

The Vijayanagar and Bahamani kingdom

Two powerful kingdoms emerged in Deccan region i.e. upper part of south India (Region of Andhra and Karnataka): Vijayanagar and Bahamani Kingdoms

VIJAYANAGAR KINGDOM

This kingdom emerged in mid of 14th century and lasted for 200 years

Three important dynasties ruled Vijayanagar Empire.

- Sangama dynasty (1336-1486 C.E.)
- Saluva dynasty (1486 – 1505 C.E.)
- Tuluva dynasty (1505 – 1569 C.E.)
- Aravidu dynasty (1569 – 1672 C.E.) (Not very significant dynasty)

Sangama Dynasty : (1336 – 1486 C.E.)

This dynasty was founded in 1336 C.E. by two brothers Harihara and Bukka.

- These two brothers were feudatories in Kampli of Karnataka

Legend associated with founders

They originally served under the Kakatiya ruler Pratap Rudra Deva II and when the kingdom was overrun by Tughlaqs, they shifted to Kampli. Kampli was also overtaken by Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, and they were taken to Delhi and were converted to Islam.

Later they were sent by the King to suppress the rebellion in Kampli. They converted back to Hinduism and with the assistance and advice of sage **Vidyanarya** of Sringeri, they laid the foundation of the kingdom of Vijayanagar on the banks of the river Tungbhadra.

Their capital was city of Vijayanagar. This city is nowadays known as **Hampi** (Karnataka). Though Hampi is a small city but it has many buildings of architectural splendor. It is also a World Heritage Site.

- Harihara (1336 – 1356 C.E.), was the first ruler of the Vijayanagar empire and also the Sangama dynasty.
- Bukka Rai I (1356 – 1377 C.E.) succeeded Harihara.

Their father was Sangama, hence the name of dynasty.

- Dev Raya I and Dev Raya II in 15th century were two great rulers of Sangama dynasty

Nicolo Conti visited during this period of Devraya I.

Devraya II recruited a large number of Muslims soldiers in his army as archers. At the same time the Muslim Bahmani kingdom also had large number of Hindu soldiers. Both kingdoms used religion as political tools.

The last ruler of Sangama dynasty was Virupaksha II. He was deposed and assassinated by his commander in chief Saluva Narasimha in 1485 C.E. who laid the foundation of the Saluva dynasty. The Saluva dynasty lasted only two decades and in 1505 C.E. Vir Narasimha, the commander in chief of the last Saluva ruler Immadi Narasimha usurped the throne thus laying the foundation of Tuluva dynasty.

TULUVA DYNASTY

- Tuluva Krishna Deva Raya (1509-1529) was most the most famous king of this dynasty
- He was also known as **Andhra Bhoj** (Bhoj is term used in South for King)
- He was very good writer and wrote famous books; Amuktamalyas and Jambavati Kalyanam in Sanskrit
- His court had 8 poets, popularly known as Ashta-dig-gajas (literal meaning big elephant)
- Tenali Rama, known for his humor and wit, was present in his court.

- Domingo Paes and Duarte Barbosa (Portuguese) and Fernao Nuniz (Italian) visited during his reign
- Krishna Dev Raya was praised in Tuzuki-i-Babri; autobiography of Babur.

Administration under Vijayanagar Empire

They gave centralized administration in which king was supreme and generally a Brahmin

Kings were assisted by Mantri Parishad, whose members were also mainly Brahmins

Sachivalaya was the department in which officials worked

Empire was divided into various segments

- Rajya or Manadlam was biggest administrative division where princes were appointed as Governors. Rajyas were further divided into; 1) Valanadu, 2) Nadu or District, 3) Melagram, 4) Gram
- Governor working in those Rajyas had powers to levy taxes and issue coins but were under total control of central authority.

Feudal system developed which was known as **Nayankar System**. The military officers called as **Amar Nayaks** who got land in lieu of their salary and that land was called as Amaram. Amaram did not fall under Rajya directly. Amar Nayaks couldn't introduce coins and taxes though they could maintain army and collect revenue themselves. Over the period Amar Nayaks became hereditary.

There were 200 such Amar Nayaks who became very powerful as they had their own armies, source of revenue, and maintained law and order themselves in their areas.

