

GROWTH OF INDUSTRY UNDER THE QUTB SHAHI PERIOD

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Abstract: This paper highlights the growth of industries and its contribution to trade and commerce in the beginning of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under Golconda Qutb Shahi rulers. The main objective of the paper is to identify the major industries such as textile, diamond, iron and steel, shipbuilding, salt-petre, pottery, etc and how the trade was carried out with Europeans. The Industries, trade and commerce, are key role played in economy of the any State. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Golconda kingdom was not only famous for fertile lands and also rich with mines; it has given boost to develop the growth of Urban and Rural industries. During this period, number of industries contributed to a steady increase in overall economic activity in the Golconda kingdom. A series of discoveries took place in the early part of 16th century and Golconda emerged as one of the biggest market in the world. Diamond industry was one of the important industries that flourished under Golconda rulers.

Keywords: Qutb Shahi, industries, Golconda kingdom.

I. INTRODUCTION

Without Industry, trade and commerce, one cannot expect the sound economy of State in the world. Hence, the study of an industry is compulsory to understand the economy. Golconda kingdom was not only famous for its fertile lands but was also for rich mines and other Urban and Rural industries. During the 16th and 17th centuries a number of developments contributed to a steady increase in over – all economic activity in Golconda kingdom. At the same time successive kings of Golconda 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 16th century till Golconda emerged as one of the most important markets in the world i.e. in the 17th century. Following are the important industries that flourished in Golconda kingdom.

II. TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Textiles have always played a primary role in the Indian economy, and comprised the second largest industry surpassed only by agriculture. The weavers manufactured the goods in two varieties i.e. piece goods and readymade, clothing piece goods were plain cotton cloth marketed as bleached, unbleached or dyed red or blue. They were either muslin or calico. Calicoes were a stout cloth in various qualities depending on the fineness of the yarn and number of threads per each; they were in demand in and out of the region. Calico or muslin readymade goods were adapted to the needs of foreign markets.

The weaving centers during this period were at Kammappalli, Mattewada (Warangal), Bhimvaram, Achanta, Nagulapdu, Mellaceruvu, Kokkerini, Burrugugadda, Tangada, Dharmavaram, Kopparam, Amritaluru, Alampur, Adoni, Velpumadugu, Proddatur, Paddukara, Animla, Hemavati, Lepakshi, Basinikoda, Tirchchanoor, Narayanavanam, Yalamari, Pochampalli, Kanchi, etc. in addition, the coastal towns like Narsapur, Guntur, Pulicat, Bheemlipatnam, Masulipatnam, etc. had good populace of weaving community. They were producing textiles.

Sukasaptati refers to the implements used in cotton industry by the weavers were, maggapu, gante, gutamu, paggamu pante, tokkudu pante, palaka, done, parisariyachulu, cheedu dabbalu, dande, krovi koti pullalu, kudutari koyyalu, chopayachalu, kota churru katti, karapu padugulu, gandela kappera, golemu, lakalu, neeli kadava, gampa, kaduru, chemika, nuluratnamu, etc.

Pattusale, Devanga, Togata, Sale, Padmasale, Jandra, Mala, Wailuru, Moorees, etc. were engaged in textile makings in the Telugu country. Besides, Parias also served the needs of the members of their community by undertaking weaving as their profession. Weavers weaving different types and variety of cloth and the practice of selling their own merchandise in the immediate localities or in country fairs continued. The Amuktamalyada refers to this large number of weakly fairs called santas.

All the family members in the community were involved in the process of manufacturing at home. Generally, female members were engaged in the production of thread on the charakhas. The male members were mainly involved in the weaving on looms and other processing work such as bleaching, printing or painting etc.⁴ The poet Srinatha mentions one of his verses that it was a compulsory duty of a house wife to work on the spinning wheel. ⁵

