayaNayaka, on the bank of the Godavari near the Malyavanta hill in Eastern Ghats; Korukonda(2)of the ManchikonglaReddis or Nayakas on a hill eleven miles north-north east of Rajahmundry, while Mummaodividu, (3)a provincial capital was located on the bank of the river Pampa, a tributary of the Godavari; Addanki(4)of Prolayavema is on the bank of the river Gunglakamma, Ramagiri,(5)the capital of Sabbinatirajya is on a hill top similarly Rajakonda(6) or Rajachala of the Velama kingdom is on a hill.

The origins of the various dynasties

All the Sudra dynasties, for instance, the Musunpri, the Manchikonga, the Koppula, the Velama and the Reddodynasties with confidence and boldness proclaimed their ancestry to the fourth caste or Chaturthakula hailing from the feet of Vishnu along with the River Ganges and both rendered sacred and holy.

Territorial expansion

Several of the important generals who served with implicit faith, MusunuriProlayaNayaka and KapayaNayaka in emancipating Andhradesa from Muslim thraldom, subsequently set themselves independent in their respective principalities e.g. the Reddis,(7) the Velamas, the KoppulaNayaks, the ManchikondaReddis etc. In implementing their selfish desires of expanding their kingdoms, these rulers developed mutual conflicts and thereby extended their territories at the expense of one another.

Administrative divisions

In this age sima was a -unique territorial division under the Reddi is in the Eastern Andhradesa, while Rajya was a new division under the Rayas of Vijayanagar in the western Andhradesa.(8)

Local Government

Once Hindu Dharma was re-established in Andhradesa, local government was least affected and interfered with by any major changes in the dynasties or their mutual antagonism.

General Conditions

The Caste system:-Naturally in this period caste system became less rigid and more elastic, consequent on the impact of Islam on Hindu Society as well as the earlier movements for stratification of castes e.g. Virasaivism,(9)Aradhyaivism andViravaishnavismetc.(10) By interlining, interminglingand intermarriages, attempts were made to scrap caste restrictions but not with much success.

Change in religious out-looks

The Muslim invasion had weakened the ethical structure of Hindu and thereby shaken the consummate devotion common man in scriptures and efficacy of religious-rites and ceremonies e.g. Conversion from Hindu to Islam, Not merely that, but the" achieve of Hindu independence brought about a change,mental attitude of the Sudras, besides confidences Physical prowess. It instilled in them power, strength and self-confidence. A change in the spirit of the times is evidentfrom the fact that Dharma Sastras were not strictly followed in the sense that the Sudras were allowed to study Sanskrit-literature, till then a-prohibited-sphere to them. Moreover, their scholarship in Sanskrit became so proficient, they started writing works,in Sanskrit on a variety of subjects and also in Telugu, the Regional language. TheSudra predominance has resulted inthe preference to Dana or gift over yajna or sacrifice of earlier times.

Language and literature

Telugu, the language ofthe region and the people gained preference over Sanskrit, the language of the higher castes andaristocrats. Eminent poets such as Errapreggada, Srinatha and Potana had rendered the Sanskrit classics into Telugu probing their individuality as well as the personality of their beloved motherland in their immortal works e.g. Andhra Mahabharata, KasikhandamBhimakhandam, Andhra Mahabagavatametc Ramayana was already rendered into Telugu in the reign of Prataparudra.(11) Sanskrit continued to enjoy royal patronage and some of the rulers wrote works(12) in Sanskrit, e.g. Kumaragiri, Katayavema, Pedakomativema, SarvajnaSinga. Some of the lay poets in Sanskrit were Balasaraswati,PrakasaBharatiyogi, Vamana Bhatta Bana 'etc (13)

Art and Architecture

in the age after the Kakatiyas and prior, to, the Rayas of Vijayanagar, there is dearth of classic examples of Andhra art and architecture in the form of monuments e.g. Temples. The successors of the Kakatiyas, namely the Musunuri Nayaks, the Reddis, and the Manchikonda Nayaks, the Velamas, Eruvachodas devoted more importance to building of new shrines and several mantapas and porticos in the existing temples than raising new temples. e.g. Srisailem, (14) Tripurantaka, Amaravati, Draksharama, Kshirarama, Kumararama. Simhachalam (15) Srikurmam etc. Why they resisted from building colossal temples in Telingana and coastal Andhradesa, might have been due to the depletion of their resources in fighting often the Muslim invaders. But luckily the Rayas of Vijayanagar in Rayalasila vigorously took to the building activity of huge temples, lofty gopuras popular as Rayagopurams and huge tanks popular as Rayalacheruvu with characteristic features of Vijayanagar style of architecture and art.

National festivals

The Reddis and the Velamas gave a fill-up to the countrywide celebration of national festivals, thus accelerating the growth, development and diffusion of Andhra culture in all its facets. Whereas previously festivals were confined to temples and pilgrims to temples, the Reddis started the celebration of spring festivals called Vasantotsavas in the capitals which gave them the title Vasantaraya. The profuse use of camphor in their celebration made the rulers take the title Karpuravasantaraya (16) e.g. Anavema, Kumaragiri. These festivals were the occasions for the gathering of poets from different parts of the country, holding of literary disputations, concerts of music, performances of dance, amusements, athletics competitions etc. On a similar pattern, the Rayas of Vijayanagara celebrated the Mahanavami festivals at Vijayanagara. Besides, the temple festivals on a large scale e.g. Tirunallu of Andhra Nayaka at Srikakulam and of Virupaksha of Hampi, served the purpose of enlightening the common man by the highlighting of culture in Andhradesa.

Conclusion:-

In Andhradesa which had experienced long periods of glory with brief interludes of decline in between, in the age after the Kakatiyas, the polity, society and culture witnessed an epoch of full-fledged efflorescence under the Reddis, the Rayas and the Velamas. The glory had become fully embodied in expressions and endearing phrases such as Mahitandhradesa and Mahaniyandhradesa in contemporary literature. The glory of the Andhras under the Kakatiyas, reminiscent of the splendor of the Andhra Satavahana age in its manifold facets found its echoes in the Musunuri Nayaka, the Reddi and the Raya periods and had thus become embedded under subsequent rulers in the life and culture of the Andhra race, Andhra nation and Andhra Nationalism fully blossoms.

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