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Trade And Commerce In Andhra (Satavahanas To Golconda Dynasty) Economic Conditions

M.Venkata Ramana Rao,
Lecturer in History,
P.R.R & V.S Govt. College,
Vidavalur,
SPSR Nellore District – 524318.

INTRODUCTION:

Andhradesa as one of the regional hubs of the vast net – work of international commerce must have experienced a great amount of material prosperity, herself having accomplished production of merchandise so as to actively participate in it. As such, the Roman connection is increasingly seen as a powerful factor in the urbanization of ports of Peninsular India in the early historic period (S.J. Keay, 1996 – 97). In spite of the subject having been studied by so many eminent scholars and distinguished archaeologists, whose works will be briefly reviewed in the following section as to have set the model for the present study, the subject promises opportunities for studies afresh.

Andhra Pradesh is one such state in the Indian Union, with its own individuality in matters of language, civilization and culture, worthy of historical study with useful purpose, and hence the study has been taken up, keeping in mind the need for a balanced study in accordance with the principles of historiography, explained above. However, the fact that no part of the country is so much individual as to flourish absolutely independent of others, and no region could remain aloof from others to the extent of without influencing, or getting influenced by others, is never to be ignored. Hence, the present study is not strictly limited to the region of Andhra Pradesh as a water – tight compartment and adequate importance has been accorded to corresponding developments in the regions around, of the same time.

Under the Satavahanas, Deccan attained unprecedented economic prosperity. Agriculture was the main stay of the economy in the land. Land and village gifts by rulers were intended to stimulate agricultural production. The Gadhasaptasati describes villages with jiggery mills surrounded by fields of paddy, ginger, sugarcane and jute. Jute was grown probably as cattle fodder. Bovine cattle was used in agriculture and gift of cows was considered a meritorious deed. According to the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela used asses in ploughing down Prithudanagara. There is no evidence to show that the Satavahana state took interest in providing irrigational facilities. The inscriptions mention the guild of makers of hydraulic machines

(odayantakas). These were probably primitive contrivances to draw water either from wells or tanks, which appear to have been the chief sources of irrigation. Land was sometimes possessed by more than one person and the share of each person was specified in fraction of a pana. The land gifted to Brahmins and Sramanas was probably cultivated by the Sudras. The rate of rent which these gift holders or the king collected on their respective lands is not known. The state might have collected the traditional one Sixth of the produces as its share.

INDUSTRY

The inscriptions of the Satavahana times mention various classes of workers. The Kolikas (weavers), Kulars (potters), Tilapisakas (oil pressers), Odayantrikas (makers of hydraulic machines), Kasakaras (braziers), Kamaras (iron-workers), Chammakaras (leather – workers), Suvannakaras (goldsmiths), Manikaras (jewelers), Vaidhakis (carpenters) were some of the workers. The list gives the impression that many industries were in a flourishing condition. Especially pottery, carpentry, mining and metallurgy appear to have received special attention. Pieces of pottery with ornamental designs, artistic shapes and fine polish have come to light in the excavations at Maski, Kondapur, and Paithan. Dr. Yazdani observes that the potter's craft in those days occupied the same position as sculpture and painting. The sculptural representations of various types and sizes such as thrones, bedsteads, chairs, boxes containers reveal the remarkable workmanship of the carpenter. Gold was mined at Hatti, Wondapalli and Maski in the Raichur district in Karnataka and traces of lead, copper and iron workings of early times are found in the Guntur district in Andhra. In preparing alloys and casting metals considerable skill and experience had been attained as revealed by the bronze and brass vessels, ornamental lamps, and figurines discovered at places like Brahmapuri, Paithan and Amaravati. These craftsmen displayed not only great skill in their profession but also a high of artistic sense. As a recent writer rightly remarks that in those days art became part of social order and hence "the distinction between artist and workman was unknown. Each of these professions or vocations organized itself into a guild or sreni. Each guild had an alderman or sresthi and its office in the town-hall or Nigamasabha. The sreni regulated the work of its members and looked after their welfare. The sreni wielded much influence with the state and sreni-dharma had the force of law. One interesting feature about these guilds is the banking facilities they provided. The guilds received cash deposits and endowments of property and undertook to spend the income from them in the specified manner. According to one of the Nasik inscriptions, the weavers guild at Govardhana accepted from Usavadata a permanent investment of 2,000 karshapanas, yielding an interest at the rate of 12% and agreed to spend the interest money for supplying clothes to the monks spending the rainy season in the cave. One of the Junnar inscriptions mentions that a Saka Upasaka invested the income of two fields with the guild at Konachika for planting karanja and banyan trees. Dr Gopalachari observes that the "Guilds were, like the goldsmiths of the Middle ages in Europe, bankers receiving deposits and lending money".

