

Growth of Industry during Kakatiyas Period (1000 - 1323 AD)

***Dr. Kolipaka Srinivas,**
Head & Chairperson, Board of Studies,
Department of History,
Government Degree College,
Siddipet (Autonomous), Telangana
**** Dr. Manisha Dixit,**
HoD, Department of History,
Eklavya University, Damoh, M.P.
*****Sri. Mamidala Kondal Reddy,**
Lecturer in History,
Government Degree College,
Siddipet (Autonomous), Telangana

Abstract: The period from starting of the 11th to early part of the 14th century saw the emergence of the Kakatiyas dynasty that opened a fresh chapter in the annals of medieval South India. During the 12th and 13th centuries a number of developments contributed to a steady increase in over – all economic activity in Kakatiya kingdom. In fact, agriculture was the main occupation during the Kakatiya period, yet, a large number of industries and handicrafts flourished both in rural and urban areas. Textile industry, the leather industry Diamond Industry, Iron Industry etc. played a prominent role in the economic sphere of the Kakatiya kingdom. Among the industries of the period, textile, metal, jewellery and leather industries were the most flourished.

Key Words: Textile, Padma sale, Tanneries, Marco polo and Diamonds

Introduction: The period from starting of the 11th to early part of the 14th century saw the emergence of the Kakatiyas dynasty that opened a fresh chapter in the annals of medieval South India. The Kakatiyas played a significant role in the history of early medieval Andhradesa who unified all the Telugu people, kept them under one umbrella, and ruled over the Telugu land for more than three centuries. The Kakatiyas started their early career as military generals under Rashtrakutas and later under Chalukya-Cholas, later they proclaimed independence and began to rule as sovereigns. Gradually they extended their empire to present Telangana, Coastal Andhra, and Rayalseema, parts of Orissa, Karnataka and Tamilnadu. The Kakatiyas ruled from about 1000 to 1323 CE. The three hundred and twenty three years of Kakatiya rule witnessed a well-knit administrative network, growth of economic prosperity by promoting agricultural and non- agricultural industries and trade and commerce Hitherto to so many scholars produced some historical works on general history of the Kakatiyas and on general conditions of medieval South India in particular.

Without Industry, one cannot expect the sound economy of State in the world. Hence, the study of an industry is compulsory to understand the economy. As the case under review, Kakatiya kingdom was not only famous for its fertile lands but also rich with mines and Urban and Rural industries. During the 12th and 13th centuries a number of developments contributed to a steady increase in over – all economic activity in Kakatiya kingdom. At the same time successive kings of Kakatiya and their sub – ordinates were quick to devise flexible means to exploit any source of wealth which drew their attention. Because of these developments a series of discoveries took place in the early part of 10th century till Kakatiya emerged as one of the most important markets in the world i.e. in the 12th century. Following are the important industries that flourished in Kakatiya kingdom. In fact, agriculture was the main occupation during the Kakatiya period, yet, a large number of industries and handicrafts flourished both in rural and urban areas, which added to the strength of the economy.

Textile Industry:

Textile industry is one of the oldest and most important industries, which flourished particularly during the period of the Kakatiyas. The weavers manufactured a great variety of designs and different qualities of textiles in the period. Inscriptions and literature provide us valuable information regarding the variety of textiles produced during this period. The cloth manufactures can be divided in to two categories cotton and silk, cotton cloth of all varieties produced on a large scale was sent to interior centres. The demand came from kings, queens and nobles as a result; the textile industry received great encouragement.

A Venetian traveller, Marco Polo who visited Kakatiyas kingdom during the period of Rudramadevi and says, “Textile production of the Andhradesa were the best in the world and there is no king or queen in the world but might be glad to wear them”. This attests the above fact. However, the verities of textiles were attractive and durable hence these became very famous. The contemporary literary sources also referred to a number of different verities of cloths and saris. In Kridabhiramamu, there is a reference to a peasant woman wearing a reddish orange colour sari designed with horizontal stripes around the waist.

A number of valuable references are found in literature regarding varieties of saris produced during this period Nannechoda, a poet of the 12th century, while describing the grandeur of ‘Lord Siva’s’ marriage with Parvati states that the pillars of the Kalyanamandapa were covered with a fine cloth; this shows that there was a practice of covering the pillars or the Kalyanamandapas with a probable beautiful cloth of a good variety. He further mentions the silk saris, the ends of which were knit fine golden thread. The women of the well to do families were wearing, particularly on special occasions, the silk saris of superior variety, which had golden threads interwoven at edges.

