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# BOOK REVIEW

**THE ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE VIJAY NAGAR EMPIRE**

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**By:**

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**( An initiative by Archaeological survey of India under  
the Ministry of culture)**

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# INTRODUCTION

*16,500 years ago the first unified civilisation BHARATVARSHA was born as the cradle of not just Humanity but the very values of human life where one could only grow with nature entangled with societal values, where one knew duties before rights -thus ending the very reason of present-day human conflicts.*

*-Suyodhan Reddy*

*India was a land rich beyond words, with cutting-edge knowledge and long history of cultural unity. Its temples were self-contained banks, its libraries banks of knowledge.*

*The book of Vijaynagar Empire clearly reflects the image of Bharat as Vishwa Guru and domination of India on the world Trade.*

*Vijaynagar Empire indicates strong sense of history and a civilisational idea of India*

*This book shows that leadership of West is not a norm, just an aberration of 200 years. Because between 0AD to 1820 A.D, India was contributed to 35% of the world GDP.*



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# WHO REVEALS BOUT EMPIRE?

*Foreign travellers were so astonished by the maintenance of the Vijaynagar state and have left glowing by opulent grandeur of the Empire:*

- ❖ Its lumirous places
- ❖ Inponing temples
- ❖ Bustling bazaars
- ❖ Buellant Jewels
- ❖ Ostentatious festivals

*We got to know bout the supremacy of this nation state by the writings or descriptions by the foreign travellers,including:-*

- ❖ DOMINGO PAES
- ❖ Abdur Razzak
- ❖ Nuniz
- ❖ Gibson
- ❖ Nicolo di conti
- ❖ Barbosa
- ❖ Caesar fredrick
- ❖ Varthema
- ❖ Vasco de gama
- ❖ Malik kafur and many more.

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# COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

- ❖ *The Vijaynagar Empire covered the area of about 1,40,000 square miles.*
- ❖ *The western side of the Empire Run the huge mountains Chain which influence climate and agricultural production of the Peninsula.*
- ❖ *The eastern and the southern end were considered as the knot of Nilgiri hills.*
- ❖ *The general slope of the Deccan plateau is from the west to the east and many of the great Rivers flow from west to east.*
- ❖ *In the central table land covered by the modern districts of Bellary,cuddapah , Kurnool and Anantapur, the rainfall is small and it in summer is great*
- ❖ *Abdur razzak , The empire extended from the borders of Sarandip to those of Kulburga and from Bengal to Malabar a space more than thousand parasangs.*



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## VILLAGE

- *Village constituted the most important economic unit in the Vijaynagar Empire.*
- *There is sufficient evidence to believe that during the Vijayanagara period the number of villages in the Empire was gradually on the increase.*
- *There were about 50,000 villages consist of Wetlands,pastures, drylands, Gardens , irrigation plants with tanks and lakes ,village sites and hamlets.*
- *Houses were elevated parts of the village, each community living as far as possible in a particular area.*

## TOWNS

- *There were large number of urban centres in the Empire.*
- *Generally the towns were allowed to grow, and not planned and built.*
- *The towns had usually good and broader streets flanked with houses.*
- *Abdur razzak Travelled through the north western portions of it, observes that between the large town there were a good number of small ones.*
- *Nikitin the Russian traveller observes that between the large towns there were a good number of small ones and significantly remarks so many towns.*
- *Rapid growth of large cities is due to the influence of commercial and industrial development and affording greater scope of employment and due to centre of education and arms.*

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*Various factors contributing to the development of cities and towns like:*

- *a religious centre of place of pretty much attracted a good population and gradually developed in a city or a town.*
- *The next is growing importance of a place on account of its expanding trade converted it into virtual,*
- *followed sometimes by the founding of a fair.*
- *Again the choice of a particular place as the administrative headquarters of the government favourite the growth of town.*





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# POPULATION

- *Vijaynagar itself was, according to Abdur Razak, a place extremely large and thickly populated and such that the Eye has not seen nor the ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. Abdul Razak says that each day at a town or village was well populated.*
- *Niccolo de Conti found that number of people in the empire exceeded beyond belief and And estimated population of the city at 99,000 man fit to bear arms .*
- *Individual cities were brisk with large populations.*
- *Endless number of merchants and wealthy man.*
- *Barbosa Notes that there were in the Empire many great cities ,towns, villages and fortresses and this is supported by this statement of Domingo pace that the whole country was thickly populated with city's and villages.*



- *Domingo pace It was bigger than the Rome and remarks to people in the city are countless in number so much so that I do not wish to write it down but I declared that no troops,horse or foot could break their way through any street or Lane, so great other numbers of the people and the elephants.*
- *It has been suggested that taking that each house on an average contain five persons they would at least 500,000 people capital*

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- *Remarkable feature of the populational development in the period was emigration to foreign countries and internal migration it was always the spirit of commercial adventure.*
  - *Internal migration, both rural and urban must be accounted for economic ,social ,political and religious life.*

## CLASSES OF PEOPLE

*(In BHARAT , we always believed in the concept of “classes of people” which means Incidents of birth had no relevance in Indian history )*

- *From economic point of view the vast population of the Empire may be divided into different groups of classes that is producers and consumers.*
- *The producing class engaged in the different productive occupations and supplied the articles of consumption for the people.*
- *Whereas consumer class Engaged in the non-productive occupations but their classes were no less important than the producer, their services the society were equally necessary and they lived on the sweat and toil of the producers.*
- *Taxes generated from these are used for the maintenance of the state.*
- *They were around 200 nayaks in the Empire among whom Empire was divided by which the governance is carried on.*
- *There will army of servants to collect the revenue and customs of the government and each village had 2 heads Munsif an accountant.*



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## CONSUMER CLASS

- *Among the consumers the nobles of the Empire who well important post in the public administration, governed parts of the empire and enjoyed good revenues as also many important privileges.*
- *The officials of the government were granted large slices of territory over which the rules and were required to pay fixed annual financial contribution to the imperial exchequer which is usually half of their income and maintain for the king a sufficient number of troops and serve in his wars.*

## ARMY

*(With the building of the vast empire, it's equally important to protect the state from enemies or external aggression, Thus The importance of protecting state was clearly realised by the Vijay nagar kings)*

*Krishnadevaraya had million of fighting troops.*

*The huge forces consisted of two parts, the IMPERIAL STANDING ARMY and a FEUDAL LEVIES.*