TRADE AND COMMERCE:

The Deccan of the Satavahana times carried on vigorous internal and external trade. In the Western Deccan there were a number of market towns such as Paithan, Tagara, Junnar, Nasik, Govardhana, Vijayanti and Karahata. In the east the Amaravati inscriptions refer to Kevurura, Vijayapuri, Kudura, Dhanyakataka and Narasala as the places of rich merchants. These inland market towns were connected with one another and with important ports by roads. According to Fleet there was an early trading route, of which well marked traces still remain from the east to the west. This route started from two points, from Machilipatnam on the east coast in the Krishna district and from Vinukonda in the Guntur District. The road from Machilipattanam took not only the local traffic from the coastal districts north of the Krishna but also the seaborne traffic from the far east. The other starting point collected the local products of the sea-side country, south of the Krishna. The two roads joined each other at a point about twenty-three miles south from Hyderabad and from that point the single road ran via Hyderabad, Kalyan, Ter, Paithan and Daulatabad to Chandore and Markinda and from there to Barukachcha. Besides, there were several routes between the north and the south. One such route, started somewhere near Sahasram in Magadha, reached the Krishna delta via Tosali in Kalinga and from there it ran along the Krishna and Tungabhadra valleys across the Raichur region till it terminated at Vijayanti in Mysore. The Periplus says that the inland country was in comparatively wild state, being full of desert regions, high mountains and all kinds of wild beasts. The forests were at times infested by robbers. In view of these perils on the highways, merchants generally moved in large groups or caravans. Bullock – cart was the chief means of transport. Rivers also served as important means of communication. Travelling along the river valleys which were more thickly inhabited was safer and transport by river was probably cheaper. Benevolent rulers like Usavadata provided, on the most frequented routes, amenities like rest-houses, wells, drinking and bathing places and free ferries. The periplus gives an interesting account of the ports on the coasts of India and the foreign trade they were carrying on. The ship – marked coins of the Satavahanas, since the time of Pulamavi II, also indicate that they maintained a fleet and encouraged maritime activities. The Periplus mentions Barygaza, Sopara, and Kalyana as the most important ports on the west coast. Barygaza was the northern most port in the Dakshinapatha. Its imports included wines from Italy and Arabia, copper, tin, lead, coral, topaz, flint, glass, antimony, cloth, gold, silver, fine ornaments and fair maidens. The most important of its exports were ivory, agate, cornelian, long pepper and silk cloth. The Periplus says that the inland commercial entreposts, from which streams of trade flowed, to Barygaza were Ozene (Ujjain), Paithan and Tagara. By far Kalyana was the most prosperous centre of trade and commerce on the west coast and it may be for that reason Sakas and Satavahanas fought for its possession.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF ANDHRA PRADESH

On the east coast there were many ports between Kalingapatnam in the north to Pulicat in the south. The most important of these were Kantakossyla, Koddura, Allosygne and Apheterion. Kantakossyla, Koddura were in the Maisolia region. The former is identical with modern Ghantasala in the Krishna district. Pliny observed that the Indian commodities were sold in the Roman markets at hundred times their original prices. Immense quantities of gold flowed into the Deccan from Europe. The large number of Roman coins discovered at many places in the Deccan is a proof of the fabulous profits the local merchants made out of their trade with the west.