Weavers of the period weaved buckram cloths also. These were the other varieties of cotton manufactured in Kakatiya kingdom; it was the best and delicate fabrics. “Marco-Polo says buckrams look like tissue of spider's web. Hence, these were more attracted by the foreigners than locals. Foreign customers used to satisfy with Telugu land textiles articles of cotton that went in for foreign trade.

A significant correlation between caste and the production of specific varieties of cloth could be discerned in the region while the *Padma Salees* specialized in course weaving,

the Pattusales, confined their activities to silk weaving and superfine cloth weaving. In addition, the Devanga weavers specialized mostly in producing pure and refined cloths. The Togotas specialized in weaving the coarsest kind of cotton cloth catering the needs of lower classes. Traditionally, this group specialized in the production of red cloth. The Jandra caste weavers as the name indicates specialized in weaving long cloth with nice skirts and borders. Besides above, the Pariah, Mala, Wailuru, Moorees, Billimagga are the non-traditional weaving castes. They are specialized in producing ordinary cloth which had a great demand from poor people of land.

The weavers weaving different types and variety of cloth and the practice of selling their own merchandise in their immediate locality or in village fairs continued. A Belur inscription of fourteenth century (A.D. 1382) gives a list of the twenty-seven towns, which held fairs and the list included Udayagiri, Adoni, Dorasamudra, Guty, Penugonda, Chandragiri from Telugu region. It is quite clear that such a fairs was much more than a village fair, since textiles from the surrounding weaving villages was brought here and sold. However, this system was insufficient from the point of view of long distance trade in textiles. Hence, the establishment of textile centres especially for export varieties had to be determined by the distance the weaving centers and the points of shipment as well as the actual cost of shipping from the 'Coromandel Coast' to the Malay Archipelago, England and other European countries.

Thus, the Kakatiya kingdom was famous for textile industry and clothes, which were manufactured on a large scale not only to meet the needs of the local people but also for export to foreign countries. It seems that silk produced here had great demand in both foreign and local market. There were 25,000 houses of weavers who were engaged in weaving silk cloth in the capital city of Warangal, where as the number of houses of cotton weavers in Warangal city were 9,500. This number might have exceeded in the coastal trade centers like Ghantasala, Machilipatanam. Korangi, Pedaganjam, Cinaganjam, Narasapur, Motupalli, Hamsaladivi, etc at Andhra region of Kakatiya kingdom.

Tanneries

The leather industry also occupied a prominent place among cottage industries during the Kakatiya period, a variety of goods manufactured with leather in all regions in Kakatiyas kingdom. They are, a) Footwear b) Agriculture Goods c) Dress d) Industrial Goods e) Instruments of Art and Music f) Domestic Articles g) Articles used by Military.

The village tanner or cobbler got his raw material from the farmers and the temples of the guardian deities of Villages. During the celebration such as annual Jataras and Mahanavami celebrations, a large number of animals were sacrificed. The cobblers took these dead animals peeled the skins and processed them to make leather. He gave in return to the farmers the prepared shoes and other agricultural leather goods. The remaining was considered his Ayam or income. This was the usual practice of the day. To produce leather from a large number of animals at a time especially during the festive occasions, a number of tanneries of large size must have been existed in the Velivadas (hamlets outside the village or towns) of the country.

The contemporary literary sources clearly described the leather shoes (Cheppulu) worn by the people in various designs and the Navanatha Caritra refers to the colour of

shoes, some of the sandals produced while walking creaking sound while some were noiseless.

In Kridabhiramamu there is a reference to Malakavalla Kurruchepullu, the creaking shoes of Malakas or farmers. The farmers preferred to wear Kurruchepullu, perhaps to protect themselves from poisonous insects or snakes while moving in the fields, women belonging to rich families used to wear shoes with straps embroidered with silk and golden threads. The common people used ordinary shoes made of a single sheet of the hide without fold or double layer. These were called as Ekavaruceppulu or Omtiattaceppulu were made to protect the front part of the feet from the sun and served as umbrellas on the feet. It seems that they were the most favourite variety throughout the medieval period.