Many of them declared themselves independent especially after the central authority declined.

Unlike Chola dynasty, Grams did not enjoy similar level of autonomy. Under Cholas they could elect their executive bodies. In Vijayanagar Empire central authority had direct role in village administration.

Revenue system

- Vijayanagar rulers also collected taxes from various sources and land revenue was the greatest sources. It was 1/6th of the produce
- Trades, crafts and industries were taxed.
- A unique tax on marriage was also imposed which had to be paid by both bride and groom.
- In case of widow remarriage tax was not imposed **implying that widow remarriage was encouraged by state**
- Even prostitutes and gamblers were taxed thereby legitimizing these professions.

Society and Culture

- There was evidence of influence of Aryan culture.
- Brahmins were politically very influential. All top positions in army, revenue and judicial administration as well as priest class were Brahmins
- Priest class and temples got certain land which were taxed but at very low rates; 1/40th in case of temples and 1/30th in case of priests
- Brahmins had monopoly over education, it was reserved for upper castes only and women were generally ignored.
- Temples were one of the largest employers. They also worked as a bank giving loan to the traders (rate of interest 3-30%) External trade was charged at higher rates as external trade had greater degree of risk. Sometimes even kings had to take loans from temples
- Temples had great role in developing various cultures, like drama, music, paintings and this in turn encouraged various craftsmen and artisans.
- Temples in south India thus played an important role, both for developing economy as well as culture.

- 'Kalyanmandap' was unique feature of south Indian temples. In this mandap marriage of Devis and Devtas were celebrated with great pomp and show.
- Some of famous temples constructed in Vijayanagar empire are Virupaksha Temple (built by Krishna Deva Raya) and Temple of Thousand Pillars. They are very important for their architectural excellence.

Condition of Women:

- Condition of women was generally poor. Though there was no purdah system polygyny was prevalent
- Widows were discouraged by society to remarry (but State encouraged it by not taxing widow remarriage)
- Sati was prevalent, though a unique system was also prevalent wherein male guards of king jumped in pyre of king.
- Child marriage was not very common but there were some instances of this practice.

BAHMANI KINGDOM

- Bahmani Kingdom was a parallel kingdom north of Vijayanagar in the same period.
- It was founded in 1347 by **Allaudin Hassan** who claimed himself to be descendent of a famous Iranian Royal family and assumed title of '**Bahman Shah**'
- He also had a Brahmin Guru, Gangu, hence he is also known as 'Hassan Gangu'
- He made his capital in Gulbarga in Karnataka.

Three important people who played a key role in expanding and consolidating the Bahmani Kingdom:

1. Firoz Shah Bahman (1397-1422) was educated and learned man and knew many languages. He had wives from different linguistic backgrounds. He built astronomical observatory in Daulatabad.

He married daughter of Dev Raya I. He was later defeated by Dev Raya I

He gave up the power to his brother **Ahmad Shah**.

2. Ahmad Shah was also known as Wali as he was treated as **Sufi Saint**.

Ahmad Shah shifted the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar

A famous north Indian saint Gesu Daraz (Long Haired) a saint of Chisti Silsila visited during this period

3. Mahmud Gawan

He was not king but Wazir-e-Sultanate under Muhammad Shah III, who was weak and was merely a puppet in hands of Mahmud Gawan

- Gawan brought Bahmani kingdom to its Zenith and its boundaries touched Orissa
- He divided the kingdom into 8 Atraf (provinces), each headed by a Governor
- He built a madrasa at Bidar known as Mahmud Gawan Madrasa which attracted students from India and Central Asia. Delhi, Jaunpur and Bidar became three important head quarters of Islamic religion
- In his period there was a clash of Deccani and Afaquis in the court.
- Local population was known as Deccani and Afaquis were basically outsiders, generally from north (from India, Persia and Central Asia). Deccanis themselves were outsiders but had settled earlier than the Afaquis. Gawan an Afaqui himself was killed by Deccanis

After his death the kingdom was divided into 5 kingdoms, which though were not large, but very strong.