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## IMPERIAL STANDING ARMY

- *Acc to Barbosa's calculation indicate that train armies of the kings were about 100,000, the cavalry alone being 20,000.*
- *Beside the Kings maintain a special guard force at the capital which Nuniz calls the "Kings GUARD" consisting of foot soldiers, horses and elephants.*
- *According to Pace, date of the mean of the garden 600 pardoas.*
- *The annual pay of highest level officers who is about 47,000 rupees along with the enormous privileges enjoyed by him.*

## FEUDAL LEVIES

- *The feudal Levies, that were assemble during times of war, constituted a very large portion of the armies that marched to the battlefield.*
- *The police duties in the outlying parts of the empire were done by the Kavalgars who were paid by the grant of rent free pieces of land and an allowance in grain and money by the local people.*
- *They maintain in village in the history of the duties of policemen.*
- *In this group may be classed the police force.*

## Inclusiveness of Vijaynagar Empire

- *When Rest of the world was busy in Religious wars, India believe In inclusiveness not imposition.*
- *India don't believe in imposition, but believe on shared culture share prosperity and shared value*
- *Service in the army was not confined to the Hindus only.*
- *The Muslims were encouraged to settle in the Empire and entertained in the army. They were allotted Jagir and allowed set to follow their own religion.*

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## OTHER OCCUPATIONS

- *Next important occupations to which the people were polled were the professions and the liberal arts.*
- *Temples mainland had a hospital in which physicians were employed for affording relief to the suffering humanity.*
- *Fine arts like architecture, structure, painting dance and music received encouragement in the period and many people lived by such occupations.*
- *The trading communities in the Empire constitute a good proportion of the population . Among them were both Hindus and Muslims.*
- *The innumerable monuments of the period, military civil and religious like forts palaces relation books and temples that stand to this day encourage architecture and sculpture received and occupation the gift a good numbers of the population*
- *Dancing music gave occupation to some people, particular to the members of the fair sex.*
- *Painting was a fine art that were dominated largely by the influence of the tastes of thr court and the people.*
- *Th ere were many learned men in the Empire.*
- *Another busy occupation is engraving on the walls of the temples, the government orders both the temple walls and on copper plates*
- *The transport system in Empire Empire gave employment to section of population. An important function, to which a portion*

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*of the population was called, was service person in domestic, and private houses*

## **MATHAS**

- *The mathas were wealthy institution.*
- *The Ascetics and mendicants, those in charge of Mathas in the Empire employ representative of the different religious sections in schools of thought among the population.*

## **GAMES**

- *Certain classes of people in the Empire take a great part in the social activities of the age, such as Games and amusements and the patronised both by the state and the people.*
- *Wrestling is Important game and amuse the king.*
- *Cock Fighting also gave amusement.*
- *The important function was coached service, personal and a mistake in the court and in private houses.*

# **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION AND GUILDS**

- *A very important feature of the economic organisation of the constitution of a GUILD*

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- *Every guild was a local organisation, and they were also extraterritorial ones. Another striking feature of the Guild system was the fact that its members belong to a religious sect.*
  - *Guilds Or the association of artisans and merchants.*
  - *Members of Guilds belong to different groups or people , unifying religious cultures.*
  - *Guilds acted as multi dimensional corporations And were carrying out private trade without the restrictions of govt across the Indian Ocean way before East India company established.*
  - *There were two kinds of guild, the CRAFT GUILD and the MERCHANT GUILD*

## CRAFT GUILD

- *It was a professional association.Each group of workmen, following a particular profession and belong to a community, formed a guild.*
- *Important craft guilds were those of the Goldsmiths, blacksmiths, Brainsmith, carpenters ,idol makers, weavers, potters, clothes Dyers ,oil millers ,shoe makers, tailors, shepherds, covert, hunters, washer man, barbers and few others.*

## MERCHANT GUILD:

- *Dr.barnett says that. There was a vast organisation of associated traders which about the 12th and 13th centuries and spread a network over the greater part of southern India and Ceylon, and perhaps even further and which beginning with simple commerce and then developing an elaborate social and semi-military system strikingly recall East India company.*



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- *The first was treated in common articles, Abdur Razak says that the treatment of each separate Guildhall craft had their shops close to one another and that the jeweller sold their rubies pearls and diamonds openly in the bazaars.*
  - *They exist it primarily for the regulation and protection of trade which was carried on by its member individually though there is a corporate body did commercial transaction in common*

## **SERVICES IN COURT**

- *An important function to which a portion of the population was cold, service, personal and a mistake," and private houses. The age was one of luxury profligacy and show.*
- *When the king went out, for instance, he was followed by 2000 men of good positions besides 200 horses and 40 or 50 horseman with their soldiers.*
- *The harem of picking consisted of many women. Some of the women rode on horseback also.*

## **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

- *India was far different from the rest of the world which considered women as weak , vulnerable and only confined to the household activities.*
- *Vijaynagar Empire gives a vision of women empowerment by making them self independent besides doing household works.*

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- *Paes says, there are women who handles sword and shield and others, and others who wrestle and blow trumpets and other pipes and other instruments and in the same way they have women as bearers and washing folk just as the king has offices of the household.*

## INDUSTRY

*(In matter of industry, India was more advanced relatively to Europe then it is today)*

*The industries in the Vijaynagar Empire are mainly:*

- ❖ *agriculture manufacturers*
  - ❖ *mines and metallurgy*
  - ❖ *handicrafts*
  - ❖ *textiles and*
  - ❖ *fisheries*
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- *The weavers are so influential in the community.*
  - *The agriculture population was engaged on land during the parts of year and no regular work during the non-agriculture season, such unemployment among them during period of the year was minimised by their taking to some rural handicraft or industry which kept the agriculturist supplementary income.*
  - *Hence, Agriculturist turned the rural industrialist for a part of the year.*
  - *Oil pressing industry carried out almost in all villages. The seeds, that were pressed for oil, were gingelly, coconut and castor.*
  - *The other important professionals were the potters, toddy drawers and the leather workers.*

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- *The washer men and barbers are also important functionaries in each village and town.*

*(Industrial organisation of the country in Vijaynagar period was so widespread and the products were made in such evidence that the country was a whole self sufficient)*

- *The people needed very little of foreign commodities, the articles of merchandise that were imported from foreign countries being laddering horses and elephants. Thus production was self-sufficient in that period.*
- *Action in relation of temples and execution of irrigation projects in different parts of the empire get the building industry active.*

