

Mysore Palace Establishment Under Wodeyars and Its Financial Administration

Suma D¹, Shashidhar M²

¹Research Scholar, Department of History , Bangalore University , Bangalore, India

²Professor, Department of History, Bangalore University , Bangalore, India

ABSTRACT

The Mysore palace essentially refers to Ambavilas palace of Princely Mysore. Mysore was a modern state and model state under wodeyars. The rulers of Mysore during the period 1881 to 1947 are Wodeyars of Mysore. The city of Mysore was capital for the Wodeyars. At the time of settlement of 1868, there were 25 departments (establishments) in the palace which was reduced to 12 later. These departments comprised an entire administration on a small scale. These worked to fulfill the roles of maintenance of the Maharaja's house hold, performance of ritual in the palace, execution of certain traditional Kingly behavior of patronage, endowment and charity. It has departments like Avasarada Hobli, Maramath, Muzarai, Mothi Khana, Estates and Gardens, Games and Tigers Preserves Office, Dasara, etc. which has jointly and independently helped in palace general and financial admiration of the palace.

KEYWORDS: Mysore palace, palace establishments, Ambavilas, Avasarada hobli, Wodeyars, Maharaja of Mysore

I INTRODUCTION

Mysore palace, which is undoubtedly one of the most splendid palaces in India, was designed by British architect Henri Irwin. The construction of the new palace was started after the old one was destroyed by a fire in 1897. The Maharani, the then Regent Vani Vilasa Sannidhana, decided to build a new palace on the model and foundations of the old one. the construction was inaugurated in October 1897, only eight months after the fire. The new palace was to represent the second-largest princely state in India, therefore the scale and cost of the construction were inevitably extravagant. When the construction of the new palace was completed in 1912, the total cost reached Rs.4,417,913, which was nearly double the original estimate of Rs.2,500,000.⁴¹ The actual cost of construction was equal to nearly one quarter of the annual revenue of Mysore state. Additional work was carried out in the 1930s in order to enlarge the *sajje*. This added a much wider stage to the palace building, which unfortunately covered Irwin's elaborate façade. The expansion of the *sajje* clearly suggests that the palace needed a wider space in order to accommodate more participants in the durbar and to allow a larger number of spectators to witness it. The fort thus gradually transformed its function into that of a stand for viewing the rituals and ceremonies of a 'theatre state'. This shows how keen the Indian princes were to impress their people as well as the British with the extravagant display of rituals. However this might be overstated, since because the British undermined the central power of Indian kingship, Indian princes were arguably obliged to adapt and assert themselves more in the ritual domain (Dirks 1987: 384-397). The display of state rituals, such as Dasara, cannot therefore be simply considered as an assertion of king's authority. (Gell 1997)

II MYSORE PALACE ADMINISTRATION BY WODEYARS

The Maharajas also restored and glorified several temples in the city, often by adding splendid *goopuras* (towers) to the original structure. However, the restoration of temples in this period was a part of the traditional religious endowments by the king. Although the idea of *dharma* continued, these restorations were undertaken in an entirely different context during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. The cost of repairing the temples, which previously had been regarded as simply a part of the religious endowment to enable the temples to continue daily worship and occasional festivals, were for the first time regarded as necessary from an aesthetic point of view. In 1928, the state government directed an annual provision of Rs.20,000 and an additional Rs.10,000 for a period of five years for the construction and repair of Muzrai Institutions and buildings 'of architectural interest'. Out of Rs.30,000 allotted annually, Rs.2,000 was earmarked for disposal by the palace authorities for the execution of repairs required for Muzrai temples under their management. Prior to this Government order, the palace authorities complained that the amount of the annual Tasdik grant for the Palace Muzurai temples was fixed in 1899 and comprised of charges only for the establishment and expenses of daily worship and special worship, but did not include any of the sum required for repairing and keeping the structure in good condition.

III UNIVERSE: the mysore palace administration from 1881 to 1947.

IV RESEARCH DESIGN:

Since the study primarily focused on the financial administration of the Mysore palace for a specified period from 1881 to 1947 the descriptive research design was found appropriate. The pattern of financial administration of the Mysore palace under different administrative set up will be historical interpretation will be carried on on the topic based on the primary and secondary sources available .

V. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Collection of Information Before commencing actual fieldwork, the basic information from various sources including gazetteers, manuals, master plans, zoning regulations, traveler's opinion books and other heritage conservation books, guidelines, containing information about the architecture and history of the Mysore City and criteria for assessment of researching was gathered and documented. The literature and reports were collected from the University of Mysore and other libraries, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the Museums, Palace Achieves Mysore, Heritage Commissioner's office, Mysore Urban Development Authority, Mysore City Corporation, Department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage. Local experts, tourists, palace authorities, experts, Non-Governmental Organizations were consulted not only to gather information on the Heritage of Mysore but also to get required guidance and help.

VI THE PALACE ESTABLISHMENT:

The Palace establishment comprises of 26 departments in January 1919 . The functions of each palace departments in the Mysore palace in the early twentieth century are as below,

(1) Aramane Dafter Kachery. – The department kept the record of the genealogy of the Maharaja and also to control the stipends to all Rajabandhus (the Urs) and Musahabs (other special stipendiaries) and so on. This department was incorporated into the Palace Office in the early twentieth century.

(2) **Palace Treasury.** – At the time of the Palace settlement of 1868, all larger payments having been arranged for in the Government District Treasury in Mysore on the cheques of the officer in charge of the Palace duties, the Palace Treasury was then merged into the General Palace Office, and from which it was subsequently separated in 1898.

(3) **Modikhana.** – This department stored grain and other necessary articles of consumption in the royal household. In the reduction of establishments in 1868, the collection of all articles of ordinary consumption was arranged to be contracted for

by open competition and the work of preparation of the required articles and their delivery to the various departments was added to the General Palace Office. Later, to meet the growing demands, the Modikhana was made a distinct *Ilakha* (department). The number of articles falling under the contract system has been greatly simplified and reduced from twenty-one in 1904 to twelve in 1919.

(4) **Kille Kacheri (literary means fort office)** – As revised in 1868, it comprised the Palace Barr, the Artillery termed *Golandaz*, the Body Guard, and the English Band. The two latter were later separated from this department. The strength of the Kille Kacheri was 478 for the Palace Barr and twenty-five for the Artillery section.

(5) **The English Band.** – It was separated from the Kille Kacheri in 1903. The total strength was 100 in 1919.

(6) **Body Guard.** – Its separation from the Kille Kacheri took place in 1901. The strength then consisted of thirty-two besides the Commandant who was assisted by a *jamadar*, the number of horses was thirty. The strength of Body Guard was significantly increased and reached to 191 in 1919 and the number of horses was eighty-one.

(7) **Zillo Kacheri (literary means district office)** – The Zillo Kacheri is another semi-military department. It comprises two distinct sections; the *Rachewar* and the *Bhale Forces*. The former furnishes guards in the interior apartments of the Palace, the latter provides outside guards besides doing escort work, They are all provided with spears. *Rachewar Pahrās* are allowed only to some select *Rajabandhus* (the *Urs*) and also to the *Sri Parakala Matt* as marks of distinction. The number of establishments was 431 in 1919.

(8) **Chamundi Thotti.** – Formally known *NaamaThirthada Thotti*. It comprises, besides the Brahmin servants maintained for purposes of worship in the various shrines inside the Palace, and for the puja of royal family, a staff of *Vidwans*, including those that officiate as priests, *jotisyas* (astrologers), and *Rutwicks*. The *Vidwans* are of four class; 1. *Dharmadikaris* (who supervise the principal ceremonials, whose number was four in 1919), 2. *Mahavidwans*, 3. *Ordinary Vidwans*, and 4. *Maryada Vidwans*. All together numbered 169 in 1919. They represent various departments of Sanskrit learning such as *Tarka* (logic), *Vedantha* (religious philosophy), *Sahitya* (literature), *Alanlara* (rhetoric), *Vyakarana* (grammar), *Vydyā* (medicine) and the *Vidas*. The *sangitha* (music) *Vidwan* who formerly belonged to this department was transferred to the *Avasarada Hobli* (see (9)). Nominations to the posts of *Vidwans* were made on the score of merit, those who passed in the annual *vidwath* examination held in the *Maharaja's Sanskrit College*, Mysore being given preference, while hereditary tradition was also considered. The Palace encouraged the Sanskrit learning in the families of *Vidwans* and gave scholarships to the heirs of deceased *Vidwans*.