The beginning of the 17th century saw the advent of the European trading companies on the Golconda Sea Board i.e., the Portuguese, Dutch, English and French established their settlements. During the first half of the 17th century they remained too involved with the spice trade of the Malaya Archipelago, for which Indian textiles constituted the staple article of barter. The trade was in fact three cornered. Ships from Europe sailed with bullion. India, the bullion was exchanged for cotton piece – goods were exchanged for spices which were taken to Europe on the return journey. The Indian piece – goods were mostly cotton in the proposition of one third plain woven cloth to two – third painted. The Portuguese had landed on the western coast of Indian at the end of the 15th century and had soon replaced the Mohammedan traders who had been carrying on spice trade even earlier. As such it is almost certain that the Andhra Qalamkaris had been known to the people of spice land when the English and Dutch Companies offered those Qalamkaris from the Madras region. The plain cloth was artfully printed and named as the qalamkar. This variety presented a unique art of that age and was peculiar to Golconda lone. All colors and designs are made by means of brush; its color and designs were so indelible that did not lose their luster even after washing and remained to the last. Qalamkaris of Masulipatnam chintz are basically fabrics patterned through the medium of dye rather than the loom. It is because of the use of the qalam (or pen) in painting the designs that the term qalamkari became widely known. The word qalam is of Persian origin and was accepted as qualam in Udu during the Qutb Shahi times when the trade links with Persia were quite strong.

William Methwold, who was senior factor at Masulipatnam between A.D. 1618 and A.D. 1622 had noted, “the painting of this coast of Coromandel are famous throughout India and are indeed the most exquisite that are seen, the best wrought all with pencil and with such durable colors that notwithstanding they be often washed, the colors fade not whilst the cloth lasteth, and this hapneth principally by a plant which groweth in this country (Golconda), called by them chay, which dyeth or staynet a perfect red, with them in an great account as scarlet with us and is the king’s particular commodity”.

The Qutb Shahi kingdom of Golconda had very close connections with the contemporary Safavid court at Isfahan of Persia. Between A.D. 1603 and A.D. 1609 the Qutb Shahi capital had an embassy from Persia consisting of a hundred Persians. It is not surprising therefore that the Safavid court at Persia was also a great patron of Golconda qalamkaris by the beginning of the 17th century. Dutch records of A.D. 1607 state that Petapoli supplied painted cloth, “used by the king of Golconda and the king of Persia for their soldiers”. Other evidences indicate that Persian horses which were in great demand in Golconda were supplied in exchange of painted cloth which was used in Persia as lining for coats and bed and floor spread.

III. DIAMOND INDUSTRY

India in general and Golconda in particular enjoyed the monopoly of diamond mining and its export till the Brazil (A.D. 1720) and the South Africa (A.D. 1866) diamond mines were discovered. Regarding sources of it, the contemporary Persian chronicles were silent, however; one should depend fortunately on European traveler’s accounts and Kai fiats which are highly useful for the study of diamond industry in Golconda during 16th and 17th centuries.

Golconda kingdom was famous for its diamond mines and other mineral resources like pearls, garnets, agates and sapphires which fostered the economy of State. That is the reason why some of the European travelers had mentioned that Golconda kingdom was a country of diamond mines or Vajradesam, and most of the world famous diamonds came from these mines including Koh – e – Noor, Pit, Orloof, etc.

Diamonds were first discovered in most of the countries as secondary formation i.e. in sands and gravels of stream deposits and river diggings. Originally they have been formed by inclusive rock pipes, some millions of years ago which are at the base of secondary or sedimentary rocks. Most of the travelers and acclaimed that large internationally reputed diamond mines were located in the three regions of Golconda kingdom viz., Karnataka, on the banks of the rivers Krishna and Godavari and some parts of the Rayalaseema. Tavernier registers twenty three internationally reputed and other diamond mines which were located in the kingdom. They are Vajrakarur, Mallapally, Gollapally, Paritala, Banaganapally, and etc.

It is true that one cannot prove that when and how the diamond mines were discovered in the Golconda kingdom. However, the diamond mines were noticed by an accident in the early 16th century. It also a traditional story or saying regarding the discovery of Koh – e – Noor diamond in Andhradesa. Long ago Simhaketu, the king of Guntur and its peripheral area was ruling. In one battle, his son was died in it for which the village Kodaluru was given to his daughter – in – law as her widow maintenance. This Kodaluru (Kodalu Uru) gradually became as Kolluru. One day during the medieval times while a peasant of Kolluru village was ploughing his field suddenly he found a valuable stone as it was dashed to his plough. This peasant got surprised of its irradiation and took away to the Sultan of this region as per local tradition. The Sultan also got surprised and exited and said that Koyi – Nahi – Noor (we doest find this irradiate diamond at any where). In course of time it was called as Koh – e – Noor diamond.

