

CHAPTER II

Solapur Under the Pre-Satvahana & Satvahana Period

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No archaeological excavation has yet been undertaken anywhere in the Solapur district. So we have no definite knowledge of the pre-historical and post-historical periods of Solapur history. But the excavations carried out¹ by Archaeological Department of the State Government, Deccan College Research Institute of Pune,² at Jorwe and Nevasa in the adjoining district of Ahmednagar, provides much information about these periods which will be equally true in respect of the Solapur district.³ The tools and weapons such as cleavers and flakes are found at the foothills of Konkan and on the river banks of Godavari, Pravara, Bhima, Mula and Tapi, which has proved the existence of man during Paleolithic period in these regions. All these rivers then flowed in comparatively wider and higher bed. The climate was initially hotter than today, it gradually became more dry.

In the gravels of the Godavari, Pravara, Tapi, and its tributaries explorer have received the tools which would prove that the first appearance of man in Maharashtra was not earlier than the middle Paleolithic period (25000 B.C.) (Sankalia 1946, 1982, 1956, Joshi 1955, Todd 1939, and IAD 1956-59). We have no idea how this man looked and from where he came. The only artifacts which have survived are his stone tools. However since highly mineralized bones and wood have been discovered from the Deccan, it is possible that in future skeletal remains of man will be found. Discoveries of which will give a fuller picture of early man and the environment. Though the material is stone its

¹ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District Gazetteer, (Second Ed., 1977). p.25.

² Basavaraja K.R., History and culture of Karnatka. (Dharwad, 1984). p.2.

³ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District Gazetteer, (Second Ed., 1977). p.35.

nature differs according to the region. The tools are of basalt material but generally called basalt material but generally called Dolomite which were used by man in the Deccan. In this period man was a nomad and a hunter and probably used the bow and arrows or spears tipped with stone tools, hand axes, cleavers scrapers, discoids, choppers etc. as tools. The extensive survey in Solapur district might bring into light the existence of man during this time in Solapur district too.⁴

Chalcolithic period (1500 B.C. to 500 B.C.) is marked by refined microlithics. Trapeze lunettes hand axe and two edged blades of chert and chalcedony in association with an ochre washed orange coloured pottery occasionally painted with red or black bands. These are the characteristic features of this period brought to light during excavations at Jorwe Nevasa⁵ and other places.

The earliest habitations of the people in this period must have been in the Pravara and Godavari river valley. The thick forests must have covered them were first cut down with their stone and copper tools. The elevated sites on the banks of rivers were chosen for settlement. Each settlement must have consisted of about 50 to 100 huts. The huts were small measuring about ten feet by nine feet and were either rectangular or round. They were constructed with wooden posts, the walls being of mud and the roof of bamboo were furnished with large and small storage, jars, bowls and vessels (*Vatis*.) Their red surface was painted in black with geometric figures of animals. Excavations at Nevasa 1959-60 indicate that these people knew cotton and silk but spun them on some cotton spinning appliance and used the thread for stringing copper bead, necklaces. One of such

⁴ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District Gazetteer, (Second Ed., 1977). p.6.

⁵ Ojha R.P., Bronze and copper age., p.63.

necklaces was found round the neck of a chief buried in urn. The presence of oil globules in the material found surrounding the string indicates the use of oil for anointing the human body during life and after death.⁶ Their tools were made of dolomite or copper. The variety of tools found in two region proved that the hunting and animal grazing formed their main occupations.

They buried their dead within their house floor or outside. The children were buried in wide mouthed jars. The adults were buried full length in a large jar. The dead were provided with bowls, spouted vessels and necklaces of copper and carnelian.⁷

Economically these people were in a pastoral cum hunting cum agricultural stage and lived in small village on river banks. They still used stone for various purposes. The use of copper being rare. This kind of life continued until it was changed by a fresh influx of people with a knowledge of iron, agriculture and town planning in about the 4th century B.C.

