

A BRIEF- SURVEY OF QUTUBSHAHIS ADMINISTRATION – A STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

The Qutubshahis emerged as a kingdom in the first quarter of the 16th century in Deccan particularly in Andhra country. They belong to the *Qura Qunilu* tribe of Armenian many which had black sheep an emblem. They made Golkonda as their capital and strengthened their position and consolidated the kingdom. Later on, the sultans of this dynasty expanded the kingdom upto the foot hills of Orissa the eastern, Deccan in the north, and central region of Telangana controlling the entire sea -board of Andhra delta.

According to the foreign travelers such as Tavernier (French traveler), Bowrey (English merchant), Thevenot (A French physician) the kingdom was highly prosperous one. They described that the kingdom of Golkonda was as rich and enough wealth and much plenty in crops, grains, cattle, sheep, goat, poultry and other necessities of human life. Added to this, the lakes , tanks and dams ,canals which are useful for agriculture and supply water to the domestic purpose in the jurisdiction of the kingdom. Thus the people enjoyed pleasant and peaceful life in this period¹.

A part from this, the king as all medieval kingdoms was an absolute monarch, with no regular democratic channel for the expressions of public opinion. He claimed *zillullah*, the image of God. He was pivot of the central government. As the head of the state, he was the chief of all organs of power-legislative , executive and judicial and he was the only law- giver ,the chief executive and the head of the judiciary, besides being the supreme commander of the armed forces. He had an advisory council, some time called *Majlis-i- Kingash*, which consisted of ministers and amirs (nobles). The most important of the ministers was the MirJumala, equivalent to the prime minister. Next came the *peshwa*, the *ainul mulk* or the minister of armed forces, the *khajanadar* or the treasurer, the *majumdar* or controller- general of audit, the *Wazir* or the in charge of general supervision, and so on. The *Dabir* was the in- charge of official correspondence, a kind of intermediary between the king and the bureaucracy. The *shuruth navis* was the record-keeper. The *kotwal* was the commissioner of police, whose duty was the maintenance of law and order in the city. The *hawldar* was a civil officer looking after royal

stores and stables. The *sarkhel* was the chief revenue officer at the capital, exercising jurisdiction over all provinces².

Besides the central government, the Qutubshahis founded a well- organized provincial government. They divided the kingdom into *tarafs* or *provinces* ,and *tarafs* into *sarkars* or districts, and *sarkars* into *talukas* and *paraganas*. Each *taraf* was ruled by a governor. Likely, the *sarkars* and *paraganas* were incharge of *faujdar*s. And they were assisted by *hawaldars*. A number of local officers with petty revenue and their titles in the Qutubshahis period were known as *Deshpande*, *Thanedar* (officer in Thana worked under the *faujdar*) *Des mukh majundar* , *Kulakarni* (Sthala - karnam). The other officials such as the *Muqaddam*, (village head) the *Kulakarni* (accountant) and *Pargana Deshpande* (the *paragana* accountant). Added to this the chief port officer called *shabandar* . His chief duty was to collect to the revenues. Thus they established good administration and convened every day *darbar* in the mornings attended by the lords and nobles ministers and officials of the kingdom. Besides that *darbars*, the king held ministerial courts where matters of public importance were discussed. When the king started on tours, the whole capital was on the move and he was followed by a great crowd, some on horseback, and some carried in palanquins. He possesses many elephants and camels and himself sits on an elephant when he comes out³.

In addition to this, the army consists of mainly infantry, cavalry and artillery were partly feudal levies and partly royal soldiers. The artillery mostly supplied by Europeans and Turks. The Golkonda fort was strongly defended by high and thick walls and guns arranged all-round. The fort posses several gates, but only two are kept opened. They were 66 forts, heart of the kingdom such as *Kondapalli*, *Kondavidu*, *Bellamkonda*, besides a number of mini forts *Rajamandry*, *Ellore*, *Koilkuntla*, *Ghanapur*, *Panagal* , *Khammammet* and so on. The forts were galleries and the negatives. The feudalists were also permitted to maintained army to protect the king and kingdom during the emergency .Added to this *jagirdari system* was continued and the *jagirdars* were paid either in cash or in fiefs or estates called *Jagir*⁴.