IRRIGATION:

The main source of the revenue was land – tax. Hence the Kakatiya rulers gave utmost importance to irrigation. They made it a point that each village had at least one tank. Huge tanks were constructed at different places like Pakala, Ramappa, Bayyaram, Kesamudram, Kundavaram, Bhanapuram, Lakshnavaram, etc. These tanks are in existence even today. Besides tanks, canals and wells were also constructed. As a result Kakatiya empire became self-sufficient in foodgrains.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

After land tax, the main source of revenue was commercial taxes. Taxes were levied on goods sold at village fairs conducted on a certain day in the week. The amount of tax was decided by the local association known as **Samayam**. They played important role in village administration. To foster trade commercial complexes known as Penta were built near big villages where big weekly fairs were held. In course of time the Pentas came to be known as Peta or commercial street. Godowns and shops were built by the government and given to merchants on hire. To foster trade, roads were constructed and goods were moved on the highways by bullocks, horses and donkeys.

MARITIME TRADE

Kakatiya rulers encouraged maritime trade. Merchants from China, Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Rome and other cities of Italy visited the famous Kakatiya ports like, Motupalli, Machilipatnam, Krishnapatnam to purchase the famous Andhra textiles, diamonds, spices, carpets, etc. In exchange they sold, horses, silk, glass, etc.

MOTUPALLI ABHAYA SASANAM

Ganapatideva issued a proclamation at Motupalli, known as Abhaya Sasanam, guaranteeing the foreign merchants that they will not be harassed by the local officials.

THE TESTIMONY OF MACRO POLO

The Venetian traveler Marco Polo visited Motupalli about A.D.1293 and recorded his impressions about the wealth of the kingdom and the efficiency of its administration.

COINAGE

The Kakatiya issued coins in metals like, gold, silver, copper and lead.

GADYANAM OR MADA

The gold coins were known as Gadyanam or Mada. The silver coins were known as Rukalu. Ten Rukalu were equivalent to one Mada. Copper and lead was used for small coinage like **Podduga Paduka** and **Visam** which were respectively half, one – fourth and one – tenth of Ruka. Each coin carried the legend Rajagajakesari or Rajyagajakesari and the Varaha emblem.

4. TAXATION

The main income of the government was land revenue. Land tax varied according, to the fertility of the soil and the kinds of crops grown. Even vegetables were taxed. Generally the rate of tax was 1/6 of the grow produce. The rates of Agraharam lands and those of the temples were respectively fixed at 1/20 and 1/30 of the gross produce. Besides land tax, there were other taxes like commercial taxes, house tax, professional tax, etc. Commercial taxes were of three kinds

- I. Sataladayam
- II. Margadayam and
- III. Mamuladayam.

Staladayam was a tax on the goods imported from foreign countries. Margadayam was a transit duty. Mamuladayam was tax on goods exported to foreign countries.

5. TAX ON PROSTITUTES

The tax on prostitutes was very high. The income from the tax covered the expenditure of the police department of Vijayanagar city. The main items of expenditure were the upkeep of the palace, ary and charitable endowments.

ECONOMY, SOCIETY, CULTURE, ART AND ACHITECTURE

COINAGE

VIJAYANAGARA COINS

During Vijayanagara rule the currency system of the region saw a new trend. After the Gupta dynasty (c.AD 300-500) the Rayas of Vijayanagara were the first to issue gold coins in large numbers and denominations, though the gold used was of a base quality. They also issued silver and coper coins for business and day – to – day transactions. Denominations included the pagoda and fanam in gold, and the tara in silver. The lower denominations were in copper and used for day – to – day transactions by the general

public. Denominations and weight standards that preceded the Sangama dynasty in Vijayanagara continued to be in use, so as to maintain economic continuity. The earlier currency was never have caused confusion in the minds of the public and in markets both internal and foreign. Coins called gadyanas that were in use earlier were allowed to continue in circulation with their names.