IV. SHIP BUILDING INDUSTRY

Ship – building industry in medieval Andhradesa was an ancient one, which was economically the most important, organizationally and technologically the most developed. But during the period under study, 16th and 17th centuries had commercially significant and noted for economic transaction in the world i.e. trade and commerce was highly developed throughout the world. The main means of transport on water was ship and boat. Hence, in this period, the ship – building got importance in view of transport, journey and war on waters. Hence there was an enormous demand for boats and ships in Andhradesa during 16th and 17th centuries.

This was made possible not merely owing to the proximity of iron – ore, but also the forests of red sandal wood's thick polar trunks or good timber, iron and other materials like coconut, palmyra, coresa coir etc. are the principal materials which were needed for ship – building. The location of Golconda having a large coastal line had enabled the Qutb Shahi rulers to develop the ship – building industry for developing inland and foreign trade and commerce in addition to military affairs. It is evident from the royal warrant of king Charles – II of England, dated 22-02-1662 ordering that no one should teach the natives to build and navigate ships to those ports to the great prejudice of England nation. This warrant shows that their nature and jealousy towards Golconda, because even prior to A.D. 1662 Golconda kingdom had already developed its trade and commerce through their ships.

The Hindu, Muslim and the Europeans had their ship building Karqanas at the yards for the manufacture of ships. Metal parts like spikes, bolts, anchors, belts, etc., were produced locally. Rather complex technical devices were used four fold tackles, system of moving blocks, crabs etc. From fifty to a hundred persons were employed at each year. Among them are carpenters, caulkers, sailors, general laborers etc. The employee at the ship yard almost certainly included blacksmiths and other skilled workers.

Schorer a servant of Dutch East India Company stated that “ships manufactured at Golconda kingdom were so strong that they could sail from the Coromandel Coast of Golconda kingdom to far distance places like Achin, Priaman Queda, Perak, Ceylon and Maldives”.

Narasapur and Korangi near two or three leagues from Masulipatnam and two principal mouths of the Godawari were the major center of ship – building industry. And other centers were at Masulipatnam, Bheemunipatnam, Modapalem, Tallaveru, Yanam, Pulicat, Porto – Novo and Nagapatnam. According to Bourey, the Dutch and Englishmen, before buying the ships, had to pay the money in advance for the manufacturers of ships. The kingdom of Golconda had merchantable ships which traded with Arakan, Tennasseran and Ceylon to purchase elephants. Masulipatnam possessed excellent anchorage reveling great Mughal port of Surat in the size of its international trade with Europe.

V. IRON INDUSTRY

Indian sub continent enjoys a great reputation in the art of making and use of iron since the advent of Aryans. As a part of it, the region Andhradesa has been well – known arm – producing centre right from the long period. The rulers and people of State identified the importance of iron. As such every State also encouraged iron – mining and its implements for war – fare, agricultural fields which are most useful one in every day of life.

The medieval Andhra under Qutb Shahi kings was very famous for the production of best quality of iron and steel in the world. This fact was supported by foreign contemporary travelers who mentioned that Golconda yielded a fine quality of iron and steel which was in great demand both India and abroad. The coming of Muslim force in the Deccan brought a dramatic change in the typology and quality of arms and armors in Telugu region. The arms and armaments used in the army for battles like, fire – arms, (like cannons), the long double – edged swords with pistol shaped hilt, guns, spears, helmets, battle axes, guards, sheaths, pans, shields, cannon balls, blades, ornamentation of arms and etc. were being manufactured in the kingdom.

Golconda kingdom was famous for arms production and marketing. Many customers came to Hyderabad to buy arms and other equipments of war. There were so many arm producing centers in the region that include Gadwal, Wanaparti, Kolapur, Nirmal, Lingampalli, Yelgandel, Warangal, Umrichinta and Aurangabad. Other centers were Bhonagiri, Velikonda, Curnool, Kolluru, Cuddapah, Tirupati, Ramulkota, Ganjam, Nizampatnam, Pochampadu, Narsapur, Konapur, Mailavaram, Ananthagiri, Vijayanagaram, Jadevepur and Srirangapatnam. Manufacturing institutions of this period were known as ‘Kharkhans’ run by the State and private people. Most of the manufacturers were extensively based in the towns.