(9) **Avasarada Hobli** (literary means division of leisure). – *Harikars*, *Urbegs*, *kaTTigekaara* (door keepers in a palace), *chaukidaara* (a watchman), *baTTa* (praisers), native musicians know as

volagadawaroo and others who have duty in connection with the palace durbars, including palanquin bearers.

(10) Khas Samukha. – It was formerly known as the Samukhada Oolgi and represented in the early twentieth century by two separate departments: the one was termed the Khas Samukha and the other the Zenana Samukha. The Khas Samukha kept in its custody the Hasige Bokhas (bed section) where royal family's bedding, Gaddige Ammanararu is located in its premises where worship is performed by a class of Sivacharas (Lingayats) known as Tammadies.

(11) Zenana Samukha. – There were three different kinds of servants working in this department. 1. The Itti-Ulgi servants, who do miscellaneous work, 2. the Gollars who keep keys of the inner apartments and wait at doors and attend to some work in zenana, and 3. the Avvers, maid servants. The department works in three sections in the Palace known as the Amba Vilas, the Zenana Bagal, and the Vola-Bagal. In the Amba Vilas which is the oldest portion of the Palace, they maintained the accounts of jewellery, gold, silver, and other articles and of some costly clothes. In the Zenana Bagal section works near the adjoining apartment called Kannadi Thotti (courtyard of mirrors) which is the place used for ceremonials and worship during the Gauri, the Ganesha, and the Dasara festivals. Miscellaneous supplements required in the Zenana Samukha such as milk and other articles of consumption, were passed in after being examined and registered in this Bagal. The Vala Bagal (inner enclosure) was the place of residence of the maid-servants who were 156 in number in 1919. This department hold charge of the Maharaja's throne.

(12) Palace Stables. – The demand for Palace carriages used to be great not only for the use of royal family and some high status Urs, but also for the purposes connected with the distinguished guests of the Maharaja during his visits to Mysore. The number of houses in the Stables was 124 in 1919. The *pattadaku Dure* (state horse) which constitutes an emblem of royalty was looked after here.

(13) Gajasala Department. – This formerly formed a part of the Aswasala Department but was subsequently constituted into a separate minor Ilakha (department). It consisted of following four branches: 1. The Gadikhana, where bullock coaches were kept. 2. The Peelkhana, whose charge was to look after elephants, including a *pattada-aane* (the state elephant). The number of elephants was sixteen in 1919. 3. The Sutherkhana, where they kept camels, whose number was twenty-four in 1919. 4. The Fuel Depot. since 1915, the palace had been directly arranging for the supply and distribution of fuel required for palace purposes. Dry wood was collected and imported from the various palace kavals and gardens.

(14) The Karohatti Department. – The Karohatti Department retained cows and buffaloes required mostly for the supply of pure milk, curd, and butter to the inner apartments in the Palace. Their number including calves and heifers was 244 in 1919.

(15) Palace Estates and Gardens. – Besides the cattle in the Karohatti, there were other herds of cattle grouped in divisions called *serve*s grazing in the Palace kavals. A department under the designation of the Palace Estates and Gardens was formed in 1914. They had six serves for cattle, comprising 1,437 head of cattle in 1919. The kavals, forty-five in number, were distributed in the Taluks of Mysore, Srirangapatna, Nanjangud, Chamarajanagara, Heggadadevankote, Hunsur, Malavalli, Nagamangala, Krishnarajapeta, Holenarasipur, and Arakalgude. In the early twentieth century, they also started a nursery where many of the plants necessary for use in the Gardens and Chamans were propagated. The extensive garden known as Madhuvana with its appanage Chaman Patti lying below the Doddalere tank next to the fort had been converted into an Orchard. The annual yield from Gardens, Chamans, Kavals and agricultural lands as well as the cattle sold amounted to about Rs. 17,000- in the early twentieth century.