## 5 DIVINE ARCHITECT

- *According to Hindu tradition Vishwakarma, the divine architect, gave birth to 5 sons, Manu, Maya, Tvastri, Silpi and Visvajia who are respectively the progenitors of the five artists and communities.*
- *Here , In the Vijaynagar empire The class of people consisted of five groups namely blacksmiths, goldsmiths, brass meets, carpenters and idol makers.*
- *They constituted an important industrial group, that supplies the necessary articles and demand.*

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# AGRICULTURE MANUFACTURERS

*The article of consumption made out of agriculture produce your money and entitled different processes*

## SUGAR

- *One of the most important of the agriculture manufacturers was sugar.*
- *According to Barbosa, it was in powder condition and wrapped in small pockets.*
- *Varthems says that sugar was available at that place “ a great abundance of sugar candied according to our manner”*
- *On account of its sweetness it was in great demand in the country.*

## OIL:

- *Oil was an article that was produced from the raw agricultural products like coconut, gingerly, Sesamam and castor seeds.*
- *The oil mill was usually made of stone and was work with two bulls.*

## DYEING:

*An important agriculture industry was that of dyeing of which Barbosa speaks and among the dyed the most notable was indigo which was available in the west coast and kind of dried fruit used in the West for dying purpose*

## OTHER ITEMS:

- *Coconut tree was important for the mini agriculture industry is a dependent on it. The other articles that were produced from it were coir, toddy, palm sugar, may, umbrella , brushed etc.*

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# MINES AND METALLURGY

- *An important non-agricultural industry that was connected with the land, was mining.*
- *Much of the mineral in the Vijaynagar Empire was obtained from the mines in the Kurnool and Anantapur district.*
- *Thr minerals like pearls fisheries, garnet, jacinths, cats eyes and other gems , rubies, topazes, and other soft sapphiers , iron, sulphur and copper were found in Malabar.*
- *Salt, being an article in great demand, was produced on a large scale both in the sea coast areas and in the inland portions.*
- *Diamonds were also dug out from the land in Vijaynagar empire. Nikitin mentions different varieties of diamonds found in empire.*
- *Gold was another important article that was mined in the empire. Gribble goObserves that in the whole of the Deccan, from Mysore to the northern limits of Hyderabad ran belt of gold bearing quartz which must have extensively worked.*
- *Metal works consisted in the making of!*
  - ❖ *jewellery*
  - ❖ *weapons of war*
  - ❖ *and household articles*

# HANDICRAFT

- *There were many handicrafts which flourished in the Empire*
- *. To take a first wooden articles , Leather goods, pottery, masonry.*
- *Vehicles of transport such as carriages and palanquins were made of wood.*
- *Would also used in the construction of ships for navigation purposes. Big boats were made of pain trunks soon together with threats, and were of great burden.*
- *The building industry was a flourishing one in the period particularly in urban areas.*



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- *The Mason build the temple and the sculptures executed the beautiful sculptures and bas-reliefs while the painter beautified the building with excellent drawings and paintings.*
  - *The construction of buildings give encouragement to the subsidiary industries of bricklaying and quarrying.*

## RURAL PROSPERITY

- *Village constituted the most important economic unit in the Vijaynagar Empire.*
- *There were about 50,000 villages consist of Wetlands,pastures, drylands, Gardens , irrigation plants with tanks and lakes ,village sites and hamlets*
- *India was a land rich beyond words, Its temples were self-contained banks, it libraries banks of knowledge.*



## VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION ( EFFICIENT ADMN)

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- *Village administration divided into two ways or two type of local institutions that Is SABHA/UR and NADU (larger rural division).*
  - *An important feature of the administration of local areas was the functioning of local assemblies which administered the local areas.*
  - *Temple was an important institution that played on a notable part in economic life of local people.*
  - *The Sabha carried out thr the administrative duties and economic functions,Collect taxes.*
  - *Acted as Guardian of public endowment and charities.*
  - *Village admn also acted as Trustees for proper cultivation of land, set apart meeting the expenses of worship in the temple.*

## **VILLAGE OF SELF SUFFICIENCY** **(Independent institutions)**

- *In Vijaynagar days the evils of absentee landlordism were well realised .*
- *It is said that the best news for land is the personal supervision of the landlord.*



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- *The temple which played an important part in the economic life of the rural population, usually maintain the treasury of its own and receive deposits of money from the people.*
  - *The temple treasury, serve the rural public by offering them credit but whenever they were in need.*
  - *The people who instituted festivals and services in the temple usually deposit a particular sum of money in the temple territory from the interest of with the expenses of such festivals and services were met.*
  - *The productive capacity of land at the wet or dry dependent on the fertility of the soil and the required supply of water put some good wetlands were usually found in the Vijaynagar Empire.*

**RURAL PROSPERITY ENABLES URBAN PROSPERITY WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF NATION.**

## TEMPLE

*Besides being an important centre of religious activities and life of the people, the temple in mediaeval India had secular functions.*

- *Another institution that played important part in the economic life of the people was the temple.*
- *The temple was a wealthy institution on which depended a large number of persons belonging to different professions, it was landlord, engage labour and cultivated lands, encouraging rural activities like extension of cultivation and rehabilitation of villages.*

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- *The Temple treasury was the bank, lending money to the people during times of need.*
  - *It was a great promoter of rural industries like handicrafts and afforded employment to the poor.*
  - *The wealth of the south Indian temple was a Great wonder to the foreign travellers that came to the country .*
  - *Barbosa, Malik kafur struck by the wealth of the south Indian temples. Such wealth was made up of Royal benefaction and the benefaction is made by the public. The kings patronised the temples by either making grounds of lands to them tax-free or later low quit rent to be enjoyed by them i or by making over them to specified tax payable to the government by the people of the area in which the temples are situated.*
  - *The Temples played an important part in the reclamation of vast lands and extension of cultivation.*
  - *The temples encouraged the forwarding of irrigation facilities to the people*
  - *The temples were allowed to collect the taxes for their maintenance and repair.*
  - *The trustees of temple have right to mortgage the temple land.*
  - *Temples was one of the institutions that provide employment to a good number of persons.*
  - *Abdur razzak bears testimony to the people in the village of Bidrur having enjoyed pensions and allowances from the tip Temple at the place.*
  - *The temple also employed Brahmans to decide some religious literature like the Vedas and Puranas in the shrines. They also appear to have maintained hospitals.*
  - *As important aspect of activities of the temples and economic sphere was the encouragement given to small industries, particularly weaving.*
  - *From the economic point of view the temple was a big land load owning boss properties in land, Got buy gifts made by individuals and by purchases made by the trustees with the surplus funds available.*
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- *In a large number of cases the temple treasury served as a bank to rent money to the people when they were badly in need of it.*
  - *Abdul Razak bears testimony to the people in the village having enjoyed Pensions and allowances from the temple at the place*
  - *Thus, the services rendered by the temple at economic well-being of the country were many even poor relief in some form was afforded.*