Leather played an important role in the domestic economy of farmers and artisans. It was shaped into a large number of articles such as Bokkenas for drawing water, (Done) straps for festering to the plough, warts, for making hide ropes, leather bags for holding agricultural implements, whiplashes, baskets, belting the bulls while drawing water and pulling the warts, etc. Farmers also used leather straps while undertaking the offering and curing methods in their gardens. Leather was used in place where a soft, flexible and strong thing was to be used as we use rubber in modern days, water bags and the agricultural labourers and the farmers used handbags made of leather as well during the period under study.

At the special occasions like Sankranthi fest, the farmers used leather in the decoration of their animals also. Belts, which decorated with in lay work, tied to the necks or in the middle of the bulls and claves. Belts with beads and bells tied here and there were more favoured in the ornamentation of bulls and claves, cart-carriages drawn by horses, sometimes covered with the hides of bears. The farmers gave the dead cattle to the tanners and in return, they received the articles required for agricultural pursuits. Using leather as dressing materials was very common from the olden days. It is interesting to note that during the Kakatiya period, also some people used to wear leather jackets and a contemporary literary work described a woman's leather jacket.

Besides, the use of furnace with big bellows was a common thing. These bellows were made of buffalo hide fitted with iron tubes. There are references to these bellows in the literary works such as Navanatha Caritra. Leather belts in the preparation of other mechanical contrivances like Etamulu and fasten the yokes, carts, etc used by the artisans. Leather, during this period was extensively used in boat making. The great rivers like the Godavari, Krishna etc. were crossed by means of a kind of circular basket boats called Puttis. This variety of basket boats was in use almost throughout the country.

During the period puppet show was the most favorite entertainment during the Kakatiya period. The performers earned a lot became so wealthy that they could patronize poets and artists. There are many references to the puppet players and the stage managers, who pulled the strings of the puppets and made gifts to the temples. The puppets used in this art performance were made ready by the tanners and the artist made the paintings of different Puranic characters required in the performance, and some musical instruments like Tappeta, Mridanga, Tabala, Kanjari, Paramba, Jamadica, Dolu, Tummata etc. were made of leather.

Toys and playthings of kids were preserved in leather bags, Panditaradya Caritra reveals that during the Sivaratri festival celebration, The Chenchus used to bring in yokes, all

the articles needed by the Saivas including the leather goods such as shoes, sandals with various kinds of toy-rings, water bags, handbags etc. The shepherds and merchants also used to bring miscellaneous leather goods in that festival. The farmers used this kind of bags to keep their implements. We find many leather articles used by the people of different professions in the literary works in the period of Kakatiyas. Important places of the state like forts and military camps also leather was used in many ways, i.e. leather vests, waist-belts, the tanners supplied wrist-belts, stockings, knife, cases, (sheaths), shoes, boots, hide-ropes, big bags to carry things, saddles and bridles.

To sum up, the above observation reveals the fact that the leather industry in the Kakatiya kingdom was in a flourishing condition and there was a great demand for leather goods in the society and the state.

Diamond Mining

An important mineral that was mined from the earth was diamond. This mining was one of the oldest and the most profitable industries of the region. The richness of the diamond mines of Telangana had become proverbial and can be seen reflected in the fiction of 'Sindbad, the Sailor'. Many of the world famous diamonds like the Kohinoor are of Kakatiya origin. Until the discovery of mines in Brazil and South Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Telangana was the diamond mart of the east.

During the period of Rudramadevi, a Venetian traveller Marco-Polo visited the Kakatiya kingdom in twilight zone i.e. the area between the Krishna and Godavari in the last decade of the thirteenth century i.e. A.D. 1293, mentions three different ways in which diamonds were obtained in this country. "There are certain lofty mountains in those parts and when the winter rains fall, which are very heavy, the waters come roaring down the mountains in great torrents, when the rains are over and the waters from the mountains have ceased to flow, they search the beds of the torrents and find plenty of diamonds. In summer also there are plenty to be found in the mountains, but the heat of the sun is so great that it neither is scarcely possible to go thither nor is there than a drop of water to be found.

This traveller's account further reveals that, "now among these are certain great and deep valleys, to the bottom of which there is no access. Therefore, the men, who go in search of diamonds, take with them pieces of flesh, as learn as they can get and to these, they cast into the bottom of a valley. Now there are number of white eagles that haunt these mountain and feed upon the serpents, when the eagles see the meat thrown down they pounce upon it and carry it up to some rocky hill-top where they begin to rend it", In this course, there are men on the watch, and as soon as they see that, the eagles have settled down, they rise a loud shouting to drive them away. In addition, when the eagles are frightened away, the men recover the pieces of meat and find them full of diamonds, which have stuck to the meat down in the depths of the valley, is astonishing, but nobody can get down; and if anybody could, it would only to be incontinently devoured by the serpents, which are so rife. This is the way of picking diamonds.