As regards village administration, the old panchayat continued to function as before. The village assembly exercising it right to grant or donate lands to do those landless. They settled all kinds of distiputes raised in the villages. The village head men was called *Patel* or *Muquddam* and twelve *Ayagars* such as the *Kulakarni* (accountant) , *Chowdary* (*head of the traders*) the *pothedar* (*money changer*) the *Deshpande* (*district accountant*) , the *Nahani* (*barber*) the *parit* (*washer men*) the *Gurin* (*the temple attender*) the *suttar* (*carpenter*) the *Kumbhar* (*potter*) the *Vessanar* (*the gate keeper*) the *Joshi* (*astrology*).Added to this the village police or *talari* was continued.Likewise, there was *desakaval* or district watch system .under the charge of *Kavalgar* or *palayakar*, a hereditary officer, responsible for the peace of the district and punished the

criminals and recovered the stolen property . The king did not interfere with customary law of the Hindus, and at the distibutes connected with it were referred by the officer to local *Bramhasabha* (Brahmins assembly)⁵.

The judiciary system under the Qutubshahis was three kinds of laws, the Quran the royas farmans and the laws based on local customs and practices. The chief justice was one of the minister at the center. There was a judge in each provinces under the chief justice. In each *pargana* (taluk) there were Qazi, the *hawaldar* or the *majlisi*. The *thanedar* was the primary judicial authority who tried cases with the help of local *gotsabha* (from gotra, family) in the villages. The king was fountain of justice and was helped by the Muslim officials and Hindu pandits in disposing the cases. The punishment were severe for criminals and culprits. This judiciary was continued in provinces also In the villages, petty disputes were settled by panchayatis or village heads⁶.

SOCIAL MILIEU

Moreover the social life of the population both Hindus and Muslims were highly culture and refinement. All sections including the nobles and officials were equally high and their houses were provided all luxuries and comforts. The middle class people led a decent and gracious life. The common people well behaved but they lived in poverty. The Brahmins were respected of by other class in the society. The Hindus and Muslims were equally eligible to all employment under the Qutubshahis in this period. The influence of Brahmins in administration was increased. It witnessed that the Hindu brothers *Akkanna* and *Maddanna* played chief roles in the administration of the Kingdom. Sometimes the Brahmins become revenue farmers as well as money Lenders ⁷.

The *komatis* engaged in the business and the *sudars* were cultivators in the country side. In the cities they served to the king and nobles as servants and in forts they served as soldiers. The untouchables lived out side of the towns and cities .. Besides This, Hindu women moved freely but the Muslim women were not given freedom and they were carried in closed *palanquins*. The common people given great liberty. Polygamy was prevailed among the nobles and monogamy was practiced by the masses. In addition, the *Child-Marriages* was rule, the condition of windows were miserable. The *devadasis* were enjoyed privileged position in the society. Regarding the dress and ornaments, the dress worn among the Hindus and Muslims were different, both men and women. But they worn ornaments made of *gold* ,*silver* and *jems* by the rich class and the commoners worned less ornaments⁸.

The Qutubshahis adopted the policy of tolerance towards Hinduism. They patronized the religious and charitable institutions of their people for wining their good will. Lands were

liberally donated they also constructed city of Hyderabad in 1591 named it *Bhagyanagar* and also built the *HussenSagar*, *Charminar*, *Juma Masjid*, *Puranpool* and so on. To the temples and Brahmins and Brahmins encouraged temple building activities. Besides the patron of art and literature they contributed for the progress of Urdu, Telugu, Deccan Urdu, and Persian languages and literature⁹.

ECONOMIC MILIEU

In addition to this, the QutubShahi rulers established economic prosperity in their period because of their rich mineral sources and fertile lands in the kingdom. They encouraged farming system adopted by Hindus as well as the Muslims, besides village communities holding land and organized collective cultivation in the villages. Thus the government collected great revenue from production of the lands and also from the industries maintained by the artisans (professional groups), The commercial activities of the eastern coastal region also yielded much revenue from the exports and imports to European countries besides the internal trade of the different parts of the kingdom.

The coastal region consisting of a good number of port cities namely *Sri kakulam*, *Rajamandry*, *Kondapalli*, and so on. And also trade centers on land routes such as *Golkonda*, *Gandikota*, *Kondapalli*, *Vada palli*, etc. These trade centers became famous for manufacturing textile particularly long - cloth, plain cloth, and painting - cloth, ivory and wood-work, shipbuilding, and so on caused the kingdom economically prosperous. So economic conditions were studied in detail which the port cities and towns as trade centers on coastal area as well as market centers on land. The taxes levied on the articles in internal and external trade, *barter system* and the coins and transport which were in vogue were also examined in detail¹⁰.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the Qutubshahis who emerged as independent Muslim kingdom in the first part of the 16th century, established a well administration in the Telugu country in particular and Deccan in general. Though they were followers of Islamic faith, they never persecuted the people of other faiths. Added to this they founded economic prosperity, but they did not torture the defaulters of taxes, debts, payers government. Thus the administration of Qutubshahis was established peace security and stability to the people in their period of rule.

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