

Probing the Socio-Economic Landscape of the Kakatiya Dynasty: An Analytical Approach

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Abstract: *The Kakatiya Dynasty, which reigned over much of what is now Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 1083 to 1323 CE, is considered to have been the golden period of Telangana. The Kakatiya dynasty was headed by two well-known rulers, Rudrama Devi and Prataparudra II. When Malik Kafur came in 1309 and Mohammed Bin Tughlaq's army defeated Prataparudra in 1323, the kingdom was toppled. Tank Temple, Town Policy, and Town Law are the three "T"s that the Kakatiyas held in great regard. Despite having a monarchical system of governance, they prioritized decentralizing authority above maintaining total control, which resulted in the persecution of both their subjects and their people. This page aims to describe the social and religious circumstances of those living under Kakatiya authority.*

Keywords: Governmental structures, Economy, and decentralization

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Kakatiyas' conquest zeal, feeling of nationalism, and patriotism brought the Telugu-speaking regions of the Deccan under their complete dominion. Before the creation of the state of Andhra Pradesh, it was the first and only occasion in which all Telugu speakers were brought together under one authority. They were able to repel the Islamic invaders because to their sense of patriotism and nationalism. But the heritage of the Warangal kingdom and this tradition were carried on by the Vijayanagara kings. In the history of South India in general and the histories of the Deccan and Andhra in particular, the Kakatiyas of Warangal held a position of great significance and interest. After the Satavahanas collapsed and before the Vijayanagara dynasty formed, they were the next to seize control of the whole Telugu-speaking region. From the eleventh century until the early half of the fourteenth century, they were responsible for determining the fate of the Telugu-speaking people. "The Age of the Kakatiyas of Warangal" is a term that might be used to this time in Andhra Pradesh's Middle Ages history.

The Kakatiya kings gave land development and administration top attention. They had excavated many canals and built tanks. The Kakatiyas built many of the lakes and reservoirs that provide water to tens of thousands of acres in the Telangana area today. They cleared forests and plowed vast stretches of newly created land in an effort to expand the quantity of arable land. The area was measured and surveyed. It was separated into two groups: dry terrain and cultivable wet terrain. The government provided sufficient maintenance for the tanks and canals. They generally fixed the canals and sluices, cleared silt accumulation from the bed, and restored the bunds every year. Thus, affluence and agriculture continued to grow throughout the Kakatiya dynasty. With Orugallu as their capital, the Kakatiyas governed the Telugu nation from around A.D. 1150 to 1323. They had a significant position and shown a deep interest in South Indian history, particularly that of the Deccan and Andhra. After the Satavahanas collapsed and before the Vijayanagara dynasty formed, they were the next to seize control of the whole Telugu-speaking region. The Kakatiya era in Andhra Pradesh's medieval history might aptly be called "The Age of the Kakatiyas of Warangal." The Kakatiyas focused their energy investments primarily on environmental protection and agricultural improvement. The population was, in general, denser in the ancient and medieval periods than it is in the present. In the Deccan, the trait is more prevalent. Peasants, with the help of the concerned leaders, farmed as much land as they could, making up the majority of the communities back then. Numerous streams, both small and large, were given by the region's topography and were used to fill irrigation tanks. The public's assistance in clearing the jungle for agriculture was thus an inevitable difficult duty

for the monarchs and their dependents. Throughout the Kakatiya era, the construction of new communities at strategically located water sources became more important. Several villages in Andhra Desa were constructed by the several kings and queens of the Kakatiya dynasty, who also gave them names like Ganapavaram after Ganapatideva, Rudravaram after Rudradeva, and Muppavaram after Muppamamba. Creating a community was seen positively in the past. The excavation of a tank was ringed by a similar sanctity.

Promotion of Irrigation for Economic Development

Visvesvara Sivacharya, the preceptor of Ganapatideva, cleared some forest land near Prakasam for 850 gadyanas, and then built Visvanathapura, a hamlet with a pond for the god's worship and gifts. One of the Tripurantakam inscriptions is the source of this information. An inscription from the year A.D. 1144 that was discovered in the hamlet of Parada in the Nalgonda District describes the establishment of the agrahara with the same name. A portion of the property was given to the temple, several brahmanas, setti, and boyas, with the stipulation that the donees were to stay there and see the community grow, neither going elsewhere nor selling their portions. Like Siddhaya, Ari, and Koru, these groups did not have to pay taxes on their property. These incentives were offered at the time to encourage the development of new communities, agricultural reclamation, and new settlement expansion.

