

- The invasion of the Deccan & South India by the Delhi Sultans weakened the power of the four kingdoms in South India (the Pandya & Hoysala kingdoms in the South, and Kakatiya & Yadava kingdoms in the North)
- This was followed by the emergence & expansion of the Bahmani & the Vijayanagar kingdoms in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.
- Harihara & Bukka, the sons of Sangama (the last Yadava king), had been in the service of the Kakatiyas of Warangal.
- After the fall of Warangal at the hands of the Delhi Sultans, they shifted to Kampili(KRN).
- After the conquest of Kampili, the two brothers were taken to Delhi where they embraced Islam & became favorites of the Sultan.
- Soon the Hoysalas attacked Kampili with the support of the local people & defeated the governor of Delhi.
- The Sultan at this point sent Harihara & Bukka to govern that region.
- They started the restoration of Sultan's power but came in contact with Vidyaranya who converted them back to the Hindu fold.
- They declared their independence and founded the state of Vijaynagar with Harihara as its king in 1336.
- Soon this state developed into the powerful Vijaynagar empire.

GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS IN SOUTH INDIA DECCAN



- The whole tract lying south of the river Narmada is known as South India. However, technically speaking, this tract consists of two broad divisions, Deccan and South India.

- Deccan is bounded in the north and north-east by Narmada and Mahanadi rivers, while Nilgiri hills and Pennar river form its southern boundary. To the west and east lie the Western and Eastern Ghats along with long coastal strip on both the sides.
- The area between the western sea-coast & the Sahyadri ranges is known as Konkan, a sub-region of Deccan.
- The whole strip is full of dense forest, and the soil is not adequately fertile. The area boasts of great strategic importance.
- Therefore, a number of strong forts were built there. The famous ports of Chaul(Raigad) & Dabhol also come under this region.
- On account of its difficult access, local chieftains (deshmukhs) often manifested shifting loyalties and at times defied the Central authority.
- It was this geographical location that played a crucial role in the rise of the Marathas.
- On account of its hilly & forest tracts, the Deccan states were difficult to penetrate, but from the side of southern Gujarat it had an easy access through the fertile Baglana tract(NASHIK).
- For this reason, it repeatedly fell under the sway of the Gujarat rulers. Finally, in the 16th century, the Portuguese altered the balance in that region.
- With minor variations, Goa marked the boundary between the Bahmani & the Vijaynagar states.
- The central Deccan (from the Ajanta ranges to the Nilgiri hills and Palghat gap) possesses black soil which is good for cotton cultivation.
- The Khandesh & Berar tracts of Maharashtra lying along the banks of the Tapti & the Wardha & Painganga rivers were known for their fertility.
- This led to frequent encounters between the Malwa & Bahmani rulers for the occupation of Kherla(M.P.) & Mahur(Nanded)
- Between the Krishna & Godavari lies the flat plain which is also famous for its rich 'cotton' soil.
- Then comes the Telangana region: its soil is sandy & does not retain moisture. The rivers, too, are not perennial; as a result, tank irrigation became important.
- Along the Krishna valley lies the Kurnool rocks where the famous Golconda mines were located.
- The southern Deccan plateau (parts lying in modern Karnataka) is also rich in mineral resources (copper, lead, zinc, iron, gold, manganese, etc.)

SOUTH INDIA

- The region south of the Krishna-Tungabhadra doab formed South India.

- The coastal belt in the east is known as Coromandel while the western tract from south of Kanara (from the river Netravati down to Cape Comorin) is known as Malabar which is bounded by the Western Ghats in the east.
- During the Chola period the focus of activity was confined mainly around the Kaveri tract which, during the Vijayanagar period, shifted further north-east towards Tungabhadra- Krishna doab (the Rayalaseema tract) where the capital of Vijaynagar was situated.
- Throughout the 13th -16th century, this tract remained the centre of struggle: first, between Vijayanagar & Bahmani, and later between Vijayanagar & its successor Nayak states and the Bijapur rulers.
- The Qutb Shahi rulers also joined the conflict frequently.
- Another feature that influenced the 16th century South Indian polity, economy and society was the migration of the Telugu population from the northern tracts (of South India) which started from the mid-15th century and continued during the 16th century.
- Interestingly, this movement was from the coastal and deltaic wetland areas, which were greatly fertile, well-cultivated and well-irrigated.
- There might have been numerous reasons for these migrations such as the Bahmani pressure; deliberate attempts on the part of the Vijayanagar rulers to extend their dominion further south; natural process, that is, movement from more densely populated areas; the soil was well suited to the migrants since it was excellent for dry farming, etc.
- At any rate, it had a deep socio-economic impact. For example, the development of dry farming led to the rise of tank irrigation which became the crucial part of the 16th century South Indian economy.
- Secondly, its comparatively low productivity yielded low surplus which helped in the rise of what the modern scholars call 'portfolio capitalists' in this tract.

ESTABLISHMENT & EXPANSION

- Geographical configurations played an important role in determining the course of political events in south India.
- The focus of struggle among the local powers was the Krishna-Godavari delta, Kaveri basin, the Tungabhadra doab and the Konkan region, the latter was known for its fertility and access to high seas.
- During the 8th -13th century, the struggle was between the Rashtrakutas and the Pallavas while the following centuries saw Vijayanagar and Bahmani kingdoms locking horns.
- The Bahmanis compelled the Vijayanagar rulers to expand laterally westward and eastward across the

peninsula from the main centre of their power on the Tungabhadra.