- (16) Chamundi Gymkhana Grounds.** – The polo grounds and the race course, formerly under the control of the stewards of Mysore Races were transferred to the charge of the Huzur Kamdar in July 1914 who was then also in charge of the Chamundi Gymkhana grounds. Facilities for indoor and outdoor games were available. Among the games, lawn tennis, badminton, golf and cricket were popular.
- (17) The Jamanmohan Palace Chitrasala.** – The Maharaja's art collection such as paintings and sculptures, as well as some 'curious of interest', were arranged and kept in the Chitrasala (art gallery).
- (18) The Maramath Department.** – The Palace's public work department which was in charge of repairs, construction of buildings related to the Palace, and preparing of rockets and other fireworks.
- (19) The Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School.** – The Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School was established in November 1892 for the benefit of the Urs boys in the city and rural areas.
- (20) The Vani Vilas Girls School.** – The Vani Vilas Girls School was opened in April 1913 in view of providing means of suitable instruction to the girls of the royal household and the Urs community.
- (21) Palace Dispensary.** – In the settlement of 1868, the hospital and the English school, which Krishnaraja Wodeyar III maintained at palace expense, were the dispensary in the city, the number of staff was increased. The cost of the dispensary was partly paid by the state government and partly by the palace.
- (22) Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Garden.** – Formerly in the grounds adjoining the Summer Palace towards the south some aquatic birds, two tigers, and a bear were kept in cages. To these were added a zebra and a baboon from Mr. Frank Brown's Circus of Bombay in 1892 and this constituted the nucleus of the Palace zoo. In 1919, the zoo had several species of animals; they comprised 157 in mammals, 287 in birds, 18 in reptiles. The zoo played also an important role in gift-exchange between colonies and metropole. Among those presentations made from the Palace zoo, were a pair of Mysore tigers presented to the Queen Empress Victoria in 1899 and female elephants 'Sundari' and 'Alexandra' sent to the Zoological Societies of Ireland and Scotland respectively in 1913 and 1914.
- (23) Palace Electrical Department.** – On the occasion of the marriage of Chamarajendra Wodeyar in 1878, a gas engine was purchased and made to put up twelve electric lamps in the Palace yard in the fort. In 1887, electric lights were installed in the Palace by an engineer from England. Forty telephone lines were maintained by this department in 1910's.
- (24) The Garage.** – The first motor car which came to Mysore in 1903 was a single cylinder Peugeot two-seater car. It was purchased by Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV in the previous year in Delhi. The number of cars was increased and reached forty-three cars besides one government car and two others by 1919.
- (25) The Palace Muzrai.** – It consisted of several religious institutions under the palace management. During the re-organization in October 1917, the cost of the Maharaja's Sanskrit College, Mysore, was transferred to the state government, the management of thereof however remained with the palace show that they had three main roles: maintenance of the Maharaja's household, performance of rituals in the palace, and execution of certain traditional kingly behaviors, particularly patronage, endowment, and charity. These roles overlapped, for example, semi-military departments concerned themselves not only with escort and guard duties but also with participating in public processions during the Dasara festival and the Maharaja's birthday celebration in which they became a part of the representation of kingliness. In other words, their symbolic presence was as important as their pragmatic functions. Performance of rituals was therefore a very central function of the palace, but it was not simply to decorate and dramatise the status and authority of the Maharaja himself, but also to be lent out as a sign of honour (*maryaade*, or *mariyaade*) to royals, religious leaders (*gurus*) and influential individuals. The word *maryaade* means 'the