The whole area south of the Vindhyas was covered with thick vegetation before the penetration of the Aryas into this region. Agastya is considered to be the first Arya to have crossed the Vindhyas and established his residence on the bank of the Godavari. This event preserved in the mythical story according to Vindhya bent before his guru Agastya when the latter approached him. The sage asked the mountain to remain in the same position until he returned. However Agastya never came back. Several other sages are said to have followed this saint and to have established their hermitages in different parts

⁶ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District Gazetteer, (Second Ed., 1977). pp.35-36.

⁷ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: History Part I Ancient Period, 1967, p9..

of the south. The cluster of hermitages established on the bank of the Godavari was called *Janasthana* to distinguish it from the original inhabitants inhabiting the region around the bank of the Godavari and the area covering the present Solapur district. There inhabitants were called *Raksas* in the Ramayana and they constantly harassed the Aryas.⁸ With the passage of time, circumstances changed and a kingdom was founded in this region by king Vidarbha, the son of Rishabhadeva who came to be called Vidarbha after him. The present Marathawada formed a part of this kingdom as its southern parts extended upto banks of the Godavari. The capital of the kingdom of Vidarbha was Kundinapura.⁹ Janasthana and Parichavati were situated on the fringe of the great forest called *Dandakaranya*. The whole country was ruled by king Danda was turned into a forest which came to be known as *Dandakaranya* after king Danda. In the *Uttaramacharita Bhavabhuti* tells us that the *Dandanka* forest extended southward from this place upto *Janasthana* on the Godavari.¹⁰ There were several territories in the central parts of the Deccan which were known by different names. Mulaka was the name of region to the north of the Godavari which is included at present in the Aurangabad district mulka and its capital *Prathishthana* are referred to in Pali literature.¹¹ *Rishika* country, now called *Kandesh* extended to the north of Malwa. To the east of *Rishika* was Vidarbha. Asmaka (*Pali Assaka*) country extended along the southern bank of the Godavari which extended for to the south in Ahmednagar and Bhir districts. Kuntala was probably included big country called western Maharashtra including Satara and Solapur district.¹²

⁸ Muirs: Original Sanskrit texts, Vol. V. Second Ed. p.19

⁹ Aurangabad District Gazetteer, p.30.

¹⁰ Muirs: Original Sanskrit texts, Vol. V, Second Ed. p.19.

¹¹ Yazdani G. The early History of the Deccan, p.6. Part I - VI. Andhra Pradesh, 1960.

¹² Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District Gazetteer. (Second Ed., 1977). p.37.

THE MAURYAS PERIOD:

It is well known that Asoka Mauryas empire extended as far south as the district of Chitradurga in Karnataka, for Ashoka's minor rock edicts have been found in Raichur, at Maski, Bellary and Chitradurg district in Karnataka.¹³ We may therefore safely say that this region formed a part of Ashoka's empire. Since Asoka himself is not known to have made any conquest in south India. It is very likely that he inherited this vast territory from his father Bindusara. It may be of interest in this connection to note that a tradition is preserved in some later inscriptions of Karnataka according to which Kuntala was ruled over by the Nand king. An account of truth is not altogether ruled out in this statement.

No Ashoka's inscription is discovered so far in the Solapur district itself. It may however, be pointed out that one of the edicts of this great king is found at Devtek in Chanda district which has a part of Vidarbha. Issued in the 14th regional year of the king. It forbids the capture and killing animals in his kingdom. The 5th and 13th rock edicts of the same king mention the *Petenikas*. Many scholars have suggested that these *Petenikas* no other than the residents of *Pratishtana*. The *Rashtrikas* are known to have ruled as Maharathis and Bhojas were ruling over Vidarbha. Minor edicts of Asoka have been discovered at Erragudi and Rajala Mandagiri Karmul district which leave no doubt that the Kuntala country comprising the Solapur district was included in the empire of Ashoka.¹⁴

Within fifty years after the death of Asoka the Maurya empire met its doom at the hands of Pushyamitra the founder of the Sunga dynasty about 185 B.C. The events that

¹³ Basavaraja K.R., History, Culture of Karnataka, Dharwad. 1984., p.27.