- The Vijayanagar rulers also found it difficult to crush the Bahmani power in Raichur and Tungabhadra doab because of latter's alliance with the Velamas of Rajakonda in Warangal.
- These circumstances prevented Vijaynagar from advancing towards the north and forced it to expand laterally eastward and westward across the peninsula and southwards into the Tamil country.
- Later, however, this alliance broke up which enabled Vijaynagar to expand at the cost of Bahmanis.

EARLY PHASE 1336-1509

- Rivalries in this period ensued among Vijaynagar, Bahmanis, the Reddis of Kondaveedu (upper Krishna-Godavari delta), the Velamas of Rajakonda (lower Krishna-Godavari delta), the Telugu-Chodas (between Krishna-Godavari region) and the Gajapatis of Odisha over the control of the Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra doab and Marathwada (specially Konkan).
- On account of constant clashes, the Vijaynagar boundaries kept on changing.
- Between 1336-1422, conflicts took place between two alliances : – The Bahmanis with Telugu-Choda chiefs & the Velamas of Rajakonda & the Reddis of Rajahmundry joined hands with Vijaynagar.
- This tilted the balance largely in favour of the Vijayanagar.
- During 1422-46, clash over the annexation of Raichur doab started between the Vijayanagar and the Bahmani rulers which resulted in the defeat of Vijaynagar.
- This greatly exposed the weaknesses of the Vijaynagar army. It forced its rulers to reorganize the army by enlisting Muslim archers & engaging better quality horses.
- The Muslim archers were given revenue assignments. During this period the entire Kondaveedu region was annexed to the Vijaynagar empire.
- Between 1465-1509 again, the Raichur doab became the cockpit of clashes.
- In the beginning, Vijaynagar had to surrender the western ports, i.e. Goa, Chaul & Dabhol to the Bahmanis.
- But, around 1490, internal disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom began with the establishment of Bijapur under Yusuf Adil Khan.
- Taking advantage of the situation, Vijaynagar succeeded in occupying Tungabhadra region (Adoni and Kurnool).
- Earlier, the loss of western ports had completely dislocated horse trade with the Arabs on which Vijaynagar army depended for its cavalry.
- However, occupation of Honavar, Bhatkal, Bakanur and Mangalore ports led to the revival of horse

trade. This ensured regular supply which sustained the efficiency of the Vijaynagar army.

- The Gajapatis of Orissa were an important power in the eastern region.
- They had in their possession areas like Kondaveedu, Udayagiri & Masulipatam.
- The Vijayanagar rulers succeeded in expelling the Gajapatis as far as Godavari and occupied Kondaveedu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam.
- But soon, in 1481, Masulipatam was lost to the Bahmanis.
- Vijaynagar had also to contend with the constant rebellions of the chieftains of Udayagiri, Ummatur (near Mysore) and Seringapatam.

KRISHNADEVARAYA 1509-29

- During this period, the power of the Bahmanis declined, leading to the emergence of five kingdoms: the Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar; the Adil Shahis of Bijapur; the Imad Shahis of Berar, the Qutb Shahis of Golconda and the Barid Shahis of Bidar on the ruins of the Bahmani empire.
- This helped Krishnadevaraya greatly in capturing Koilkonda and Raichur from the Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Gulbarga & Bidar from the Bahmanis.
- Krishnadevaraya also recovered Udayagiri, Kondaveedu (south of river Krishna), & Nalgonda (in Andhra Pradesh).
- Telangana and Warangal were taken from the Gajapatis.
- By 1510, the Portuguese also emerged as a strong power to reckon with in the Indian waters.
- Occupation of Goa and sack of Danda Rajouri and Dabhol provided them monopoly in horse trade, since Goa had been the entrepot of the Deccan states for horse trade.
- Krishnadevaraya maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese.
- On Albuquerque's request, Krishnadevaraya permitted the construction of a fort at Bhatkal.
- Similarly, the Portuguese soldiers played a reasonable role in Krishnadevaraya's success against Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur.

PERIOD OF INSTABILITY 1529-42

- Krishnadevaraya's death generated internal strife and attracted external invasions.
- Taking advantage of the internal situation, Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur seized Raichur and Mudgal.
- The Gajapati and Golconda kings also, unsuccessfully, attempted to occupy Kondaveedu.
- During this turbulence, Krishnadevaraya's brother Achyut Raya (1529-42) succeeded in usurping the Vijaynagar throne.
- But the latter's death once again led to the war of succession between Achyut Raya's son and Sadasiva, the nephew of Achyut Raya.
- Finally, Sadasiva ascended the throne (1542), but the real power remained in the hands of Rama Raya, the son-in-law of Krishnadevaraya.

- He followed the policy of admitting Muslims in the army and conferred important offices on them which greatly enhanced the efficiency of the army.

THE PORTUGUESE

- Rama Raya's relations with the Portuguese were not very cordial.
- Martin Alfonso de Souza, who became the governor of Goa in 1542 plundered Bhatkal.
- Later, Rama Raya succeeded in concluding a treaty with Alfonso de Souza's successor, Joao de Castro, in 1547, by which Rama Raya secured a monopoly of the horse trade.
- Rama Raya tried to curb Portuguese influence in San Thome (Chennai) on the Coromandel.