## AGRICULTURE

- *Good part of the country had been brought under cultivation.*
- *The important Indian manufacturers largely depend on large agricultural production, the purchasing power of the people depends on it, the Indian trade both export and import depends on it and finally the soundness of the finances of the government of India largely depends upon the agricultural prosperity.*
- *Deserve to be noted here that in Vijay Nagar, as in other parts of the country and periods of its history, a large majority of the population lived on the land and agriculture.*
- *Vijaynagar was usually fertile, capable of giving evident crops.*
- *Flower garden was also made in the Empire.*
- *List of the crops grown in the Vijaynagar Empire shows that almost all the crops that are now raise were raised even them.*
- *Acc. To Abdur razzak, domingo paes, Nikitin, barabosa ..In Vijaynagar “Most of the land was tilled and fertile”.*
- *The epigraphs of the period also only refer to the kind of crops raised on which were certain rate of tax was levied.*
- *Many agricultural crops were grown in the Empire including rice, cereals, spices, garden produce etc.*

## RICE



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- *It was the principal crop grown and on a large scale.*
  - *Rice being a typical monsoon crop, appears to have been cultivated in different parts of the empire where facilities for the same was. available.*
  - *The Coromandel Coast, including the area about Pulicat specialise in Abundant rice cultivation, largely because of the fertility of the soil and irrigation facilities available in the area.*

## CEREALS:

- *Cereals, such as wheat, barley occupy the second place of importance in agriculture.*
- *MILLET and JOWAR which Paes call ' **INDIAN CORN**' Was also produced in the country.*
- *Pulses were produced and among them were the gram, black gram , Bengal gram, horse gram, red gram, black pulses and beans.*
- *According to pace the grains were produced in great quantity because being used as food for men they were also used for horses.*
- *Sugar cane, the economic importance of which was great, was grown where over water was available and the soil was suitable. The important fibres that were produced were HEMP and cotton.*
- *The cotton appear to have been cultivated on a large scale in the middle country where the red soil must have yielded a good harvest.*
- *The others were cinnabar, myrobalan and Sandal wood.*

## SPICES

- *Spices were produced, both for consumption within and export to foreign countries.*
- *The most important of the special spices produced in the country was pepper, particularly black pepper, cinnamon, cloves and*

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- ginger , cardamom,nutmeg, mace, mustard , incense and aloes were also among the important species produced in the country.*
- *Prices would largely produced in the west coast and exported to foreign countries where they were in great demand*

## **GARDEN PRODUCE:**

- *Besides this there were produced in the Empire many kinds of garden crops consisting of vegetables and fruits.*
- *Paes says that the country was filled with grooves of fruit trees, on account of which evident fruits were available everywhere and they were cheap.*
- *The fruit gardens grew so closely to one another that, to domingo pace, they appeared to be a thick forest.*
- *Among the fruits cultivated in the country were the bread fruit, plantain, fig, citron , grapes, mango, Orange, lime, lemon, pomegranate, jackfruit, cucumber and many others.*
- *Acc. To Pas, there were large plantation of mangoes, jackfruit trees, tamarind and other very large tracts behind the cities towns and villages and formed resting places for merchants to halt with their merchandise*
- *Besides these product there were two more important crops, the coconut and Betel (Indian nut)*
- *It was put to various uses, and help it the existence of many small by-industries in the local areas.*
- *Among other garden crops were the arecanut , gall nut, brinjal, garlic, onions and turmeric.*
- *Flower gardens were kept in the Empire. Vijaynagar had a plentiful supply of different types of flowers*

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# METHODS OF AGRICULTURE

## BOUNDARIES OF LAND

- *Cultivated lands were Divided into small plots, by Well-marked boundaries, over which boundary stones were erected.*
- *When the demarcation mounds between fields were washrd away as for instance, by unprecedented floods, they were restored, after the floods subside it, to facilitate the affected land being brought under cultivation.*
- *Whenever dispute arose between the owners of the 2 adjacent fields ,the government interfered in settle the disputes and fix the boundary according to old custom*

## PROCESS OF AGRICULTURE

- *The processes of agricultural operations in the Vijaynagar days do not appear to have been far different from what they are now*
- *The implements used by the peasants in those days do not appear to have been different from those of our times, the plough was certainly in used.*
- *Water lifts appear to have been used in the well irrigation.*
- *Another kind of tenure under which the land was cultivated was the LEASE system.*

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- *According to which the lands were Leased out for a fixed annual rent usually calculated on the basis of average yield for a number of years.*
  - *According to another system of cultivation, the landlord carried on the cultivation with the farm servants which at the present day is known as Pannai system.*

## LABOUR

- *Agriculture being the main industry in the country, a majority of the people dependent upon it .*
- *Among them were two classes, one the landed employers ,and the other the labourers who earned their living by doing work on land.*
- *The hired labour Were taken in for seasonal work on the land during seasons of harvest and were paid daily wages in kind or in cash.*
- *The Kudis Were connected with the lands as servants and they were in the nature of serfs on this soil.*
- *They were generally natives of the soil Attached to and possessing an interest in the land permanent and in alienable right to cultivate the land.*
- *InCome from the land was shared between the landlord and the tenant and the system was known as Taran system.*