In addition, there is another way of getting the diamonds. The people go to the nests of these white eagles, of which there are many, and in their drooping; they find plenty of diamonds, which the birds have swallowed in recovering the meat that was cast into the

valleys. Moreover, when the eagles themselves are taken, diamonds are found in their stomachs. Marco-Polo observes that “no other country but this kingdom of Mutfili (Motupalli) produces them, but there are found both abundantly and of large size. Those brought to our part of the world are only the refuse as these of the finer and larger stones for the flower of the diamonds and other larger gems, as well as the largest pearls are all carried to the great kings and princes of those regions, in truth, they possess all the treasures of the world”.

It is clear from the foregoing accounts that there was no deep mining. As abundant quantities of diamonds could be obtained as described by Marco-Polo, merchants could easily meet the heavy demand for diamonds. The account of Marco-Polo is in connection with description of the kingdom of Motupalli. Motupalli was a well-known seaport town of this period, included in the Kakatiya Empire and not a mining centre. There are no mountains with “deep valleys full of reptiles” near this port. The reference must be to the mines in the districts of Kurnool and Anantapur or more probably to these at Kollur in the Sattenapalli of Guntur district, both of which regions satisfy the conditions mentioned by Marco-polo.

Contemporary literature and epigraphical records refer to many varieties of ornaments, worn both by men and Gods, studded with diamonds and other precious stones, bear ample testimony to the abundant supply of diamonds yielded from the mines. Diamonds were also among the Chief articles of export and must have constituted the most valuable part of foreign merchandise, which fetched considerable revenue to the kingdom of Orugallu

Iron Industry:

Next to diamonds, the important article that mined was iron. However, during the period of Kakatiyas, iron was used in agricultural, industrial and Welfare implements in addition to home implements. The arms and armaments used in the army and other activities like aegis's, swords, guns, daggers, spears, pans and blades etc. we're being manufactured in the kingdom, Besides these military weapons, iron was also used for domestic tools like knives, utensils, axes, nails, sickles, ploughs and spades. The level of domestic equipment at all the iron works was roughly the same. Iron produced in small and rather primitive furnaces. The methods of blowing did not create sufficient heat to smelt the ore. The process was similar to that which is in vogue among primitive tribes.

Iron was made in two kinds i.e. stones containing iron-ore were brought and pounded into power, which was then smelted in large furnaces. Another method appears to have been more popular. Fine particles of ore deposited on the beds of streamlets in the hilly tracts were collected, and the ore so collected was melted in huge furnaces erected for the purpose in jungles where fuel could be had abundantly”.

Quite a few inscriptions from different temple records the gift of a variety of temple utensils made of different metals, also with silver, copper, bronze, the metals like iron was also used in that purpose. For example, an inscription from the village Srikurmam mentions that a gift of 10-iron twin lamp stands (Inupakavadiviya-Kolalu) to Srikurmanatha temple in A.D. 1293." Another inscription from the same place mentions the iron lamp stand (Lohapu Kambamu) of the weight of 7 Visas. An inscription of the 12th century from the same place mentions a lamp stand made of iron. The lamp stands were of great artistic value. Often

affluent devotees made the gift of lamp stands resembling a youth full woman or their own images. The inscriptions generally refer to the former as Dipapratima or Dipataruni and the later as Pratibimbha or Chchaya. All these instances bear eloquent testimony to the flourishing state of iron industry.

Industry played a prominent role in the economic sphere of the Kakatiya kingdom. Among the industries of the period, textile, metal, jewellery and leather industries were the most flourished. Textile printing also gained much popularity. Marco-Polo, who visited the Andhra country, was amazed at the perfect texture of the cotton cloth manufactured in the country. The black soil regions of Andhra such as the Palanadu, Suravaram and Vinukonda in Guntur district must have yielded plenty of cotton and there was the widespread domestic habit of spinning cotton daily in the country. Thus, the weavers had ample supply of thread to work upon and no wonder they produced the best and most delicate fabrics, which secured them the highest price.

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