VIJAYNAGAR IN DEEP SOUTH

- By 1512, Vijayanagar rulers succeeded in bringing almost the whole southern peninsula under their control.
- The small Hindu chiefdom of Rajagambirarajyan (Thondai Mandala), the Zamorin of Calicut and the ruler of Quilon (Kerala) accepted the suzerainty of Vijaynagar.
- By 1496, almost the whole deep south upto the Cape Comorin including local Chola & Chera rulers, Tanjore & Pudukkottai and Manabhusa of Madura were subjugated.
- However, the Pandya ruler (chief of Tuticorin & Kayattar) was allowed to rule as a tributary.
- An interesting feature of the occupation of the Tamil country was that, after the conquests the Telugu soldiers settled down permanently in remote & sparsely populated areas.
- These migrants exploited the black soil which led to the emergence of the Reddis as an important cultivating group.
- Besides, the emergence of the nayakas as intermediaries in the Tamil country was also the result of expansion into that region.
- The Vijaynagar state was a massive political system which included within its domain diverse people, i.e. the Tamils, Kannadas and the Telugu-speaking community.
- The Vijayanagar rulers exercised direct territorial sovereignty over the Tungabhadra region.
- In other parts, the Vijayanagar rulers exercised ritual sovereignty (overlordship) through the Telugu warriors (nayakas) and the local chiefs who had metamorphosed into nayakas and also through the sectarian groups, i.e. the Vaishnavas.

THE DECCAN STATES

- By 1538, the Bahmani kingdom split up into five states – Ahmednagar, Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda and Berar.
- Ahmednagar and Bijapur came to a mutual understanding in 1542-43 which gave Bijapur a free hand against Vijaynagar, whereas Ahmednagar was to expand at the cost of Bidar.

- With this understanding, Ibrahim Adil Shah attacked Vijaynagar which was repulsed.
- But the understanding did not remain for long. Ahmadnagar received Rama Raya's help to capture the fort of Kalyani from Bidar.
- Rama Raya's relations with the Deccan states were quite complex: he helped Ahmednagar against Bidar but, when Ahmednagar attacked Gulbarga (Bijapuri territory), Rama Raya came to the help of the Bijapur ruler.
- Moreover, Rama Raya succeeded in bringing about a collective security plan between the Vijayanagar and the Deccani states.
- It was agreed that aggression by any one of them would bring forth armed intervention by the rest of the parties against the aggressor
- In utter violation of the agreement, Ahmadnagar invaded Bijapur in 1560.
- Rama Raya secured Golconda's help against Ahmednagar but this alliance, too, proved short lived.
- Ahmednagar was defeated and Kalyani had to be surrendered to Bijapur.
- Around this time, Rama Raya also violated the security agreement by attacking Bidar.
- The ruler of Golconda joined hands with Ahmadnagar and attacked Kalyani.
- Rama Raya sent his forces against Golconda for recapturing the fortress of Kalyani.
- On the other hand, Vijaynagar and Bijapur joined hands (which was again a transitory alliance) against the aggression of Ahmadnagar and Golconda.
- Finally, Ahmednagar had to surrender the forts of Koilkonda, Ganpura and Pangal.
- During this phase, Rama Raya's policy was of playing off one Muslim state against the other to secure a balance of power in favour of Vijaynagar
- Later, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar and Bijapur rallied together against Vijaynagar.
- The final showdown was at Talikota (1565)(KRN), a town located near Krishna river. It spelt utter doom for Vijaynagar which was sacked.
- Rama Raya was killed. Though the Vijaynagar kingdom continued to exist for almost hundred more years, its size decreased and the Rayas no longer remained important in the politics of South India.

RELIGION & POLITICS UNDER VIJAYNAGAR

RITUAL KINGSHIP

- Religion & religious classes played an important role in the political, social and economic life of the Vijayanagar empire.
- It is generally emphasized that the principle of strict adherence to dharma was the chief constituent and distinguishing feature of the Vijayanagar state.
- But very often it was the Hindu rulers against whom the Vijayanagar rulers had to fight, e.g. the

Gajapatis of Odisha. The most strategically placed contingents of the Vijaynagar army were under the charge of Muslim commanders.

- The Muslim archers were employed by King Deva Raya II. These Muslim contingents played an important role in the victory of Vijaynagar against its Hindu rivals.
- The successful military deeds of the Vijayanagar rulers led them to assume the title of divijayans.
- Vijaynagar kingship was symbolic in the sense that their rulers exercised their control through their overlords over a region beyond the prime centre of their authority.
- This symbolism was manifested through the instrument of religion which was used to ensure loyalty from the people. For example, ritual kingship is best exemplified in the Mahanavami festival
- This was an annual royal ceremony lasting for nine days between 15 September & 15 October.
- It culminated in the Dussehra festival on the tenth day.
- Important personages (e.g. military commanders) from the peripheral parts participated in the festival.
- Through this festival, recognition of the sovereignty of Vijaynagar rulers by peripheral parts of the empire was strengthened.
- Though the Brahmins participated in the festival, their role was not predominant.
- The ritual rites of the festival were largely performed by the king himself.

POLITICAL ROLE OF PRIESTS

- A distinct feature of the Vijaynagar state was the importance of the Brahmins as political & secular personnel rather than ritual leaders.
- Most of the durga dannaiks (in-charge of forts) were Brahmins.
- Literary sources substantiate the theory that fortresses were significant during this period and were placed under the control of the Brahmins, especially of Telugu origins
- During this period, the majority of educated Brahmins desired to become government servants as administrators and accountants which offered them good career prospects.
- The Imperial Secretariat was totally manned by the Brahmins.
- These Brahmins were different from the other Brahmins: they belonged to a sub-caste called the Telugu Niyogis.

POLITICAL ROLE OF BRAHMINS

- They were not very orthodox in performing religious rites. They also worked as potential legitimizers.
- The Brahmin Vidyanaraya & his kinsmen were the ministers of the Sangama brothers: they provided

legitimacy to their rule by accepting them back into the Hindu fold.