<u>Kingdom</u>	<u>Founder</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Dynasty</u>
Berar (Maharashtra)	Fatehullah Imad Ul Mulk	1484	Imad Shahi dynasty
Bijapur(Kar)	Yusuf Adil Shah	1489	Adil Shahi dynasty
Ahmadnagar(Mah.)	Malik Ahmad	1490	Nizam Shahi dynasty

Kingdom	Founder	Year	Dynasty
Golkonda (Andhra)	Qutub Shah	1512	Qutb Shahi dynasty
Bidar(Karnataka)	Qasim Barid	1527	Barid Shahi dynasty

Bahmani Empire and Vijayanagar Empire had almost parallel existence. These two kingdoms fought for almost 200 years over three regions:

- Raichur Doab (Between Krishna and Tungabhadra)
- Area between Krishna and Godavari Delta
- Marathwada Region

Raichur Doab was battle ground and the main bone of contention between these Kingdoms.

In 1565 in battle of Talikota also known as battle of Banihatti, or Rakkasa Tangdi, Vijayanagar was defeated.

They fought over trade, economy, commerce as well as agriculture, but in case if any one of five Bahmani kingdoms had to fight with Vijayanagar Empire, they united to fight against it.

AdilShahi, NizamShahi and Qutub Shahi were important and stronger than the other two kingdoms.

These kingdoms had great contribution in literature especially Urdu literature which had no scope to flourish in north India as Persian was there official language.

In South Urdu was facing Telugu, Kannada and Marathi. Urdu became a lingua franca and was official language of Bahmani Kingdoms, thereby providing support and benefits to the language and enabled it to flourish.

Quli Qutub Shah is regarded as first Urdu poet, his collection of poems is known as Diwan-e-Qutub-e-Shahi

Wali Deccani was another famous Urdu poet in Bahmani Kingdom

A few additional points about Bahmani Kingdoms

- Bijapur: Gol Gumbaz was a biggest dome in India built by Bijapur.
- Golconda: City of Hyderabad and Charminar were built by Golconda empire
- Ahmad Nagar Kingdom; The last decade of 16th century witnessed the rise of Chand Bibi, the daughter of Hussain Nizam Shah I, as the defacto ruler of Ahmed Nagar. She fought against the Moghul army valiantly but was killed in 1600 C.E. by her own general. She was the only women ruler of the Deccan sultanate in the medieval period.
- Berar stayed away from the confederate of Deccan sultans against Vijay Nagar Empire in the battle of Talikota in 1565 C.E., Berar was annexed by Ahmed Nagar Empire in 1572 C.E.
- In 1618 C.E., Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II invaded Bidar and annexed it to Bijapur kingdom.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

Bhakti stands for '**Devotional surrender to a perceived God**'

- God is perceived in different ways.
- He may have a form (& forms may be different e.g. Ram or Krishna) and
- He may be perceived to be without any form

Literary source of this movement can be traced from Upanishads, Bhagwad Gita and Bhagvata Puranas.

In second century B.C. Vasudev Krishna (Agra and Mathura) is credited by some scholars for Bhakti origin of Bhakti Movement. In his movement Krishna was most important character.

Brahminical religion had been jolted due to emergence of Buddhism and Jainism

This movement focussed on direct relations between man and god instead of rituals of Vedas, Karma kands, ceremonies and sacrifices.

It was a simplified form of Vedic Religion but could become popular only in some isolated pockets in North India. Bhakti as mass movement originated in 6-8th century, led by **Alvars Saints** (Vishnaivaite Sects) and **Nayanars** Saints (Shaivaite Sects)

- It originated in region of Andhra Pradesh & Tamil Nadu
- These movements had both female and male saints
- It did not encourage vedic rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices.
- It simplified religion and brought it closer to masses.
- Saints who came in this period who used local language of masses (Tamil and Telugu), not Sanskrit the language of educated class.

Shankaracharya (8th-9th century A.D.)

- Shankaracharya made an important impact on Bhakti movement.
- He belonged to Kerala and propagated his philosophy of Advaitavada (Non Dualism)
- He was young, learned vedas by heart and travelled a lot. He conversed and debated with Buddhist and Jainism and established supremacy of Vedas and Vedic knowledge.
- He set up four famous Mutts in four directions; Badrinath (Uttarakhand) in North, Sringeri (Karnataka) in South, Puri (Orissa) in East and Dwarka (Gujarat) in West.
- He was scholar saint, a well educated saint and popular among educated class during his life time. He could become popular among masses only after his death.