DENOMINATIONS

Gold gadyanas and varahas had the highest value followed by pratapa/ partab, kati, pana/fana and haga. Varahas were of three types known as ghatti, dodda and sudda. Perhaps these were based on the quality of gold used in minting the coins. Silver coins called tar or tara were next in value, and copper denominations included the pana, jital and kasu. Travellers, inscriptions and historians differ on the values of different denominations of Vijayanagara currency. However, it would generally appear that the varaha was the highest in value among the gold coins. Two gold 'partabs' or two half pagodas/madas made one varaha. Ten gold fanams made one partab and a pana was one – tenth of a varaha. The haga, which was also known as kakaini, was one – fourth of a pana. Of the four dynasties of Vijayanagara, the second dynasty, the Saluvas (AD 1485 – 1505) alone did not issue any coins. This was perhaps due to their short rule of twenty years. The first dynasty, the Sangamas (AD 1336 – 1485), issued coins with divinities and animal symbols on the obverse. The divinities included 'Hanuman, Umamaheswara, Lakshminarayana and Saraswati Brahma, while the animal figures were those of the elephant and the bull. The reverse depicted the name and title of the issuing king in Kannada or Nandi Nagari characters. The third dynasty, the Tuluvas, who ruled from AD 1505 to 1576, issued coins imprinted with images of the deities 'Venkateswara, Umamaheswara Balakrishna and Lakshminarayana, as well as images of a bull, the mythologically significant Garuda vulture and Gandabherunda figures. All these featured on the obverse with a legend on the reverse. The last dynasty, the Aravidus (AD 1568 – 1678), issued coins with more new image on the obverse including those of deities such as Rama, Vishnu and Lakshmi, Venkateswara (with and without consort), Hanuman and Garuda, and animal images such as the bull and elephant.

SANGAMA DYNASTY

Harihara I, Bukka I, Harihara – II, Bukka – II, Devaraya-I, Vijaya Raya-I, Devaraya-II, Bukka – II, and Mallikarjun of the Sangama dynasty issued coins. Harihara I issued coins with Hanuman and Garuda figures. The reverse bore a legend with his name, Sri Vira Harihara or Harihara, in Kannada or Nagari script. Bukka I issued coins with only a Hanuman figure and his name in the reverse in Kannada or Nagari script, as Sri Vira Bukka Raya or Vira Bukka Pati Raya or Sri Bukkapu Raya, arranged in three lines. Harihara II issued different types of coins, which include Umamaheswara and Lakshminarayana types, wherein the deities are shown seated on and the reverse contains the legend bearing his name. His name is mentioned as Sri Pratapta Harihara in the Nagari script arranged in three lines in both types. A very rare coin, rather doubtfully ascribed to this ruler, is the Lakshminarasimha type coin which depicts Lord Narasimha with his

consort in a seated posture. There are also Brahma and Sarasvathi type coins wherein the deities are depicted on the obverse in a seated posture. The reverse depicts a three – line legend of his name in Nagari script as Sri Pratapa Harihara. Other coins of this ruler show a bull on the obverse and the legend Pratapa Harihara on the reverse on two lines of the Nagari script. Harihara II's son Bukka II, who ruled for two short years, issued coins with the figure of a bull. The legend on the reverse shows his name as Vijaya Bukka Raya in Nagari characters arranged in three lines. Bukka II's brother who ousted him from the throne, Devaraya I, issued coins of many types which included Umamahvara, Lakshminarayana, bull, and bull with conch and wheel types. One interesting coin of this ruler is a bull type with the legend on the reverse mentioning Sri Nilakanta on Nagari in three lines. So far only one coin has been found for the next ruler, Ramachandra. The next ruler of the line was Devaraya II who issued many coins, most of his coins are of the elephant type; some are the Siva – Parvati type depicting divinities in a seated posture on the obverse. The elephant type shows the figure of a king as warrior, well-armed and opposing an elephant. Legends on the reverse mention the ruler's name as Deva Raya Sri Devaraya, Sri Pratapadeva Raya, Prata Devaraya, Sri Devaraya Gajabetakara and Rayagaja Gandabherunda in Nagari or Kannada script arranged in two or three lines depending on the type. Mallikarjuna was the next ruler of this line who issued two varieties of elephant type coins, these coins have found the symbol of an elephant while the legend on the reverse says Mallikarjuna or Immadi Devaraya.