- The Brahmins also played an important role as military commanders in the Vijayanagar army. For example, under Krishnadevaraya Brahmin Timma received economic support as he was an integral part of the political system.
- Thus, Brahmins constructed & commanded fortresses in different parts of the empire for which they were assigned revenue of some crown villages, bhandarwada / Muamala.
- Differentiation was made between crown villages and amaram villages (whose income was under the charge of the local military chiefs).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KING, SECT & TEMPLES

- To establish an effective control over the distant Tamil region, the Vijayanagar ruler sought the help of the Vaishnava sectarian leaders who hailed from the Tamil Country.
- For legitimizing their power in this region, it was necessary for the rulers, who were aliens in the Tamil region, to establish contacts with the basic Tamil religious organization – the temples.
- This relationship can be explained in terms of four assertions:
 - 1) Temples were basic for sustaining kingship.
 - 2) Sectarian leaders were the connecting links between kings & temples.
 - 3) Though the routine supervision of the temples was done by local sectarian groups, the task of solving disputes concerning temples was in the hands of the king.
 - 4) The intervention of the king in the above matter was administrative, not legislative.
- During 1350-1650, numerous temples sprang up in south India.
- Through grants or gifts to the temples in the form of material resources (a part of the agricultural produce of specified villages), a particular type of agrarian economy evolved under the Vijayanagar rule.
- The rulers of the early Sangama dynasty were Saivas who made additions to the Sri Virupaksha (Pampapati) temple of Vijayanagar.
- The Saluvas were basically Vaishnavas who gave patronage to both the Siva and Vishnu temples.
- Krishnadevaraya (the Tuluva ruler) constructed the Krishnaswami temple (Vaishnava shrine) and also gave grants to Siva temples.
- The Aravidu kings also gave gifts to the Vaishnava temples.

ADMINISTRATION AT VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE

- For the Vijayanagara state the literary works are available in two languages, Kannada & Telugu.
- While the inscriptions are scattered over an immensely vast area in three languages – Kannada, Telugu & Tamil.

- Scholars proficient in one language made use of the sources available in that language with the information pertaining to that particular culture region.
- Language barrier prevented individual scholars from providing a comprehensive analysis on the subject.
- Scant attention has been paid by scholars to the independent sultanates which emerged as a consequence of the decline of Delhi Sultanate.

VIJAYANAGAR CENTRAL POWER

- Vijayanagar empire was established by the sons of Sangama, Harihara and Bukka in 1336.
- It had its capital on the banks of river Tungabhadra.
- Some scholars ascribe to the theory of Telugu origin of Vijayanagar rulers, Others believe that they belonged to Karnataka.
- The scholars believe that the empire was established by Harihara I & Bukka I (the sons of Sangama) who were employed under the Kakatiya ruler.
- When Warangal was taken by Ulugh Khan in 1323, they got employed under Kampildeva of Anegundi (KRN)
- When Anegundi was conquered by the Delhi Sultan, they were deputed there but they founded the Vijayanagar empire.
- According to one view, they were feudatories of Hoysalas & after the dissolution of Hoysala power in 1342, they emerged as their successors.
- According to Nilakanta Sastri the empire was a hereditary monarchy & the political situation within the territory & outside made it imperative that the king should be strong at war & diplomacy.
- A weak ruler could not continue for long since there was pressure from within and outside.
- King Mallikarjuna (1447-65), who succeeded Vijaya Raya II, was such a weak king whose power was usurped by Saluva Narasimha, a military commander who later founded the Saluva dynasty
- Thus, such instances of intrigues & conspiracies were an important feature of the Vijayanagar kingship.
- The last ruler of Saluva dynasty was assassinated by the powerful noble & regent Vira Narasimha who laid the foundation of Tuluva or third dynasty.
- The most important ruler of this dynasty was Krishnadevaraya.
- The Aravidu dynasty began to rule over Vijayanagar in 1572.
- It was the fourth dynasty — Rama Raya an important king of Aravidu dynasty was Krishnadevaraya's daughter's son.
- The king was advised by a council of ministers but the supreme authority was the king
- On certain occasions the king punished his most powerful ministers as in the case of Saluva Timma who was punished by Krishnadevaraya.

- The royal princes were often appointed to important official positions with a view to training them in the administration.
- As a result some princes became highly efficient & well versed in the state affairs.
- Krishnadevaraya exemplifies this practice in his didactic text Amuktamalyada
- Krishnadevaraya wrote about : – importance of development of harbours , safeguards of foreign sailors & traders , export & import of horses & elephants
- The King's army was stationed at the capital.
- The army consisted of an elephant corps, a cavalry and an infantry.
- There were two treasuries at the Capital
- 1) For current remittance & withdrawal.
- 2) A large reserve, which was used only when the king was in great need.
- Every king made it a point to add something to this reserve.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

- The territory was organised from the very beginning of the kingdom into administrative units called rajas or provinces.
- These provinces were put under pradhanis who were a category of superior officers.
- In the initial stages the pradhanis were princes of the royal line but later, the post was occupied by military officers.
- Subbarayalu Reddiar informs that the headquarter of each rajas was called uccavadi or simply cavadi
- The exact number of rajas in the Vijayanagara Kingdom has not been convincingly calculated.
- The rajas ceased to serve the function of important administrative units when the nayaka system was established by the time of Krishnadevaraya.
- However, the names of rajas figure in the records exists even later but only as geographical names.
- In the later stage the headquarters of the earlier rajas are found as fortified garrisons under the military officers called amara nayakas.
- There were other smaller divisions like sime, sthala, nadu
- In some records, the terms rajas & sim are used interchangeably as in the case of Terakanambi sime and Terekenanbi rajas.
- Some of these divisions are said to be part of the hierarchy of divisions such as Kundahatta Sthala of Nagavali Sthala.
- Epigraphical reference to such complicated nomenclature & divisions prevents us from suggesting any hierarchy of administrative divisions.
- It was thought that, For administrative convenience governmental authorities introduced the peculiar nomenclature system for identifying various territorial divisions.