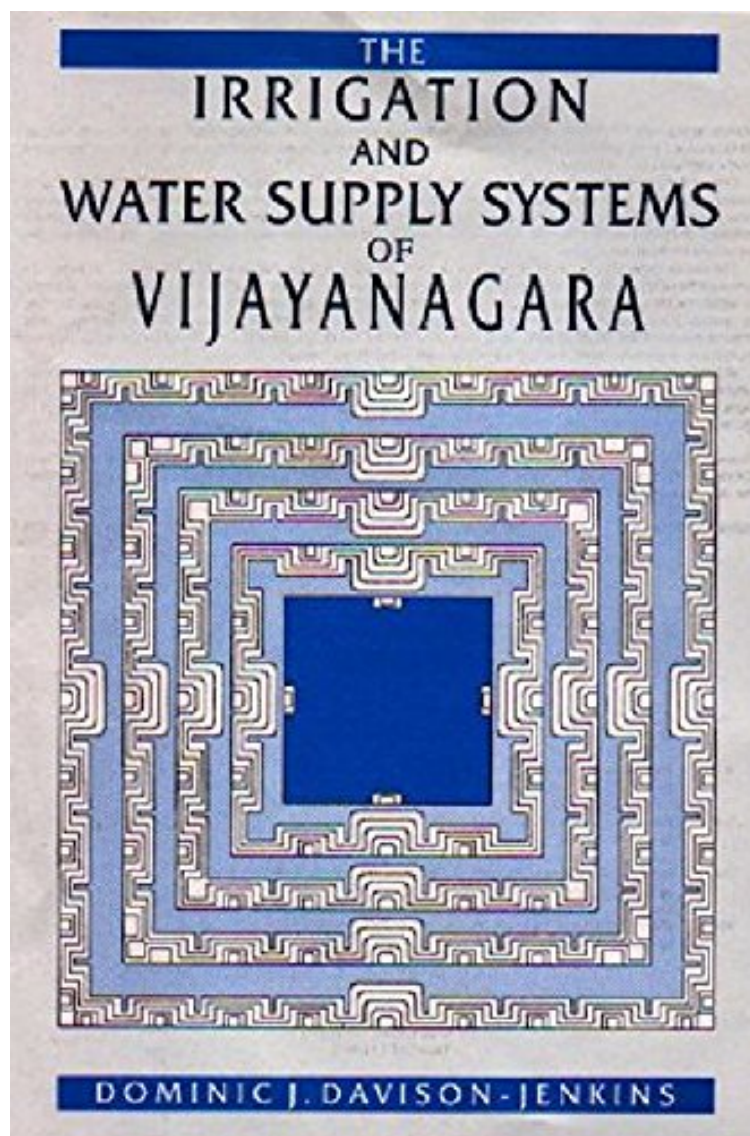
## LIVESTOCK

- *There was abundant live stock available in the country.*
- *Besides the preservation of waste and the pasture lands in every village shows that much care was taken to provide for the livestock.*
- *The foreign travellers give a good description of some breeds of oxen which were used to carriage and used for drawing ploughs.*

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- *Barbosa says that oxen, asses and small ponies were used as beats of burden and ploughing animals.*
  - *Buffaloes were also used for ploughing purposes.*
  - *Manure collected was used as a fuel on a large scale and burnt, thus leaving only a part of it to be spread over the cultivated lands.*

## IRRIGATION

- *Krishna Deva raya Said that small prosperity would increase only when tanks and irrigation canals all constructed and favour poor cultivation.*





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- *The Vijaynagar sovereign not only constructed irrigation tanks and canals but also encourage private initiative in this profession in different ways.*
  - *In Vijaynagar days great attention was paid to the storage work, Dan or ancient works and the digging of wells.*
  - *It is recorded that 1000 men were employed in the war, hundred carts were used to get stones for the walls that form part of the masonry sructure and that it took two full years to finish the work.This tank three means even to this day in a file good condition and use.*
  - *Domingo Paes says that in the tank I saw many people at work that there must have been 15 or 20,000 men looking like ants so that you cannot see the ground on which they walked.*
  - *Likewise the officers of the government, private individuals and public bodies undertook the construction of the tanks.*
  - *Large and more expensive irrigation projects were not neglected.*
  - *Irrigation works maybe divided into three main types,*
    - ❖ *storage works or tank irrigation*
    - ❖ *river or canal and dam works*
    - ❖ *well and lift works*

## MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

- *The maintenance and repair work include:-*
  - ❖ *Proper maintenance of supply channels*
  - ❖ *removal of deposit from tank slices and river and spring channels.*
  - ❖ *Guarding these dams and construction of big dams*
- *. Vijaynagar government and the people were interested in the maintenance of the irrigation and drainage works serving agriculture tracts in the country, and paid great attention to it.*
- *The local administrative bodies like the village assemblies and the temples made provision for the upkeep of tanks.*
- *Whenever the tanks and other irrigation works had to be repaired, the work was immediately attended to.*

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- *The government encourages large hearted private effort in the maintenance, repair and construction of the irrigation works.*
  - *Crole says that: Large and more expensive projects were not neglected, even some of them bear witness to the enlightenment of those Hindu kings while the absence of scientific instrument in those remote times compels the astonishment of the beholder.*
  - *When an irrigation work was repaired by more than one individual, it was usually arranged at the water from the source post to be enjoyed in proportion to the expenses incurred by the different parties.*

**( THUS,INDIA WAY IS WHERE SCIENCE WAS TRADITION AND TRADITION WERE SCIENTIFIC)**

## **MARKETING OF GOODS:**

- *One of the important inducement to agriculture operation is the facility for the sale of goods produced.*
- *There was a great demand of raw products of the country and facilities for their sale existed in the Vijaynagar Empire.*



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- *Rice for instance was exported to important places in Arabia and Ormuz besides the Malabar.*
  - *Wheat, rice and millets was in demand in Melinde in Africa.*
  - *While coconut was exported to Ormuz.*
  - *For internal consumption, these articles were sold in fairs which were held at the weekly or at intervals in many places in the Empire.*
  - *At important places, like VijayNagar itself, fairs were held every day in different parts of the city.*
  - *In order to induce merchants to bring goods to the market, concessions were shown in the matter of taxation of the article that enter the place for particular period.*

## **EXTENSION OF CULTIVATION AND RECLAMATION OF LAND**

- *The Vijaynagar government realised the need for the improvement of economic resources of the Empire and paid much attention to the agriculture.*
- *Large tracts of land of cultivated in the Empire, yet, it appears that there were still wild forest and uncultivated waste lands which could be brought under cultivation.*
- *This policy was perceived in the two directions, by the formation of the new villages and extension of cultivation in the virgin soil and by the reclamation of deserted villages and land.*
- *The sovereigns formed new villages by clearing forest and bringing fresh lands under cultivation, and thereby increase to the gross yield from land.*
- *Besides bringing fresh lands under cultivation, the government reclaimed land that had gone out of cultivation for one reason or the other.*
- *In order to encourage the colonisation of fish lands under cultivation, government exempted from the payment of taxes for the specified period*



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- *The land reclaimed, the Channels restored, the boundary marks the period and the tenant is rehabilitated and certain favourable condition which are enumerated in inscription.*
  - *In order to increase land reclamation, the government Encouraged to private initiative in that direction*
  - *Krishnadevaraya I said that King is never prosperous even though we conquer large territory but does not call back the subject leading the state on account of suffering*