Golconda kings concentrated on equipping themselves with the huge force of artillery with the men and material. Both small and big, forts, bastions and embrasures, were mounted with number of cannons and built up reserves of huge quantities of ammunition. Iron and bronze artillery pieces were cast at various places in Andhradesa. Thousands of men were recruited in the army in various divisions. They were provided with arms, armor and ammunition. Various metals were used in the industry of arms. Iron, bronze and steel were the prime metals used for bows and arrows, javelins, war clubs, swords and shields, daggers, battle axes, coat of mail, helmets, armguards, knuckle guards, animal armor, horse shoes, nails, stirrups, all kind of artillery pieces, matchlock guns, cannon balls, of various sizes and other equipment.

The curved swords with the forward edge talwar suddenly become more popular and quma, a hunting knife was introduced as Arabian model. A number of new types of daggers, such as the peshkabja, jumbia and khanjar were also brought as the Central Asian, Turkish and Persian proto types. The traditional Indian daggers jamadhara and katar, however, also continued. Khanda, tega swords were equally popular in the Muslim nobility. 32 Jean Baptist Tavernier admits that the barrels of the muskets of Golconda soldiers were stronger than those of any European muskets because they were made of finer steel and these iron and steel were cheaper better at Masulipatnam than in Japan that is the reason why the Indonesians were imported the Golconda kingdom’s iron and steel.

VI. COAL INDUSTRY

It was an additional industry to iron and steel industry since ancient times in India. As the case at Golconda the kingdom also had some coal mines. Coal was used to burn or smelt the iron to make needed instruments including battle weapons, domestic tools and agricultural implements as mentioned in earlier.

Antony Schorer recorded the char – coal which was available locally. His meaning (statement) for “locally” is Coromandel region. It is to understand reliably that he worked as a factor / officer of East India Company of Dutch at Masulipatnam in the early 17th century and Masulipatnam was port town of Golconda. Some of the prominent mines located at Yelandu, Wardha or Chanda, Singareni and Godavari valleys.

VII. BUILDING CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Qutb Shahis were great builders and well – known for their magnificent constructions. The Sultans construct a number of forts, buildings, mosques, Ashurkhanas etc. They were well known for their magnificent constructions. Lakhs of skilled and unskilled laborers and masons were employed in this building construction industry throughout the kingdom during the period of Qutb Shahi Sultans. Golconda forte, Hyderabad City, Charminar, Daria-e-Mir Momin (Necropolis), Four

high ways, Tombs, Dar-us-Shifa, Construction of Hayatnagar, Ashurkhanas, Masjids, Balagate, Mortuary, Fort Rissala, Navmahal, Nakorkhana Balahissar, Shilakhana, Amberkhana, Shamsheerkota, Telkadhoka forts, Jabbarkota, palaces of Taramati, Premamati, the hall of justice, Syedabad fort, Mirpet fort, Musheerabad fort, Puranapul, Khajanakhana, Shamsheerkot (Sastrasala) Ghoshahmahal, etc. were constructed by Sulthans.

It is evident from the contemporary sources that Qutb Shahi Sultans and their nobles equally contributed for the construction of Hindu temples of the period and this shows how the Qutb Shahi Government liberal policy towards their subjects. As the State policy of religious toleration, the Qutb Shahi Government encouraged to construct and renovate the temples also by granting villages/lands to its maintenance.

It is well known to the people of Andhra Desa that Knacherla Gopanna known as Ramdas, Taluqdar of Nelakondapally Pargana (Kammam Dist.) and nephew of Akkanna and Madanna, the Ministers of Abul Hasan Tana Shah, constructed Sri Rama temple at Bhadrachalam in Khammam District in A.D. 1684. The Sultan donated the villages Bhadrachalam, Shankaragiri and Palvancha for this temple's maintenance and he practiced the sending of the Mutyala Talambralu on the day of Sri Rama Navami, which is continuing until today. Madanna, the able Prime Minister of Tanashah, arranged to erect a number of temples and old once renovated in the kingdom.