- However, the changes are an indication of the variation in the pattern of administrative machinery in different periods.

NAYAKA SYSTEM

- The Nayaka or the Nayankara system which matured in the later period of the empire brought some changes in the status of the rajas or provinces.
- The nayakas were a category of officers appointed by the king with rights over land.
- According to historians the Nayakas enjoyed control over the land held by them & they could parcel out a part of it to others in return for some remittance of revenue.
- Epigraphical records speak of different kinds of nayakas such as dannayakas (military official), durga-dannayakas (military official in charge of fort) & amaranayakas.
- It seems there was some hierarchical relation among them.
- Durga dannaiks were Brahman commanders in charge of strategic fortresses.
- The landholding allocated to the nayakas was called nayakattanam.
- According to Karashima & Subbarayalu the Tamil epigraphical sources presented a more logical picture of the nayakas & the institution of nayakattanam.
- Nuniz, the portuguese Chronicler had stated that there were two hundred nayakas in the Vijayanagara empire.
- Karashima refers to more than three hundred nayakas in the northern part of Tamil region which consisted of five rajas & these nayakas are attributed to the post 1485 period.
- These chiefs controlled production in their nayakattanam territories by encouraging settlers including cultivators, artisans & other service groups, who on their part enjoyed some tax concessions.
- These nayakas were obliged to be present in the royal headquarters and therefore they looked after their territory through their agents or Karyakarta.
- In return for the territory received from the king the nayakas had to maintain troops, ready to be sent to the battlefield, in addition to remittance of a portion of revenue from their territory to their superior.

FUNCTIONING OF NAYAKA SYSTEM

SHAPING UP OF NAYAKA SYSTEM

- The king gave territory to a nayaka who distributed it in three ways.
- 1) A sub-nayaka who received land from the nayaka was called amaranayaka. He was responsible for maintaining troops. He had to remit a fixed amount to the nayaka

- 2) The nayaka employed cultivators on the land. This land under his direct possession was called Bhandaravada.
- In Tamil, these cultivators were known as Kaniyalar while in Kannada they were called garuda praje.
 - Nayaka gave away a portion of land to temples ,free of tax ,such grants are called manya.
 - In this way, the institution of nayakattanam involved a system of land tenure consisting of three tenurial rights, amaram, bhandaravada & manya.
 - The amaram land in possession of the amaranayakas was cultivated by employing Kaniyalar who engaged the kudi, primary cultivators & forced labour.
 - The nayakas engaged kaniyalar for cultivating the bhandaravada.
 - In the manya tenure there were several service groups such as the accountants, the priests etc.
 - Portuguese travellers Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz — contemporaries of Krishnadevaraya and Achyutaraya in 16th Century - they have mentioned about Nayaka system in their accounts
 - The description of Paes & Nuniz cannot be corroborated by the evidence from the inscriptions or literary sources.
 - According to D. C. Sircar (Landlordism & Tenancy in Ancient & Medieval India as revealed by Epigraphic Records, p. 32), the amara tenure was similar to the allotment of land to the priest, barber, washerman, carpenter etc. for the services to be received from them regularly.
 - D.C. Sircar mentions about a hierarchical system in which sub-nayakas again grants lands to the lower order chiftens to render services from them
 - When Krishnadevaraya , extended his control over Tamil region, the system of governors (mahamandaleshwar) replaced by four military commanders, nayakas to function with the help of the dependent warriors called palaiyagars.
 - The penetration of Telugu warriors to Tamil country resulted in the emergence of chiefs who were either Telegus or Tamils in collaboration with Telegus.
 - According to Krishnaswami Aiyangar upto 1530 there were a large number of Nayakas in Tamil Country.
 - According to Burton Stein, Nayakas acted as pillars of support for the kings who at times also rebelled against them
 - Venkataramanayya in his book, 'Studies in the history of the Third dynasty of Vijayanagar', suggests, that ,the nayankara system has strong affinities to feudalism but also has many differences. ...land was held immediately or mediately of the emperor on condition of military service. The concept of fealty & homage did not exist and therefore it is characterised as a military system under a central power.
 - Krishnaswami in his work, 'The Tamil country under Vijayanagar'(p.181), explains, " Nayankara system of the feudal arrangements in the Tamil Country seems to have been in existence from the time of the conquest of the region by Kumara Kampana".
 - In his earliest work (Further Sources of Vijayanagar history, V. 3, p. 299,) N. K. Sastri distinguishes between the nayakas before 1565 & after 1565 thus "The nayakas who were absolutely dependent upon royal will... (until 1565) acquired a status of semi-independence.
 - In his work, "Sources of Indian history"(p. 79), N. K. Sastri has pointed out, that the" empire is best looked upon as a military confederacy of many chieftains cooperating under the leadership of the biggest among them.
 - According to Burton Stein, (Peasant state & society in Medieval India, p. 408) "Nayaka authority in Tamil country replaced the local institutions of Chola ruler the local body of nattars acting corporately through their territorial assembly, the nadu or, latterly, combined with other locality bodies in the greater nadu, the perianadu"
 - According to Stein, "Telugu nayakas quickly became locality figures in their own right, encouraging the settlement of other Telugus to strengthen their control over local Tamil and Karnataka chiefs but under intimidating power of the Rayas"
 - According to B. Stein, "Revenue from agriculture, customs & dues in cash, extracted from merchants & artisans, there is no evidence that this money found its way to the treasury of the kings".
 - Karashima in his work, "A Concordance of Nayakas", refers to 3 levels of tax authorities: king, nayakas & nattavars — Jodi & sulavari - imposed on temples - were the king's responsibility.
 - Pattadai-nulayam (an important revenue item) and Kanikkai were remitted by nayakas. Nattu-viniyogan and nattu-Kanikkai were remitted by nattavar.
 - Nobuhiro Ota in his work "State and Kinship in Early Modern South India", mentions revenue records called raya-rekha which contained information of the amount of tax collected by Vijaynagar kings from the villages.
 - It was transferable or not is not explained by Historians.