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# TRADE AND COMMERCE

*(The prosperity of a country depends largely on her trade)*

- *From the writings of the foreign Chroniclers who visited the country we get a glimpse of the vigorous trade, South India continued to drive in the Vijaynagar days*
- *GIBBON says that objects of Oriental traffic were splendid and tripling and thus showing that there was no great change the course of foreign trade of the country during Vijaynagar period.*
- *The trade of the country was largely dominated by the merchant over the trade Guild.*

## IMPORTS

*The foreign goods that were in demand may be classified under broad heads:*

- ❖ *Necessaries of government.*
- ❖ *Raw and finish material*
- ❖ *and luxuries*

## NECESSARIES OF THE GOVT.

- *Gold and silver were imported from Aden Milinde and China.*
- *Quicksilver, 10, lead, copper and iron were some articles that were imported in some measure.*
- *There was great demand by the government for elephants and horses which played an important part both in the words of the period and Royal paraphernalia. Elephants were supplied by cylon and pegun. (Deva Raya had more than thousand elephants lofty as hills and gigantic as demons).*

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- *Another important animal that was imported from outside was the horse which was in the great demand both for state paraphernalia and for military purposes.*
  - *The foreign policy of the kings was there for largely influenced by their anxiety to secure a good supply of horses.*
  - *Opium silk brass were come imported from China*
  - *Precious stones were exported from cylon, ormuz..*

## **RAW AND FINISHED PRODUCTS:**

- *Among the different Raw products that were imported were spices like close, cardamom, cinnamon which came from Sumatra, Moluccus and Ceylon.*
- *Borneo and Sumatra supplied a good part of the camphor needed in the Empire.*
- *The perfumes that were imported into the country world saffron, rose water and mask from the Jedda and Ava.*
- *Finished articles like brassware from China were in demand by the Muslims*
- *Silk was imported from China also.*

## **LUXURIOUS**

- *The articles of luxury that were imported into the country were precious stones which were in great demand by the royalty and the nobility.*
- *Precious stones like rubies, sapphires, garnet and cats eyes brought for sale from Pegu, ceylon and Ormuz .*



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# EXPORTS

*(The vijay nagar empire have exported articles in excess of its imports)*

*Vijaynagar products were imported to Persia, Arabia, Africa, China, Germany, Malindi, Aden, ormuz.*

*The Items that were exported from the country Grouped under three broad heads:*

- ❖ *food produced, Spices and drugs,*
- ❖ *metal and*
- ❖ *manufacture goods.*

## FOOD PRODUCTS, SPICES AND DRUGS

- *The most important fruit product that was exported to foreign countries was rice.*
- *Malabar is said to have exported rice to Ceylon and other places.*
- *The next important article that was exported was sugar of the powdered variety and wrap in a small packets.*
- *The other important foodstuffs that were exported to foreign countries were wheat and millet.*
- *Coconut an Indian nut was exported in large quantities from the ports of the west coast to places like Aden and Ormuz.*
- *The dye stuff that were exported included cinnabar, henna, indigo, myrobalan , available in large quantities at Bhatkal and Malabar ports.*

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- *The export other than food stuffs what is the spices and drugs which were in great demand in foreign countries in the West and East.*
  - *Pepper particularly of the black variety was an article that was produced for export to foreign countries.*
  - *Ginger has grown in large quantities in the west coast and exported to Foreign countries.*

## METALS

- *Important metal that was exported to foreign places like Ormuz from Bhatkal was iron.*
- *Among the precious stones that were exported to foreign countries like Arabia were garnet, pearls, rubies, sapphires, topazes, chrysolites, hyacinths, cat's eyes.*

## MANUFACTURED GOODS

- *The Finnish products that were exported from the country to Ormuz and other places were cotton clothes and Porcelain articles.*
- *The kind of calico clothes made in the Vijaynagar Empire were exported to Bantam and other places in return for cloves.*
- *The articles of inland trade include pulses, millets, ragi, pepper, cloves, nutmeg, coconut, ghee, oil, jaggery, sugar, betel leaves etc.*

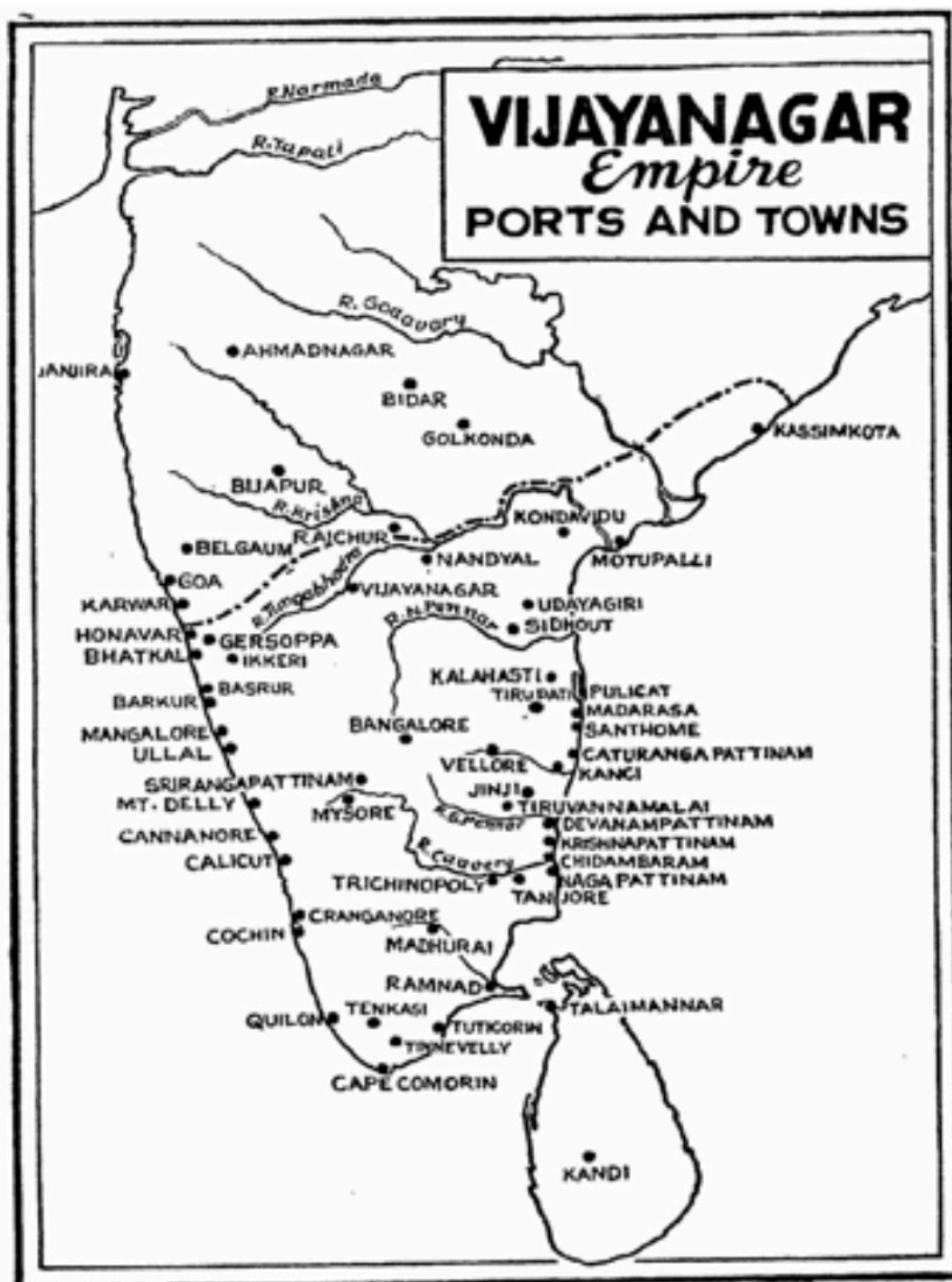
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# MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT

- *Facilities for easy transport external and internal give an impetus to trade while harbours, either natural or artificial, encourage navigation and foreign trade, good and safe route and navigable rivers increase the growth of internal trade.*
- *The existence of all these facilities were responsible for the flourishing condition trade in the Vijaynagar Empire.*

## PORTS

- *Vijaynagar Empire covered practically the whole South India below the river Krishna and extended from coast to coast..*
- *According to Abdur Razzak there were in both the coast 300 ports each of which was equal to Calicut, an important and well-known port even in those days*
- *The ports were used for doing business In spices, coconuts, drugs, palm sugar, cotton goods, wheat, green, rice, millet etc the place was also important as a great centre for the trade and horses in the manufacture of silk, Muslim and calicoes*
- *The harbour and the places was good and was visited by ships from Mecca, Eden and almost, carrying many resources*
- *Nikitin says that it was a noble emporium for all India common, abounding in pepper, lac, ginger, large kind of cinnamon, micro balance etc.*
- *Acc to Barbosa, the Moors and Heathens were great traders and posseses many ships dealing in goods of diverse kinds and in which they sailed in all directions to the coromandel, ceylon , benagal, malacca, sumatra and pegu.*



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## SHIPPING:

*(According venetian traveler to Nicolodi Conti, the Indian ships were larger than those of his country and capable of containing 2000 butts and 5 sails as many mats.)*

- *Extensive trade of South India with the transitioning people both in the east and west presupposes the existence of many ships in the country and a good knowledge of shipping by people.*
- *According to Niccolo de Conti, the Indian ships were larger than those of his country and capable of containing 2000 butts and 5 sails and as many mats.*
- *Smaller Boats were also built for rowing and were very graceful, well built and extremely light.*
- *Calicut was a Rendezvous for ships from China to eastern Africa and vessel sailed from the place to Mecca, for the most part laden with pepper.*
- *To facilitate easy ferrying, good fords were provided as important Riverside places to cross rivers*
- *Read with important places in the West was territory by the red Sea route. Another route was Persian Gulf.*

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# INLAND TRADE

*(The Vijaynagar Empire tried to contribute to the maintenance of the active commercial life in the Empire)*

- *Though there was such an extensive volume of foreign trade carried in South India during the Vijaynagar days, the people were largely a land people doing a good lot of internal trade.*
- *The different parts of the vast Empire was connected by roads to which get occasional difference in literature.*
- *As the capital of the empire, the city of the Vijaynagar was connected with different important cities in the empire.*
- *The roads appear to have been good ones. The more important of them were metalled and provided with good drainage, culverts and bridges.*
- *Canals were also used for transportation of produce.*
- *Barbosa observes that the goods were carried by means of buffaloes, boxing, asses and ponies endeavours to the consignment of paper from Malabar on oxen and Asses,*
- *Animals were also used for transportation of produce.*
- *Articles of internal trade were usually sold at the weekly figures or those held at prodigal intervals or in the regular bazaars.*
- *The fairs attracted trade from a great distance and were an instrument of periodic done retail trade as well.*



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# STATE AND COMMERCE

*(In the role of the state in the expansion of commerce and a guarantee security in the Empire for the fostering of an active commercial life in the country can't be ignored)*

*(The foreign travellers who visited the Vijaynagar empire would very much impressed with sense of security prevailing in it)*

- *State Sought to assure the trade to the merchants who brought their goods from different countries.*
- *To use a modern expression, the policy of the government was encouragement of free trade in the preference to policy of protectionism*
- *Flourishing condition of the internal trade in a country depends on the security and safety in the empire.*
- *The rulers considered at their duty to encourage the foreign commerce of the country.*
- *Krishnadevaraya says king should improve the harbours of its country and encourage its commerce that horses, elephants, precious gems, sandalwood, polls and other articles or freely imported into his country..*
- *To use a modern expression in the policy of the government was the encouragement of free trade in preference to policy of protection.*
- *The foreign travellers who visited the Vijaynagar Empire were very much impressed with the sense of security prevailing in it.*
- *Barbosa said that great equity and justice was observed to do or not only by the rulers but by the people, one to another*
- *Nuniz says that if anyone complain to the king that he was wrong and such and such approvals and on such and such a road, the king sent immediately for the captain of that province though he was at a court and the captain was seized and his property taken if he did not catch the thief.*

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## TAXATION, CURRENCY AND MEASURES

*( A democracy is a contract between the government and the citizens, that the government will promote the welfare and development of its people where as people will pay the taxes to facilitate the growth)*

*(This bond between the citizens and the state has been wonderfully encarved in the Vijaynagar Empire)*

- *All governments depend on finance, and hence great attention is paid to it.*
- *The sources of revenue and it may be classified under the following heads.*
  - ❖ *Land tax*
  - ❖ *Property tax*
  - ❖ *Commercial tax*
  - ❖ *Profession tax*
  - ❖ *Industries tax*
  - ❖ *Social and communal taxes.*
  - ❖ *Military contribution*
  - ❖ *. Judicial fines and similar income and*
  - ❖ *Miscellaneous source of revenue.*