¹⁴ Mirashi V.V. Studies in Indology Vol I., Nagpur, 1960, p.109.

occurred during the days of the Sungas are recorded to some extent in one of Kalidasa's plays, namely, *Malavikagnimitra*.¹⁵ About the time of the decline of Maurya empire, the province of Vidarbha had begun to rise in power. Yaganasena was now its ruler, Madhavasena the cousin of Yujanasena, was also claimant to the throne of Vidarbha. Yajnasena put Madhavasena behind the bars. The latter's sister however managed to escape to Malwa which was then governed by Agnimitra Sunga and got admission in Agnimitra's harem. Agnimitra who stood by the side of Madhavasena sent his army against Yajnasena and successfully defeated the army of Vidarbha.

SOLAPUR UNDER THE SATAVAHANAS:

The Satavahanas for the first time welded the Deccan into a powerful state and gave a cohesion and integrity to its history. The Deccan prospered immensely under their strong rule.¹⁶ The Satavahana empire in the Deccan was covered with a large number of petty kingdoms.

There are no direct evidences of the Satavahana rule in Solapur district. But there is no doubt that it was a part of the Satavahana kingdom. The Maharashtra region to the west of the area and the Andhra region of the east were the strongholds of the Satavahanas and their rule extended further south. The Satavahana dynasty named after its founder king Satavahana rose to power with its capital at *Pratishthana* (Paithan) *Pratisthan* and Ter the important towns during the Satavahana period were just near to Solapur district. The trading route from Ter to Kalyan might be crossing the Solapur

¹⁵ Yazadani G.: The early history of Deccan Andhra Pradesh, Part I-VI, 1960, p.71.

¹⁶ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: History Part I. Ancient Period, p.57.

district so it proved that Solapur was under the control of Satavahana. The rulers formed matrimonial alliances with the local rulers called Marathies. Although the Satavahanas are called Andhras in the puranas.¹⁷ It is definite that they rose to power in western Maharashtra. Their earliest inscriptions are found in the caves at Nasik. The earliest coins of the dynasty issued by king Satavahana are also later than Satavahana king extended the rule to Andhra region as shown by their inscription and coins. They are called Andhras in the *puranas* evidently because at the time of the compilation of the *puranas*, they were ruling Andhra country.

The Satavahanas established their power about half a century before the final disappearance of the Mauryan empire. This was also the earliest and the largest south Indian empire. The Satavahanas empire endured for 460 years in the unbroken continuity both in the dynastic line and administrative traditions. As its greatest extent the Satavahana empire covered the whole of the Deccan.¹⁸

The origin of the Satavahana dynasty has not yet been definitely ascertained but the most likely theory is that they were natives of the Adoni country (Karnataka). Taking advantage of the decline of the Maurya empire, they began to extend their boundaries and by the middle of the first century B.C. They had achieved rapid expansion northward and eastward. Their rule lasted for nearly three hundred years although for a short period they were deprived of their northwest possessions by the invasions of the Sakas. It is to be noted that the Sakas entered in the Deccan by north-west route.¹⁹

¹⁷ Mirashi V.V.: Studies in Indology, Nagpur, 1962, Vol-VIII, p.46.

¹⁸ Sastri N. A History of South India, Oxford, 1914, p.92.

¹⁹ Deleury G.A.: The cult of Vithobha, Poona, 1960, p.25.

The Satavahanas were the first full fledged emperors of the Maharashtra region. There is no unanimity regarding the original home of the Satavahanas, the beginning of their regime, the number of rulers in the dynasty, their caste and their nomenclature. It is generally believed that they possibly originated in Maharashtra, ruled from about the second century B.C. to about third century A.D., called themselves Brahmins, about 30 kings ruled in the dynasty and that their empire comprised a major portion of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and part of Madhya Pradesh.