AYAGAR SYSTEM

- According to, T.V. Mahalingam, "during the Vijayanagara rule the village administration was organised in the form of the ayagar system".
- 'Every village was a separate unit.
- Twelve functionaries, collectively known as 'ayagars' were appointed by the government in each village and the office became hereditary
- The ayagar could sell or mortgage their office.
- Tax free lands or manyas were granted to them for their maintenance for perpetuity.

- Col. Wilks writes that , “they received the compensation of their labour either in allotment of land from the corporate stock or in fees (Historical Sketches of Mysore, I p.73).
- They are referred to as having been, appointed by the Government.
- According to Subbarayalu, the term ayagar is rarely found in Kannada inscriptions & not found in Tamil inscriptions.
- Ayagar system carried out the economic activities in the local communities.
- Inscriptional evidence has not been found to support the view that the —system was introduced during the Vijayanagara period.
- According to, Burton Stein, “Purvamariyade (ancient constitutional usage)”, continued under the Vijayanagara rulers as earlier.”
- K. V. Subramanya Aiyar, Nilkantha Sastri & T. V. Mahalingam & A. Krishnaswamy refer to the transformation in the functioning of local institutions like Ur, Sabha and Nadu in Tamil areas due to the prevalence of Nayaka tenure.
- Burton Stein, (Peasant, State and Society, p. 423), suggests that —ayagars, the body of village servants displaced villages of the Chola period (Sabha and Ur) as the local management institutions
- Ayagars constituted important official functionaries like headman (maniyam, reddi or gauda), accountant (karnam, senabhova) and watchman (Thalaiyari).
- They held rights over tax free plots of village land (Manyra) from which a part of village income was given to them.
- The other village servants potter, blacksmith, carpenter etc. who did not perform administrative functions but performed essential services for the village were also given income shares. These Income shares were called umbali, kodage and srotiya.

- Payments in kind were referred to as danyadaya and those in money were called suvarndaya, kasu kadamai.

CONTINUITY & CHANGE

- From 14th to 16th century structural changes noticed in the administration based on center, provinces & an officialdom comprising of (Mahamandaleswar & Mahapradhani) Governors, Generals (Dandnayaka) & revenue officers (adhikari)
- In the nayakattanam territories nayakas directly controlled revenue administration.
- A network of officers of revenue administration were under his control.
- Subbarayalu informs us that the total revenue assessment, called rekha (rekai in Tamil) of individual villages is found mentioned in several inscriptions.
- Karashima points out that the Nattavars played an important role in the local production system & administration. However, under Nayakas they lost the eminence they had enjoyed under the Cholas.
- However the social basis of landholding changed under the Vijaynagar empire , due to the immigration of people to newly annexed Vijaynagar territories .
- Nattar now included apart from Vellala landholders (non-Brahmin community), Reddis & Settis also.
- According to N.K. Shastri , revenue farming was in existence.
- Burton Stein does not accept the view that the royal officials existed who sent the tax collection to the central treasury
- In the last phase of Vijaynagar empire , growing political importance of mercantile entrepreneurs can be seen
- These groups of intermediary level of the power structure had their involvement in long distance trade, revenue – farming etc.
- Recent scholars like Sanjay Subramaniam describe this group as portfolio capitalists’.

BAHMANI KINGDOM

- The Deccani amirs laid the foundation of an independent kingdom.
- According to H. K. Sherwani,(The Bahamanis of the Deccan, p. 28) —The new kingdom became the center of the nobles of the Deccan ,amirs of Baroda & Dabhol in Gujarat
- The new government redivided the jagirs & iqtas in the Maharashtra provinces.
- The Deccani amirs selected one amongst themselves as their sultan.
- Alauddin Hasan established the Bahmani dynasty.
- The organisation of administration under the Bahmanis was initiated by Muhammad I.
- To consolidate his position in the region Alauddin Hasan subdued those who favoured Tughlaq rule & tried to win over the local chiefs.
- The political developments of the Bahmani kingdom can be divided into two phases.
- In the first phase (1347-1422), the centre of activities was Gulbarga. Major conquests were affected in this phase.
- While in the second phase (1422-1538), the capital shifted to Bidar which was more centrally located and was fertile.
- The struggle for supremacy between the Vijayanagar and the Bahmanis continued in this period as well.
- During this phase, we find conflicts between the Afaqis and the Dakhkanis touching zenith.



ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND OF TUGHLAQs

- Under the Tughlaqs the Deccan provinces or aqalim were subdivided into shiqs (rural districts) & urban districts (madinas or Shahrs).
- The shiqs were further subdivided into hazaris (1000 villages) & sadis (100 villages).
- The officer in charge of province was wali whereas shiq was placed under shiqdar, sadis were governed by amiran-Isadah.
- Amils, mutasarrif - pargana level revenue collector, karkun - pargana official, accountant, patwari - village accountant, chowdhary - pargana level rural magnate accountable for land revenue collection - were other provincial and local officials.
- Provincial Governor had partial provincial autonomy
- Tughlaqs had a large retinue of provincial officials manning the judiciary, army and other departments.
- The revenue obtained from the provinces was sent to the central treasury after making provisions for provincial expenditure.
- The amiran-i-sadah comprised the military commanders responsible for revenue collection.
- They became dissatisfied with Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq & laid the foundation of the independent Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan.
- The policy of Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq to pay the troops directly through the central treasury in cash & to giving iqtas to the commanders, caused resentment among the commanders.
- In spite of this elaborate administrative set-up, the real control of the Sultan was weak mainly because of:
 - the distance from Delhi,
 - difficult geographical terrain, and

- wide powers enjoyed by the 'viceroy' and other officers.
- In this situation, any dissatisfaction of the officers (posted in the Deccan) with the centre could lead to the snapping of ties with Delhi.