bounds of morality or propriety, moral law, established rule or custom, rule of decorum or decency, propriety of conduct, reverential demeanour, respect, civility'. *Maryaade* is a widely used word in people's everyday life in contemporary Karnataka and its meaning is highly equivocal. People, and especially women according to observation made by several historians, use this word to describe someone's qualities or a manner of treating people which cannot be converted into any purely material equivalent subsistence, such as money or goods, or even social prestige in a conventional sense. A poor and powerless man or woman can, therefore, become a man/woman of *maryaade* if he/she has acquired a high moral standard, and people should treat him/her with *maryaade*. By contrast with the general use of the word, *maryaade* given by the palace is a more crude material representation which symbolises a recognition of one's status by the superior authority and does not necessarily require any moral quality or conduct of a person. At the same time as there are seemingly different types of *maryaades* (one is highly dependant on personal quality and conduct, and another a mere decorative addition to one's already established status), they both share the idea that both high moral standard and high social status must be recognised in public by high authority; respect has to come from above. Another important aspect of the idea of honour is that receiving honour does not necessarily remain an individual matter but also can be extended to the recognition of a social group or a family. If a *guru* was honoured by a superior authority, it would mean that all of his devotees were equally recognised as a respectable group. If the palace sent an elephant to the funeral ceremony of a head of one Urs clan, people would consider that all members of this clan had been so honoured by the Maharaja. Another function of the palace as an agent of the king, ie., patronage, endowment, and charity, was nothing but execution of *raajadharmā*. The classical texts define the king's duty (*dharma*) as protection of his subjects. The relationship between the king and his subject is interdependent thus: not only does the wellbeing of his subjects depend on the king, the king's wellbeing also depends on his subjects (Lingat, 1973:211-12). Royal protection tends, however, to be generous towards Brahmins who are to guide others, including kings, in their duties (*ibid.*: 216, 218). The huge endowment made by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in the first half of the nineteenth century towards construction and restoration of temples and *agrahaaras* (Brahmin settlements), and generous patronage of 'traditional cultures' throughout in the period

VII DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Following the British take over of the state administration in 1831, the Mysore Maharajas could not hold full administrative power over their territories, even after the 'Rendition of Power' in 1881. Although the state was run under the name of the Maharaja during British commissioner's rule (1831-1881) and he remained as the head of the state during subsequent indirect rule (1881-1947), the real administrative decision-making was concentrated in the hand of the Diwan. The Maharajas were made 'pensioners' with a share of state revenue and practically removed from the state administration

The condition of the Palace establishments in 1868 was described by Bowring, in the following way;

"At the time of His Highness' death, the various departments were in a most unsatisfactory condition, and many abuses had crept in which it was impossible to remedy, as he persistently refused to admit any interference in the affairs of the palace, clinging with tenacity to the small amount of authority thus left to him."

The Historian S. Chandrasekhar argues that the Diwan's 'one man rule' was established by the first two Diwans, Rangacharlu (1881-1883) and Seshadri Iyer (1883-1901) (Chandrasekhar 1985: 7, 19-24). The transfer of powers to the Diwan was also a general British policy in other princely states (cf. Dirks 1987: 331) Dasara was one ritual through which a dynamic relationship between the king and people was periodically evoked, regulated, and reassessed.

The finance is the lifeblood of all monetised socio – economic formations ranging from simple nuclear family to complex national and international organisations. Financial system and its operation is an important aspect of public administration. Financial administration relates to the system which generates, regulates and distributes monetary resources needed for the sustenance and growth of organisation. It is one of the potent instruments for concretising the objectives of administration and the aspirations of the people.

The period under study circa (1881 to 1947 A.D.) was the period of conservation, preservation and creativeness and peak period of administration of the Mysore Maharajas rule. Rulers like Chamarajendra Wodeyar X, Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar were known as farsighted, responsible and intellectual rulers besides being liberal and able administrators. These rulers had broad vision of development which included welfare of the common people and projects of public utility. They were highly devoted to the welfare of their subjects. The welfare measures carried out during their tenure made Mysore a successful state of imperial India. The efficient Diwans and the other officers who were given ample freedom and power translated the welfare vision into reality. Mysore as a modern and model state achieved allround progress.

Considering the population of Mysore city was 60,312 in the Census of 1871, the palace was the very centre of their every day life. Because of the lack of documentation about the palace in the mid-nineteenth century, we again have to rely on British official documents which were of course written purely from a colonial and administrative point of view. Most studies on the modern history of the Mysore princely state, although there are few of them, have largely concentrated on the political and economic history of the state administration (Shama Rao 1936, Hettne 1978, Manor 1975, 1978). The historical antecedents of the financial administration of the princely Mysore state specifically limited to the historical details of financial administration of the palace while. This type of history was inevitably limited to narratives of the personages 'high-politics'

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