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Religion And Medical Service Under Bahamani Kingdom

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Abstract:

The bulk of the population of Bahamani Deccan was Hindu with a sprinkling of Hindu descendents sects like the Lingayats, the Mahanubhavas and the Jains. In Konkan the strip north of Chaui was settled from times immemorial by a colony of Jews who had become like children of the soil. Like the Arabs and later Muslim settlers of this area these Jews had enjoyed since Yadava times complete freedom to follow their religion and observe their customary laws. This community is known to us as their mother tongue, using Hebrew for religious purposes. From the inscriptional data available the inference that the though Arabic was of course their language. For all religious pruposes missionary found at Thana a colony of Nestorian Christians who had settled there well before his time. In this regard present article deals with the status of religion under Bahamani and Adil Shahi Kingdom.

KEY WORDS:

Religion, Bahamani Kingdom, Sacred Places.

INTRODUCTION :

The religious condition of the Hindus from 1347 to 1526 CE. is one long history of religious movement and reform. The movement received a strong stimulus when the Muslims setteled down and established the Bahamani Empire. An organized government gave an organized push to its Islamic ideals, which as a result accelerated social awakening among the Hindus. There were huge waves in the stagnant ocean of Hindu society and “Gems of purest ray serene” in the shape of a Ramanand, a Namdev and a Tukaram emerged. Ranade summaries the changing social condition thus;- “The worshippers of Dattatreya often clothed their God in the garb of a Mohamedan Faqir.

This same influence was at work with greater effort on the popular mind in Maharashtra, where preachers both Brahamins and non-Brahmins were calling the people to identify Ram with Rahim and ensure their freedom from the bonds of formal ritualism and caste distinctions and unite in common love of man and faith in God. In this context present study deals with religious harmony with medical service.

RELIGION AND MEDICAL SERVICE :

‘Alau’ d-din Ahmad II deserves spcial mention. He established a hospital at Bidar and endowed it with some village the revenues of which were to be utilized for providing food to the patients. Both Hindu and Muslim physicians were appointed to look after this hospital. It is evident that this hospital catered for patients of all communities. ‘Alau’ d-din came very close to his Hindu subjects and was comforted in his

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last illness by the sage of Gangapur. The Gurucharitra eulogizes the sultan as one who though “without caste” was a large-hearted ruler who showered generosity on his people without distinction of caste or creed. He evinced devout attitude towards the Brahmins. But this liberal and sympathetic attitude of the sultan, the Gurucharitra tells us, caused a flutter in the devotees of orthodoxy. Some of the Shaiks and Ulemas at the royal court detested this fraternizing with non Muslims and some of the reactionary Brahmins were distressed that their brethren should discuss the sacred Vedas and other Hindu religious texts with a person who though a king was of “no caste”. Also the Hindu in general and the Brahmins in particular were appalled by the “Cow killing” practices for the ruling class and their occasional iconoclastic indulgences.

The Bahamanis did not encourage casteism among the Hindus these divisions were unnatural and at any rate foreign and unknown to them. Islam, which had its basis in socialism, believed in one God it neither did nor recognize the Hindu concept of the logical contamination or the idea of superior birth from the sun or the moon or the head or foot of Brahma. Again Islam did not have an ordained priesthood or a hereditary class of Brahmins. To Muslims ittiqa or piety was the only basis of superiority. The Bahamanis who openly championed these Islamic ideals in the south helped to soften the rigidity of the caste system and indirectly gave an appreciable push to all the Hindu movement of social and religious reforms.

Besides the Brahmanical form of Hinduism and Deccan had other religious movements, which functioned within the framework of the Hindu fold. The most important of these was the Bhagwata cult of the Bhakti School of thought of the Warakris who were devotees of Vithoba (Vithala) the deity of Pandarapur. The deity was of Karnataka origin which had gripped the minds of the people even before the days of Janeshwara and whose devotees were spread all over Bahamani Deccan. In the later times, the mystic teaching of the Pandarpur School attracted to it even Muslims like Latif and Shaikh Muhammad, and Marathi literary evidence records the name of Muntoji Bahamani, perhaps a scion of the declining house of Bahamani, as being a follower of this School in the beginning of the sixteenth century³.

The religious life of the people of Bahamani Deccan centered round the temple mosques and various shrines. Every village had its patron deity and town and cities boasted of many temple dedicated to a god of the Hindu pantheon. Some places had acquired sanctity over the ages and had developed of learning, were well known kshetras (holy places) where pilgrims flocked from many places for a dip in the Godavari. Nasik had the additional attraction of being hallowed ground as the hero and deity Rama had sojourned there. The simhashta fair held once in twelve years at Nasik and Trimabak drew the devout from far and near. There is no reason at all to suppose that this routine suffered any setback during our period. In the Maharashtra part of Bahamani Deccan there was amity between the worshippers of various deities⁴.

CONCLUSION :

The Sultans of Bahmani kingdom on many occasions stood in need of the help of the Hindus against their own rebellious nobles and administrators. Even if the Sultans of Bahamani were fanatical Muslims, they had to depend upon their Hindu subjects for certain purposes and hence arose the necessity of reconciling them instead of wholesale persecution. With the exception of a few, the other Sultans of Bahamani kingdom followed the policy of religious tolerance. Moreover, the intelligent and broad-minded Hindus and Muslims also realized the futility of the policy of war and persecution for all times.

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