ADMINISTRATION OF BAHMANI KINGDOM

- Alauddin Hasan Bahman founded the kingdom in 1347.
- The new ministers and officials in the period of Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah were wakil-i-mutlaq (Prime Minister), amir-ul-umara (commander in chief of army), Barbek (king's private secretary), Hajib- I-Khas (Chamberlain), Sar pardar (master of ceremonies) etc.
- In due course many other offices were created & an elaborate administrative system came into existence.
- Muhammad I is credited with organising the administrative & institutional structures.
- The king stood at the pinnacle of the administrative system.
- He was assisted by a host of officials for discharging his duties viz. Wakil (Prime Minister), Wazir (Minister), Dabir (Secretary), Sarhaddar (Warden of Marches), Qiladar (Commander of Fortresses), Bakshi (paymaster), Qazi (Judge), Mufti (interpreter of law), kotwal (police), Muhtasib (censor of public morals) etc.
- These offices bear striking resemblance to the administrative structure of Delhi Sultanate
- Under Muhammad I the kingdom was partitioned into four atrafs or provinces which had their headquarters at Daulatabad, Berar, Bidar & Gulbarga.
- These were placed under the charge of governors.

- The nomenclature for governors varied viz. Musnad-i-Ali (Daulatabad), Majlis-i-Ali (Berar), & Azam-i-Humayun (Bidar) and Malik Naib (Gulbarga).
- The province of Gulbarga was of strategic importance and it was placed in charge of a governor, whose loyalty was unquestionable, called Malik Naib or Viceroy.
- The troops directly under the king comprised of yakka jawanan or silahdaran (200 men)
- The bodyguards of the king were 4000 in number & are referred to as khasakhel.
- The Amirul Umara was the commander in chief of the army & the officers called barbardaran were responsible for mobilizing troops
- Munhiyan or secret service agents of the Bahmani kings kept him informed about the developments both within the kingdom and outside.

NOBILITY

- The role of the amirami sadah in making the Deccan independent of the Tughluq rule is relevant.
- These officers of noble lineage performed the twin functions as military officers & revenue collectors.
- They had direct connection with the people of their territory.
- When a series of rebellions broke out in the South, Muhammad Tughluq attributed them to the massive power exercised by these amirs;
- as a result, he embarked upon a policy of suppressing them which in turn sounded the death knell of the Tughluq rule in the Deccan.
- The reign of king Shihabuddin Ahmad I (1422-1436) is significant because of the change of capital from Gulbarga to Bidar.
- The Bidar period of Bahmani rule witnessed the weakening of Tughlaq influence and also the law of primogeniture being applied in accession to the throne.
- His predecessor Firuz is credited with promoting the Afaqis, the nobles who were newcomers & came to the Deccan from Persia, Iraq and Arabia.
- The reign of Tajuddin Firuz (1397-1422) is particularly important for the induction of Brahmins in administrative system.
- He entered into matrimonial alliances with the Vijayanagara ruler.
- The other group of nobility from north India was called the Dakhnis.
- The influence of newcomers increased in the administration of Bahmani kingdom.
- During the reign of Ahmad I (1422-36), Khalaf Hasan Basri was made wakil-i-sultanate mutlaq (Prime Minister) and was bestowed the title of Malik-ut-Tujjar (Prince of Merchants).
- He inducted archers from Iraq, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Turkey and Arabia, in the king's army
- The importance given to Afaqis created resentment among the Dakhnis which resulted in factional struggle thereby resulting in instability.

RISE OF MAHMUD GAWAN

- The division between the two groups Afaqi and Dakhni had deteriorated the stability of the empire.
- Now it was important to bring about a balance between the two for ensuring stability in the kingdom.
- During the reign of Alauddin Ahmad II (1436-58), the conflict between Afaqis and Dakhni further continued to increase.
- Alauddin Humayun Shah's reign (1458-61) is noted for the rise of Mahmud Gawan to prominence & power.
- The Burhan-i-Maasir, of Syed Ali Tabataba compiled in 1592 refers to the appointment of Mahmud Gawan as chief or prime minister by Alauddin Humayun Shah (1458-61).
- The policy of bringing about reconciliation between the two factions (Afaqis and Dakhnis) was pursued by Mahmud Gawan during the period of Regency when Nizamuddin Ahmad III, the king, was a minor – 1461 to 1463.
- In the period between 1461-63 Mahmud continued as tarafdhar of Bijapur.
- The other important afaqi noble was Khwaja-i-jahan-turk who was appointed as tarafdhar of Telangana.
- The nobility comprising of the Dakhins & afaqis had always been hostile to each other.
- During the reign of Shamsuddin Muhammad III (1463-1482 and the end of regency in 1466) Mahmud Gawan again became the Chief Minister.
- According to Burhan-i-Maasir, King opined that both religious & worldly affairs require the help of advisory councils.
- With the rise of Mahmud Gawan to power the Bahmani Kingdom witnessed unprecedented territorial expansion.
- It covered the whole of Konkan coast in the west to Andhra in the east, river Tungabhadra in the south to Berar in the north and Khandesh became its Protectorate.
- The provincial administration was reorganised by Mahmud Gawan.
- The bigger tarafs were now divided into 8 sarlashkarships or provinces of medium size.
- Gawil & Mahur (Nanded) were created out of Berar
- Daulatabad comprised of Daulatabad & Junnar - territories covering Daman, Bassein (Vasai), Goa and Belgaum
- Gulbarga was divided into Bijapur & Ahsanabad-Gulbarga (included Naldurg and Sholapur);
- Telangana comprised of Rajahmundry (Nalgonda, Masulipatam) & Warangal.
- The older provinces were partitioned & certain areas were placed under the crown as khasa-i-sultan or Royal territory.