The Satavahana rose to power in the western Deccan in the region round about position (*Pratishthana*) traditionally associated with them and thence spread their empire in all directions. In the first instance they conquered north and south Maharashtra, eastern and western Maharashtra and what is now Madhya Pradesh.²⁰

The archaeological, literary inscriptional and numismatic date pertaining to the period of the Satavahana rule in Maharashtra available in a fairly abundant measure, major sites like Paithan, Nasik, Nevasa, Kolhapur, Prakash, Kaundinyapur, Ter etc. have yielded in their excavation dates pertaining to the material culture of the times.

The first Satavahana king that appears in the puranas is not Satavahana, but Simuka.²¹ Simuka was the founder of the Satavahana dynasty. He ruled as a Mauryan tributary for twenty two years from 235 to 212 B.C. His capital was Paithan on the bank of river Godavari, near Aurangabad. The dominion of Simuka probably comprised Pune, Nasik, Ahmednagar and Aurangabad district.²² He was succeeded by Krishna. He was

²⁰ Sastry N.: A History of South India, Madras, 1970, p.93.

²¹ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: History part I. Ancient Period, p.75.

²² Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur district, p.38.

brother of Simukas. Satakarni I was the next ruler of the dynasty. He is known from a mutilated relief sculpture in a Nanaghat cave. Naganika was his queen and a relief statue of hers is also represented in the same cave.²³ He was probably the same ruler during whose reign Kharvela of Kalinga sent an army against Vidarbha. Satakarni performed the *Rajasya* and *Ashwamedha* as also several *Srauta* sacrifices, perhaps to commemorate his victories in the Deccan. Satakarni was followed by his son Vedeshi and a number of other princes among whom only one name and that of Hala stands out.

Hala flourished in the first century A.D. and was the reputed author of the *Gathasaptashati*. A later tradition as known to *Rajasukhara* asserted that the Satavahanas had issued a regulation that *Prakrit* alone should be used in their court. Hala was the 17th king. As he himself was poet of distinction he encouraged literary activities in his empire.²⁴

The expansion of the Satavahana power received a check about a century later. The adversaries whose onslaught brought about this calamity were the *Sakas*, the foreign tribes of Scythians. The *Sakas* gathered strength and extended their sway over northern Maharashtra known as Kathiwar, Malwas and southern Rajaputana. Thus the rise of the *Saka* rule caused a temporary eclipse of the Satavahana power when its members continued their humbel existence in obscurity. The four immediate successors of Hala had short reigns, an indication of a troubled times caused by the *Sakas*.

²³ Dr. Morevanchikar R.S.: Dakshin Kashi Paithan, Poona, 1987. (Marathi), p.21

²⁴ Dr. Morevanchikar R.S.: Satavahana Kaline Maharashtra (Aurangabad, 1963) p.58.

GAUTAMIPUTRA SATAKARNI:

Gautamiputra: there is no unanimous opinion among scholars about his time. He was the most famous among the Satavahana kings. Before he came to throne, the Pallavas who had become powerful in the north occupied some frontier territories in the Satavahana kingdom. Gautamiputra Satakarni defeated Nahapana. Then the Satavahana kingdom attained its old glory. An inscription by his mother Gautami Balashri has been found near Nasik.²⁵ It is about his victories. It describes him as a conqueror of Shaka Yavana and Pallavas. The boundaries of the territory under his direct control extended from the river Krishna in south of Malwa and Kathewad in north and also from Bihar in east to Konkan in west. He described himself as the lord of the Vindhya, Rikshavat, Parisatra, Sahya Mahendra and other mountain ranges encircling the peninsula of south India. He took up the title of *Trisamudra - toya - Pita - Vahana*.²⁶ which means one whose horses drink the waters of the three seas in the east west and south namely, the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian sea and the Indian ocean. From all this it appears Solapur was a part of the Satavahana empire during the period. His full name was Gotamiputra Yajnasri Satakarni. Risutokarni among the coins found at Kolhapur some copies of the matsya puran assign him twenty nine years and the Vayu puran twenty nine while the Brahmanda allows him nineteen. Probably his reign in Maharashtra was for eighteen or nineteen years.²⁷ Among the various successors of Gautamiputra, the most noteworthy was Yajnasri Satakarni who ruled over a large kingdom extending to Konkan in the west to

²⁵ Yazdani G.: The Early History of the Deccan, Part I-VI, Andhra Pradesh, 1960, p.98.