Hence the Qutb Shahi Sultans, nobility and higher officials provided daily work for the laborers, skilled works and masons in the State and thus, they contributed for the development of building activities in their period.

VIII. SALT – PETRE INDUSTRY

The item salt – petre mainly used in the making of gun powder for blasting stones, forts, etc. It was used in the battle fields against enemy soldiers / force. This salt petre used to fill in the cartridges and fire to blast. Due to its importance in warfare every State in medieval times identified its value and began to manufacture gun powder for their protection and to wage battles hence it has international importance. The Qutb Shahi rulers of Golconda also instructed to their State engineers to manufacture gun powder and encouraging this industry. These Sultans arranged to bring salt petre from outside the kingdom if necessary.

Tavernier mentions that most of the salt – petre of the world which was used for gun powder came from India. According to Dutch documents the ship namely Schoonhoven arrived to Amsterdam from the Coast of Coromandel on 7th June, 1621 with 38,000 pounds of salt – petre and other commodities. Coromandel towns like Nagapatnam, Trangabar, Meliapur or St, Thome, Bheemunipatnam, Pulicat and Masulipatnam were the commercial centers of salt – petre. In addition to these centers, salt – petre was used to bring from Bengal to manufacture of gunpowder.

Moreover, Irfan Habib pointed out in Mughal Atlas that one of the salts – petre industries in the kingdom was at Ramayampatnam. The gunpowder manufactured at Golconda was exported by the European Trading Companies from Masulipatnam.

IX. SUGAR AND JIGGERY INDUSTRY

Sugar manufactured from sugarcane was considered to be an important article of consumption during the Qutb Shahi period in Andhradesa. Sugarcane was grown in considerable extent and mills to extract juice from it were also referred to. Sugar and jaggery were made out of this, and were in extensive use both for domestic consumption as well as in temple rituals for preparation of food offerings to Gods. The extensive use of sugar and sugarcane during the 16th and 17th centuries in Andhra were also found in the works of poets such as Srinatha and Vemana.

The naivedya is an important part of worship that included sugar and jaggery. Temple encouraged this industry either by owning it or by taking contract in order to ensure a constant supply. At the Panakala Nrusimhaswamy temple at Mangalagiri in Guntur District, Panaka i.e. jaggery water is being poured into the mouth of the lord and the gurgling sound is nearly audible as if the lord is actually drinking it. On account of this special characteristic, the temple acquired this name. Jaggery is consumed in the year long.

After the rise of the Muslim power in Andhradesa, they were favorites of the sweet meets, made of sugar or jaggery and thereby they encouraged to sow the sugar cane in the kingdom. The sweets like semiyaan, queer, julebi, mitahkhana, sherbet, matkiyan (the pots which filled with sugar / jaggery and milk) etc. were prepared on some festive occasions.

X. POTTERY INDUSTRY

Although the services of the potter are in great demand in the society since the dawn of human civilization, references to them or to their works are generally lacking in the epigraphs, on literature of the medieval times. However, the paucity of information about this important industry in the literature of the medieval times does not undermine the importance of ceramic were in the medieval Andhra society. On the other hand, we do find references to the potter and his works in few stone epigraphs and classical Telugu literary works like Hamsavimsati.

On the basis of these available evidence it can be mentioned how the pottery industry flourished during this period in medieval Andhra. The art of the potter developed in various countries, at various times, along various lines, but in all cases, it started as a handicraft using the clay as it occurs in river beds or tank beds. In course of time, step by step, more and more artistic articles were made and many complicated shapes were designed. Colors were used to decorate the pottery vessels; sometimes a transparent glaze was applied over them to give them a fine finish. There was also an attempt to make the wares more artistic by applying color and using painting on them. The usage of wheel for making the posts enabled the potter to manufacture them on a large scale. References made to Kummari Sari and the imposition of tax on potter's wheel and on the profession of the potters in the epigraphs during the medieval times prove the existence of pottery as an industry. The temples used to maintain the potters along with carpenters, artisans, shepherds and others to perform the services of providing necessary earthen were vessels for the religious purposes. It is further known from the temple records that the temples had employed the potters by providing certain land shares and by paying the salaries in cash. In this context, it is mentioned in the inscription that the potter has to provide the earthen were referred to as kaduvalu to the temple. Another epigraph refers to the provision of salary made to the head of the potter (pedda kummari) as five chinnams and six khadikas of rice growing land. 65 Besides these stray references, very little is known about the potter or his works during the early medieval times.