Two important points of Advaitavada (Non dualism)

- **God is one.** Concept of Trimurthy (Tidev/Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh as separate Gods) was rejected by him and he cited Veda and Upanishads to reinforce his views. In Rigveda concept of one God is clearly mentioned.
- Creator (God) and created being (Soul) are not two entities separately but one singular entity.

Creator is perceived as having three separate entities because of 'Maya' (illusion) which is because of 'Agyanta' (ignorance). Agyanta can be removed only through Vedic Gyan or knowledge. The Path he suggested is known as **Gyan Marg**. To realize god one has to go through this path of Vedic Path and then only he will realize oneness of God clear

11th century great saint Ramanuj

- He gave philosophy of pure dualism; **Vishishtadvaita**

- He rejected the idea of Gyan Marg and said that devotional surrender with love before the perceived god was the key to get blessings of god (Prasad).
- For this purpose knowledge of Vedas was not required.
- So he became more popular among the masses.
- He opened the doors of Bhakti for poor and low castes

In north India Bhakti did not emerge at same time due to political reasons.

- In 8-12th century A.D. Rajputs in north India and orthodox Brahminical religion were very dominant.
- Religion was institutionalized. Temple had major roles, rituals, yagyas karma-kand and sacrifices were very prominent and didn't tolerate any new ideas.
- They suppressed and even crushed any new ideas which could challenge their authority and strangle hold on society.

Rajputs needed priest class help to legitimize their position as Kings sent by God. Brahmins supported this view through yagyas and religious ceremonies and got huge financial help in form of land grants. So no great saints could emerge.

Between 12-13th century Rajputs were defeated by Turks who established a vast empire and ruined Rajput Empire. This inturn had great impact on society

- Alliance between Brahmins and Rajputs got weak because protectors, patrons and financers of Brahmins (Rajputs) had lost their political and economic powers.
- New social reality and environment developed, Turkish in comparison with Brahminical religion were liberal
- Hetrodox group got opportunity and better environment to flourish, profess, preach and propagate new ideas.

Saints of Maharashtra in early medieval period

1) Gyan Dev or Jyan Dev (11th Century) 2) Namdev (who migrated to North) (Some of his teachings/doha are compiled into part of Guru Granth Sahib) 3) Eknath 4) Tukarram 5) Samarth Ramdas (Spiritual Guru of Shivaji)

(GNETS key to remember)

These saints for the first time helped the divided Marathis, who were divided by caste and class, to come together under one umbrella of **'One God and One Mankind'**

Bhakti saints are created with uniting Marathis culturally even before their political unity, done by Shivaji.

Feeling of belonging to one common root started developing first of all among Marathis

Northern Indian Saints are generally divided in two groups based on their beliefs; Nirguna and Saguna Nirguna didn't believed that God is formless and main saints were; Namdev, Kabir and Nanak

Namdev in 14-15th century come from Maharashtra and settled in north India.

- He was a tailor by caste
- His message was one god and one mankind
- He opposed hierarchy of society based on caste, class or gender
- He ridiculed the social ceremonies and many religious practices including idol worship
- He started giving logical answer to questions that how can god be a rock?
- Some of his dohas were included in Guru Granth Sahib, the religious text of sikhs

KABIR 15-16TH CENTURY

- He is among very few saints in India who was popular among both masses and classes.

- He lived in eastern U.P., mainly in Benares
- He was born in Hindu Brahmin family, but was abandoned and raised by Muslim weaver family.
- He left Benares because he believed that it was headquarter of all Brahminical activities, he left Kashi to oppose institutional form of religion. He questioned the whole concept of holy places like Kashi and Kaba. His logic was simple that God lies within you, not in a temple or mosque. God is not pleased by offering, prayers or rituals but is pleased more when you help the poor
- He was not educated but his ideas were great.