TULUVA DYNASTY:

Further coins were issued by the Tuluva dynasty to which belonged famous ruler Krishnadeva Raya. The rulers of this dynasty who issued coins were Vira Narasimha, Krishnadeva Raya, Achyuta Raya and Sadasiva Raya. Only two coins have been ascribed to the first ruler of this dynasty, Vira Narasimha's scholars however remain doubtful as similar coins are also found of the Sangama dynasty. The second in the line was the famous Krishnadeva Raya who issued different coin types with the figures of Venkatesvara, Ummahesvara, Balakrishna, bull and Garuda. The reverse displays his name in two forms Krishnaraya and Sri Pratapa Krishnaraya, in Nagari and Kannada characters, along with the symbols of a conch, sword and wheel. The legend on the reverse was arranged in two or three lines. Achyuta Raya was the next king of this dynasty. He introduced Gandabherunda type coins to the existing currency. Gandabherunda is the double – headed eagle which Achyuta Raya displaced on the obverse of his coins. The reverse of these coins has his name as Sri Pratapachyutaraya in Nagari characters in three lines. Sadasiva Raya succeeded to the throne after Achyuta Raya's son Venkata I ruled for a few months. He issued coins of Lakshminarayana, Ummaheshvara and Garuda types. His name on the reverse of these coins appears in three or four varieties in Nagari character. Sri Pratapa Sadasiva Raya, Sri Sadasiva Raya, Sri Sadasiva Rayalu, and Sri Sadasiva Raya.

ARAVIDU DYNASTY

The Aravidu dynasty was the last to rule the kingdom of Vijayanagara. Tirumala Raya, who was the regent, issued coins that bore symbols of Rama, Lakshminarayana, Garuda, conch and wheel, boar, elephant, and bull on the obverse. The reverse bore a legend with his name as Sri Tirumala Rayalu, La ma Raya, Sri Tirumala Raya or Sri Chalama Raya in Nagari, arranged in two or three lines. The second king of this dynasty was Sri Ranga and his coins were of the Venkateswara type with the figure of the deity on the obverse and on the reverse, a legend bearing his name Sri Rangaraya in Nagari characters. He was succeeded by Venkatapati II who issued coins bearing images of Venkateswara, Hanuman and Garuda. The reverse bore legends such as Chalama Venkata Raya, Vira Venkata Raya and Sri Venkata Raya in two or three lines in Nagari characters. Sri Ranga II (also known as Chikkaraya) was the next ruler of the dynasty and he issued coins with a bull depicted on the obverse. The reverse bore the legend Cheka Rayalu in Telugu characters. It is to be noted that for the first time, Telugu characters were introduced into Vijayanagara coinage during this period. The next known two rulers of this dynasty were Venkatapati III and Sri Ranga III. Venkatapati III issued Venkateswara type coins wherein the deity is depicted with his consorts Sri Devi and Bhudevi. However, the reverse symbols of these coins are uncertain. Sri Ranga III also issued coins of the Sri Venkateswara type, and on the reverse the legend says Sri Venkateswara Namah. These were the last rulers of Vijayanagara and the Aravidu dynasty collapsed in AD 1678, bringing to a close one of the greatest kingdoms of the late medieval period in south India.

GOLCONDA DYNASTY

During the period of Golconda dynasty Land revenue system was well developed. Cotton Industry, Weaving famous in their region. Diamonds processed in Golconda. So Golconda called as 'Second Egypt'. Kolluru mine famous place for Diamonds. During the period of Sulthan Abdu'l-Kathubsha Koh-i-noor Diamond discovered in Kolluru mine (Guntur district, AP). Copper coins, Gold coins Pagoda (Hoon) a unit of currency popular in their region. Bandar port famous for international trade and commerce during Golconda Region. Francis Bernier (1658) wrote in his accounts about the development of cotton industry in Andhra during the Golconda empire.

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