Interesting information was noticed from a bilingual inscription of Telugu and Persian language dated A.D. 1620. This record was issued by Khairat Khan, an officer of Mohammed Quli Qutb Shah at Pungal of Mahabubnagar district. It records the construction of a watch tower at the top of the fortress called Bala Khilla and a well in the potter's street in the fort. This reveals that the potters were residing in a separate street situated in the fort. However, it is stated in Atthavana Vyavahara Tantram collected by Mackenzie, that there was no need for the potter to reside in each village and that it would be sufficient, if one or two will stay in the village and provide the ceramic ware needed for that village. Sometimes, the potters used to sell their pottery vessels at the market places, depending on its demand for which they were paying chakrakanika to the government. Preparation of pottery vessels on large scale, intended for serving the needs of the villagers and also as commodity offered for sale at the market town / places reveals the development of potter's art as an important cottage industry during this period.

Reference has been made to the potter and his work in seven beautiful verses in Hamsavimsati. The detailed description of the materials, method of preparation of pottery forms, types of earthen – ware and its decoration found in this work helps us to understand better, the services rendered by the potters in the society. In the poetic descriptions, it is mentioned in the work that the potter, who is referred to as ghatakara chakravartin, brings clay just like the boar lifts up the earth from the oceans, prepares the ceramic were with great enthusiasm like Brahma creates the Universe, turns the potters' wheel for several times like lord Vishnu turns his cakra, bakes the sun – dried earthen ware like lord Siva burns in the burial ground, prepares the potter vessels in large numbers and piles them up in large heaps like Hanuman brings the entire mountain.

Hamsavimsati enlists the utensils prepared by contemporary potters thus; kagu, majjiga, mumta, kadava, gunabana, vesalabudiga, purapuchatti, munta, dutta, pidata, mukudu, binde, pramide, chevulapenumu, golemu, chillula sibbi, done totti, gummeta, dumapatra, sanike, etc. The occasions on which, certain parts were used specifically mentioned by the author.

The economic status of the potter can be estimated on the basis of verse contained in Hamsavimsati. According to it, the economic position of the potter was sound and that he lived happily without having any debts. It also mentions that he posses the gold ornaments and that he enjoys a good socio – economic status in the society.

XI. SALT INDUSTRY

According to Bhaskara Satakam, Uppuleka ruchi puttaganatayya Bhaskara, it means without mixing salt in dishes there is no flavor. It was truly a medieval time verse that identified the significance of salt. From ancient times salt manufacturers were in Deccan Coastal areas. Salt was also a royal monopoly in those days. Kautilya the author of Arthashastra says that “the superintendent of ocean shall attend to the collection of salt and regulate the commerce of this commodity.

In the medieval times in Andhradesa salt was widely manufactured evidently by means of the evaporation of sea water. The Qutb Shahi government controlled salt production and its sale, concessionaires appointed by the State were allowed to sell salt. This was manufactured in salt – pans (uppu madis) along the coast of Golconda.

However, this government monopoly was continued when Sultan Abdullah transferred this monopoly to private entrepreneurs, the price of salt shot up by leaps and bounds and it was sold “for the price of silver”. The king Abdullah’s sister Khadija Begum was married to Ali Adil Shah – II, the king of Bijapur and when she heard of the distress of the people, she wrote to her brother that the monopoly of the intermediaries should be ended forthwith, otherwise “he would be held up on the day of Judgment”. On the receipt of this letter, the Sultan rescinded his orders causing the price of salt to come down to normalcy. It reveals us to the demand of the public for salt in then the days.

Manufacturing centers of salt were at Coastal towns like Masulipatnam, Pedda Ganjam, China Ganjam, Peddapally, Bapatla, Nizampatnam, etc. Salt was used to store in uppentas and measured by vatnmas. It was noticed from the sources that salt trade was mainly in the hands of Komatis and Banjars in the period.

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