Bijak & Sukh Nidha are two books of Kabir's Dohas in Awadhi dialect of Hindi language

Since they were compiled after 100 years some of dohas of other poets are also included in these books. Though Dohas were written in simple language but they could touch hearts.

- He raised questions challenging existing religious dogmas in witty and logical and manner
- He was very vocal and outspoken and dared to speak against priest class in sixteenth century, which was not easy. He dared to speak against mahajans, maulvis, zamindars and called them as parasites; those who live on hard-work of others.
- He was famous for giving importance to dignity of labour

Physical labor was assigned to lower castes, he questioned the logic of societal prevalence of this division.

Another important aspect of teachings of Kabir was **religious tolerance**; for him there was no difference in Ram and Rahim.

He called God with several names like Allah, Sahib, Sai, Ishwar, Rahim, Ram

He clarified that he didn't use Ram, as Ram of Ayodhya, as it would give Ram a distinct form. Since he belonged to Nirguna Sect (Formless) Ram signified just another name of God.

His philosophy united the people together despite the differences in their beliefs, faiths and classes.

Followers of group formed **Kabir Panth** but this sect could not flourish much.

Nanak (Nirgun Saint) 1469-1530 A.D.

- Nanak was brought up under training of Sufi saints in Talwandi in Punjab (Nankana Sahib in Punjab)
- Like Kabir he strongly believed in concept that God is one and formless and propagated this view.
- He condemned hierarchy of society and institutional form of religion.
- He was not as outspoken as Kabir but he travelled widely; Sri Lanka, Mecca and Medina
- The concepts associated with Nanak and still practiced by Sikhs are: Sangat and Pangat

Pangat is langar or community kitchen (not originated by him, it was Sufi saints who brought this idea)

Common kitchen signifies that when you eat together, the taboos of separate class & caste will cease to exist, idea is that no one is superior or inferior

Sangat is addressing together, generally in Indian society women and low castes were kept away from religious gatherings and discourses. This would automatically challenge the caste and class hierarchy, and even the concept of untouchability. This form of democracy is not seen even now in Hindu temples.

He used to roam around cities and villages (rural areas) and became famous among peasants of Jats and traders of Khatri communities

On the other hand Kabir had mainly confined himself to urban areas

Nanak had no intention to start a new religion but after death, his followers formed a sect and gradually developed into religion.

Each of following gurus took played some role in establishing it as a religion.

His disciples formed a unique form of silsila known as guruship. Initially it was not hereditary but from fifth Guru, it became hereditary.

Guru Nanak was the first guru then it was Guru Angad (Pioneer of Gurumukhi script)

Punjabi is also written in Urdu script in Pakistan

They were followed by 3rd Guru Amardas and 4th Guru Ramdas (Akbar gave piece of land at Amritsar to Guru Ramdas and at this place 5th guru Arjun Dev, made Harmandir Sahib.

Arjun Dev compiled the holy books of Sikhs known as Adi Granth Sahib (Guru Granth Sahib) during 1604 during the reign of Akbar

- Teachings and dohas of other Bhakti Saints: Namdev, Kabir and Muslim saint Baba Farid are integral part of this book.
- He was son of previous Guru, Guruship became hereditary
- He was killed by Mughals, Mughals blamed that Arjun Dev sheltered Khusrau the son of Jahangir

Sikhs tradition says that Mughals wanted to crush Sikhism, so they killed Guru Arjun Dev.

Satish Chandra wrote about Arjun dev's death and opined that it was result of political clash between Mughals and Sikhs since Sikhs were not only a spiritual identity but had become political entity as well.

Mughal Mansabdars exploited local peasants and oppressed them and political clash developed into religious clash, leading into major differences between Sikhs and Mughals.

Relations between Mughals and Sikhs were not same level during the Mughal history, as many ups and downs were witnessed.

- 6th Guru Hargobind started using arms and weapons
- 7th Guru was Harrai
- 8th Guru Harkrishan was only 8 when he became a Guru.
- 9th Guru Teg Bahadur was also killed by Aurangzeb in 1674.
- 10th Guru Gobind Singh gave the famous five Ks Kachhera, Kirpan, Kesh, Kangha, and Kara; the Sikh identity symbols. In 1699 he formed Khalsa Panth.