*(Nuniz said The duties in the land being are very great, since nothing comes through the gates that does not pay duty, even men and women as well as head loads of the merchandise.)*

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## COMMERCIAL TAX:

- *Large share of the state revenue was contributed by the duties under trade and commercial transactions.*
- *multiplicity of taxes Levied on the article of merchandise brought enormous revenues to the government which helps in the maintenance of state.*

## MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS

*For the proper maintenance of the army and the forts in the Empire a few taxes were collected from the people.*

## JUDICIAL INCOMES AND FINES

- *The judicial department of the government got good revenues from the state.*
- *Fines were impose for false, annoyances, theft, adultery, injustice et cetera.*
- *Village administered at the town level and ensuring criminal free state.*

## METHOD OF COLLECTION

- *The government adopted different methods for the collection of taxes.*
- *The first was the one according to which the government appointed its own officers for the collection of the state to the revenues.*
- *The second was the farming system according to which the taxes from a particular area were farmed out to the highest bidder.*
- *A method slightly different from the second was the one where the government dealt with the local assemblies with regard to the collection of taxes.*

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# COINS MEASURES AND WEIGHTS

*(Condition of a country is generally depicted in its currency system.)*



- *With the foundation of the Vijaynagar Empire the currency system in South India became well regulated*
- *According to Nicole DeConti says that in the region about Vijay Nagar:-*
  - ❖ *gold work to do a certain weight.*
  - ❖ *In some parts pieces of iron work into needles were used as currency*
  - ❖ *while in the other stores, called the cat eyes were used as the media of exchange.*
- *It is the theory of modern economics that only a rich country can afford to have a gold currency and that such currency cannot circulate in India and we of the general poverty of the people but it deserves to be noted in the Vijaynagar Empire currency system.*
- *Besides these claims the currency is a foreign countries were also in circulation in the Empire, particularly in the places where the foreign merchants had settled.*

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*(Varthema Also observed that The ruler of the Vijaynagar was the richest king he had ever heard spoken)*

- *There is evident evidence to show that the prices of the articles were very low in the Vijaynagar Empire. Even in the middle of the 14th century Vijaynagar had won a name as a rich country well supplied with all good things.*
- *Paes also bears testimony to the cheapness of articles in the Vijaynagar. He describes it as a best provided city in the world.*





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# STATE AND ECONOMIC WELL BEING

## CHARITY AND FAMINE RELIEF

- *Important duty of the state is to hence the economic well-being of the people.*
- *Religious sentiment usually played a notable part in the organisation of poor relief and also the organisation of charitable works was considered as an act of merit.*
- *Even in the ordinary times charitable works were undertaken*
- *Empire organise charity include grants, gifts, group of Brahman brought together the organised effort , provision of water shed, water troughs for animals.*
- *Temples maintain schools and hospitals and feed school children and give relief to sufferings*
- *All the institutions at that time came together for relief.*
- *Private body or agencies that undertook relief work during hard times may be made of example*
- *To make gifts to Brahma is considered as an act of great merit.*
- *So much Sanctity was attached to the act of charity that many people made provision for affording relief to the needy.*

## STANDARD OF LIFE

*This content is largely drawn from the writings of the foreign travellers visited the country at different points of time. The*

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*standard of living among the nobles and common people may be examined from the three aspects of the culture*

## **HOUSING**

- *Barbosa said Vijaynagar empire had luxurious palaces with many well-built and enclosed courts and open spaces and water tanks in great numbers.*
- *Abdur Razak mention the “sort of Bazar “ which was more than hundred yards long and 20 broad on both sides of which were houses and forecourts and said that houses at Bidrur looked like palaces.*
- *Paes says that there were 100,000 dwelling houses at the Vijay Nagar, old one storeyed and flat roof for each of which there was the surrounding wall.*

## **FOOD**

- *We get curious list of the dietary of the Vijaynagar people.*
- *Meat was largely used by all classes of people except Brahmins and the flesh of sheep, goats, fowls and birds like partridges, etc. also used by some classes of people*
- *Fruits such as oranges, lemons, citrons, dates, , melons, fresh and dried and many other were used by the middle class people.*
- *Reflects the richness and the food in the Empire*
- *Daily diet of the people butter was used on a large scale which was mixed with honey, rice, milk, sugar, dishes or fruits etc.*

## **DRESS**

- *Foreign travellers regarding the nakedness of the common people have to be accepted only with some reservation.*
- *That is the openness of Indian society*
- *The insufficiency of the clothing was not exactly due to poverty, but according to the climate of the country is such as could not allow the use of Much dress.*

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## CONCLUDING REMARKS:

*ANCIENT India has the capability to drive Modern BHARAT.*

*Vijaynagar Empire indicates strong sense of history and a civilisational idea of India*

*(Now again in 21st century, India was turning back to the clock, reclaiming their lost glory, reclaiming their civilisational glory and coming back to the norm where they led the world and come out of the crisis of confidence.)*

- *we always believed in the concept of classes of people which means Incidents of birth had no relevance in Indian history.*
- *When Rest of the world was busy in Religious wars , India believe In inclusiveness not imposition. India don't believe in imposition, but believe on shared culture share prosperity and shared value*
- *Vijaynagar Empire gives a vision of women empowerment by making them self independent besides doing household works.*
- *Industrial organisation of the country in Vijaynagar period was so widespread and the products were made in such evidence that the country was a whole self sufficient*
- *The wealth of the south Indian temple was a Great wonder to the foreign travellers that came to the country . Barbosa, Malik kafur struck by the wealth of the south Indian temples*

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After Reading the book certain traits of “Bharat Varsha” has been clearly reflected, which shows civilised, culture and organised we were:

- *Vijaynagar Empire was always been accommodative, adaptive of mutual coexistence and fostering respect for each other. India believes in inclusive leadership which respect all faiths, all sects, all believe system and which allowed them to prosperous.*
- *Inclusivity is at the heart of Indian civilisation value*
- *Indian way is enlightening the world with Ancient knowledge and wisdom bout economics, science, health, Ayurveda, yoga, environment and taking everyone along.*
- *The Society of Vijaynagar Empire was guided by Dharma: A set of universal values applicable equally to the rulers and the ruled.*
- *ANCIENT India has the capability to drive Modern BHARAT.*
- *No civilisation has accorded so much divinity to the individual as India has.*

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*Inspired by Gurudev...*

*Sources:*

*The culture book (Economic life of  
Vijaynagar Empire)*

*India@2030*

*India way*

*Third way*

*Class notes*