The Deccan got the attention it needed to build irrigation infrastructure under the Kakatiya kingdom. Building tanks is one of the seven actions of permanent characteristics, or sapta santanas, as per several laws, and is often linked to heavenly attainment in Hindu ethics. It seems that the Kakatiya government lacked an individual or department responsible for irrigation operations. The majority of these projects, which included building temples, tanks, and other buildings, were often overseen by ministers and other lower-ranking individuals. Some of the tanks were built by the Kakatiya Kings themselves.

Inscriptions discovered at Motupalli and Bayyaram state that Prola I constructed the tank known as Kesari-tataka in remembrance of his own title, ari-gaja-kesari, which means "lion to the elephant like enemies." The Telugu book Pratapa Charitra states that Ganapatideva built many ponds in areas like Nellore, the Telugu Choda's headquarters, and Ganapuram in the Krishna District. The tanks referred to as Ganapa samudra are often mentioned in the inscriptions from this era. These tanks are said to have been built and are now being used to irrigate thousands of acres of land.

Building an embankment that can resist the pressure of the water trapped within it has traditionally been the most crucial step in the building of a tank. It was a rather simple procedure that, of course, required less money and time to finish in steep terrain than it did on flat ground. Regretfully, we are not aware of any documents that outline the methods the tank builders used to fulfill their objectives. Evidence suggests that they did, at least sometimes, personally hire and compensate laborers. An inscription from Tipurantakam in the Prakasam district states that the construction of two other tanks, both named Tripura samudram, cost 156 madas and 7 madas, respectively, and that the development of a tank known as Kumara samudram cost 241 madas.

The government provided sufficient maintenance for the tanks and canals. The major maintenance tasks include bund repairs every year, bed silt removal, and canal and sluice repairs. Several papers identify certain people as carrying out this responsibility. These people usually get a pay from the farmers called dasavandha, which is calculated at the rate of one kuncha for each putti of total output. Six Putti and Cheruvu Kumarcha are the names by which it is known. Dasavandha manya is an alternative form of payment. The tank keeper is bestowed with manya status over a segment of the area submerged in water underneath the tank.

Cultivable dryland and cultivable wetland were the two main groups. Nadi-matrikas are the fields that get water from tanks, canals, wells, rivers, and rivulets. Wet land is again separated into garden land and paddy producing land, also referred to as nir nela and nir nela, respectively. "Nature fed" fields, also known as deva matrikas, are entirely dependent on precipitation. Deva matrikas, or dry fields, were used to cultivate crops that required low amounts of rainfall, such as millet, sesame, indigo, mustard, and castor. The two kinds of arable fields were not as evenly spread in size as the forests and pastures were. Both dry and wet lands are included in the category of "achukattu lands," which are the regions that are plowed. The word "acchukattu" indicates that the land was liable to the government's general ari tax.⁸ Every marturu included in the acchukattu territory received a financial gift at the rate of one visa or 1/16 of a ruka, according to an inscription dated S 1225 found at Katakuru. This is the levy for every kaaru, regardless of whether it

falls in the Kartika or Vaisakha season.⁹ The term implies that areas designated as *acchukattu* are those that have undergone meticulous mapping and tillage in order to collect taxes.

It is common knowledge that agricultural practices were mostly unchanged until recently, until the advent of mechanized farming. Bullocks and indigenous tools were used. The fields are named after the harvest seasons: *Karttika* and *Vaisakha* lands. Some fields are farmed during the first season of the South-West monsoon, while others are farmed throughout the winter to produce crops for *Vaisakha* or summer. They go by the names *iruupu* lands and *tru garu* lands as well. From ancient times, both wet and dry regions have ceremoniously marked auspicious days for planting seeds, starting a new crop year, or starting a new harvest. When the South-West monsoon approaches and the weather is perfect for seed planting, the two events often coincide in June on *Eruvaka Punnama*, or the full moon day of *Jyeshtha*. For farmers, this marks the official start of the new year.

Reclamation of Land

The Kakatiya monarchs tried to expand the area that could be utilized for agriculture by clearing forests and putting vast amounts of new land under cultivation. In order to assist agriculture, they wanted to install irrigation systems. According to the *Kaifiyats*, who have kept local customs from various villages, *Prataparudra* is supposed to have ordered the clearance of a substantial portion of the land, and new settlements were formed on territory they regained from the forest and untamable jungle. After fighting the *kayasta* chieftain *Ambadeva* on foot, *Prataparudradeva* sent an order to one of his men, *Irugappa Ketu Nayaka*, to clear the jungles at *Kochcherlakota* in the *Prakasam* district and construct the modern hamlet of *Dupadu* there. For the upkeep of this settlement, a court official named *Srinatha-raju* of *Anumakonda* was given responsibility. Numerous new villages were established in the vast regions that remained after the monarchy ordered the destruction of dense forests in the area west of the *Srisaila* mountain, which corresponds to a sizable portion of the current *Nandikotkur* in the *Kunool* district. Security and agricultural development was under the purview of officers serving in his administration. Similar stories about the establishment of other villages in the districts of *Kadapa*, *Kunool*, *Prakasam*, and *Nellore* are told by the *Kaifiyats*. These stories all show how the Kakatiya rulers, particularly *Prataparudradeva*, were really interested in expanding the amount of land that could be cultivated, since this cleared the path for the development of his kingdom's financial reserves.