- This measure was introduced to reduce the power of the older tarafdars
- Mahmud Gawan tried to accommodate Dakhnis and afaqis in the nobility by giving them important assignments
- He also made attempts to befriend the Hindu rulers for political gain (Vijayanagar against Hindu rulers of Orissa).
- These assignments were not permanent & the nobles could be shifted.
- Tarafdars were in charge of military administration of the province & mobilized troops and appointed commanders who were in charge of garrisons and forts.
- Mahmud Gawan brought most of the forts & their commanders under his direct control.
- The tarafdar's control was now limited to only one fort in the province.
- These were also meant to bring the revenue resources assigned to commanders under the direct scrutiny of the central government.
- Mahmud Gawan was also responsible for adopting revenue assignment on the basis of measurement of land.
- The policy of accommodation & equilibrium is reflected in Mahmud Gawan's efforts to induct equal number of old comers habshis, Dakhnis and newcomers
- Sarlashkar was appointed from amongst both the groups i.e. Dakhnis and Afaqis.
- He made Fathullah Imdaulmulk and Malik Hasan Nizamulmulk (Dakhnis) sarlashkar of Mahur and Gulbarga respectively.
- Yusuf Adil Khan (afaqi) was made Sarlashkar of Daulatabad and Prince Azam Khan was made Sarlashkar of Warangal and Fakhrul-mulk Gilani (Dakhni) was made Sarlashkar of Junnar.
- Mahmud Gawan's reforms were not appreciated by the nobility and after his death the conflict among the nobles acquired a new dimension and was now no longer based on racial considerations.
- The conflict was now purely based on the desire to seize power by whatever means. This element of ruthlessness in the nobility brought about the downfall of the Bahamanis.
- Mahmud Gawan ordered for systematic measurement of land fixing the boundaries of the villages & towns. Thus, in this regard he was the forerunner of Raja Todar Mal.
- All this greatly helped the exchequer. The income of the empire was ensured & became known in advance; It also curbed the corruption of the nobles to the minimum, thereby increasing the state's income.
- Nikitin, a Russian traveller, who was in the Deccan during 1469-74, provides ample information regarding the commercial activities of Bidar. He

says that horses, cloth, silk, and pepper were the chief merchandise

DECLINE

- Nobility played an important role in the polity under the Bahamanis, succession was generally based on heredity but the nobles exercised considerable power over the Sultan and acted as kingmakers and policymakers.
- They also brought about instability in the kingdom.
- The clash of the Bahamanis with Vijayanagar was for the control over Tungabhadra doab (between Krishna and Tungabhadra), Krishna and Godavari deltas (ports, foreign trade) and Marathwada country (konkan, goa ports).
- At times Bahamanis joined hands with rulers of Telangana against Vijayanagar
- It appears that the Bahamanis like any other political power in the region were vying for political supremacy.
- Thus they were involved in hostilities against the Muslim states of Malwa, Gujarat and Khandesh and also joined hands with the Hindu chiefs (Telangana) against Vijayanagar rulers.
- Political expediency was the major criteria which determined relations with other states.
- The relation of Bahamani sultans with other political powers in the region kept vacillating.
- They could not be static since the political alliances and hostilities were based on securing the frontiers and also for extension of territory against encroachment by any expansionist political power.
- Frequent military engagement proved detrimental to the Bahmani state.
- The decline of Bahamanis paved the way for the establishment of a number of Deccan kingdoms ruled by different dynasties.
- They were: Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar, Barid Shahis of Bidar, Imad Shahis of Berar, Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Qutab Shahis of Golconda.

SOCIETY

- The social structure of the Bahmanis was cosmopolitan in character.
- There were Muslims, Hindus, Iranians, Transoxonians, iraqis and Abyssinians (Habshis).
- The Portuguese came during the early 16th century.
- This heterogeneous character becomes more prominent at its linguistic pattern: Persian, Marathi, Dakhni (proto-Urdu), Kannada and Telugu languages were widely spoken in various parts of the kingdom.
- Broadly, two classes existed in the society.
- According to Nikitin, there were poor, and the nobles who were "extremely opulent"
- The sufis were great & venerated by the Bahmani rulers.
- Initially, they migrated to the Deccan as religious auxiliaries of the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs.

- The infant Bahmani kingdom required the support of the sufi for popular legitimization of their authority.
 - The sufis who migrated to the Bahmani kingdom were chiefly of the Chishti, Qadiri and Shattari orders.
 - Bidar emerged as one of the most important centres of the Qadiri order. Shaikh Sirajuddin Junaidi was the first sufi to receive the royal favour.
 - The Chishti saints enjoyed the greatest honour.
- Syed Muhammad Gesu Daraz, the famous Chishti saint of Delhi, migrated to Gulbarga in 1402-3
 - Hindu traditions and culture also influenced the Bahmani court.
 - Sultan Feroz's (1397-1422) marriage with a daughter of the royal family of Vijaynagar helped greatly in the Hindu-Muslims cultural harmony.
 - There is a legend that Feroz even once went to Vijaynagar in the guise of a Hindu faqir.
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