Finding individuals to move to and reside in the newly built communities was not always simple, either. Encouraging individuals and enterprising farmers to settle in recently established cities, the government granted immigrants exclusive rights. For the first three years they were free to cultivate the land without paying any fiscal fees or rent; but beginning in the fourth year, taxes were levied at low rates, which were progressively increased annually until they matched the rates in the more established, older villages. The establishment of a fully operational village is completed with the construction of a tank and the addition of other facilities like a temple and road connections.

Main Crops in Kakatiya Dynasty

The main crop grown across the kingdom at the time was paddy. By no means were the many tanks and small canals that served as irrigation facilities beside the streams back then inconsequential. Every community was almost self-sufficient in food grains, such as millet, *ragi*, *sajja jonna*, and other grains. *Andhra's* golden color and mature rice fields like *Mount Meru of gold* are described in an unfinished *kavya* authored by an unknown author and discovered on a hilltop near *Hanmakonda*. The *veli*, or dry fields, were used to raise all varieties of millets. In the fields, other husked grains such as horse gram, green gram, black gram, and wheat were also sowed and flourished.

In order to support the growth of agriculture, the Kakatiya period saw the reclamation of land, the establishment of new villages, the encouragement of irrigational infrastructure, and the introduction of methodical land mapping. The state's economy was strengthened as a result.

The Chalukyas of *Kalyani* were in command when the Kakatiyas came to power. The freshly found *Bayyaram Tank* inscription dispelled concerns previously expressed by certain academics about the dynasty's descent to *Kakartya Gundyana*, a subordinate of Eastern Chalukyan monarch *Amma II*. The names *Kakaliya*, *Kakartya*, and *Kakartya* have a common ancestor. The dynasty's name comes from either their worship of the goddess *Kakati* or from their connection to the *Kakatipura* town. There is a temple to *Kakitamma* at *Ekasilanagara* the Kakatiya capital. Consequently, the theory that *Warangal's* original name was *Kakatipura* is supported by evidence. Inscriptional evidence indicates that the

Kakatiyas belonged to the Durjaya dynasty, whose distant ancestor Karkkalahola established or first lived in Kakatipura. They were Sudras.

Economy in Kakatiya Ruling

The Kakatiya epigraphic documents demonstrate the ways in which the policies of the dynasty emperors aided in the economic growth of the Telangana area. The region saw economic prosperity in all areas as a result of the monarchs' wise promotion of trade, commerce, and agriculture with an emphasis on trade with distant regions. A well-known author said that the region's attainment of financial stability was facilitated by initiatives such as turning waste and unproductive land into agricultural land. The creation of irrigational sources led to an increase in crop productivity, which in turn fueled a general expansion in trade and commerce that ultimately entwined with the temple as an institution. The government implemented a number of policies to ensure that farmers could support themselves in every way, even in the face of unfavorable weather and persistent rainfall in the region. They also supported creative approaches to raise productivity and output in agriculture.

Summing Up

Tank construction was created to encourage more people to take part in the excavation of wells, canals, and tanks. Under Prataparudra II's reign, efforts were undertaken to expand the area suitable for agriculture by the construction of irrigation systems and the clearance of forests, especially in the Rayalaseema region. The clearings in the forests were made welcoming to future communities. Regular government employees were in charge of collecting the business and commerce taxes as well as the farm tax. For evaluation purposes, the property was split into three categories: garden, wet, and dry. Tax payments may be made in cash or in kind. Tax incidence is not covered by any accessible data. The government had a monopoly on salt. Together with agriculture, the government also supported business and industry. During this time, Marco Polo, Amir Khusrau, and Wassaf were among the people who lauded the thriving Andhradesa empire. In Telangana, the rise to power of the Kakatiyas in the 13th century marked the beginning of an era. In Telangana, Rayalaseema, and coastal Andhra, the Kakatiyas promoted internal trade, agriculture, and the building of temples via their endorsement of the arts and integrative governance.

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