²⁶ Sasti N. Comprehensive History of South India, From Pre-Historic times to the fall of Vijayanagar. Vol. II, Oxford, 1953, p.312.

²⁷ Bhandarkar R.G., Early History of the Deccan, Calcutta, 1957, pp.44-45.

Andhradesh in the east. However, within fifty years after Yajna Shri Satakarni the rule of the Satavahanas came to an end.

The excavation at Nevasa, Nasik, Ter Paithan, Bahal, Prakash, Sopara etc. give us an idea of the material cultural, social religious and economic conditions of the Satavahana times.²⁸

SOCIAL CONDITIONS:

Varna Vyavastha or caste system was a salient feature of Hindu society since early times. It continued to be so during Satavahana period. The four main castes, *Brahmana*, *Ksatriyas*, *Vaisyas* and *Sudras* are frequently referred to in the records. It is interesting to note that Buddhist laymen continued their loyalty to the caste expressly describes himself as a Brahman. Brahmins occupied a prominent position in the religious sphere. They were the priests of the community, took a prominent part in its religious life. They officiated at the various sacrifices and got handsome honoraria especially from the richer and ruling classes. Some Brahmins however exchanged the sacrificial ladle for the butter axe. The Sunga and the Satavahanas were Brahmins, who had trespassed upon the sphere and domain of the *Ksatriyas*.

Ksatriyas were the traditional profession of arms and distinguished themselves as generals and administrators. We may well suppose that the Marathas and *Mahabhojas*, *Mahasenapatis*, *Mahamantra* and *Amatyas* who figure so prominently in the records of

²⁸ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra, Solapur District, p.39.

western India, were generally members of the caste. The fighting forces in the army must have been largely recruited from the *Kshatriyas* caste.

The *Vaisya* caste were always a composite one and its members were usually described with reference to the particular professions. *Vaisya* class mainly consisted of agriculturist and traders. Ordinarily traders were called *Vanijakas* but the more substantial among them were called as *sethis*. The trading class specialised in the transport of goods from place to place were called *Sarthvahanas* or caravans. They are often referred to in the cave in the inscription of western India.

Sudras naturally figure rather rarely in the records. Mugadasa the donor in the cave inscription No. 8 at Nasik calls himself a *dasa* and was probably a Sudra. This Sudra donor donates a cave showing that some members of his caste were often men of substance. A vast majority of the artisan class was probably recruited from this class.

Caste system was regarded as the very foundation of Hinduism in this period. Great kings like Gautmiputra Satakarani are often described as ruler who took steps to prevent the mixture of caste. But we have seen above that several individuals in society often followed professions not permitted to their caste. Whether the mixture of caste was prevented by prohibiting inter caste marriages up do not know. The sources do not refer to any inter caste marriage but contemporary Smrti writer like Manu and Yajnavalkya permit them if *anuloma*. It is further to be noted that Gautamiputra who is credited with preventing the mixture of castes had occupied a Saka bride for his son Vasithiputra Satakarni.

Our sources do not refer to any case of widows remarriage or to the becoming *Sati*. Usually the widows led a life of restraint and austerities devoting themselves to spiritual pursuits. Balasari the widowed mother of Gautamiputra Satakarni is described as leading a life befitting a royal widow in as much as she was devoted to truth, charity and ahimsa and spent her time in practicing austerities, fasts and religious observances. Some Buddhist widows became nuns also.²⁹

The education system during the Satavahana dynasty was traditional one. The Brahmin class was the pivot of Hindu system of education during this period. The holy places such as Nasik, Karad were the centres of education. Prathistan as it was a capital of Satavahanas, may be the centre of education. The deserving pupil from various places gathered here for taking education. The priest or the Brahmin were in charge and supreme in these educational centres. Total maintenance of these education centres depended upon the financial support given by the rulers and the rich community.³⁰

The dress for men consisted of an upper garment and lower dhoti both unstitched. The sculptured figures in western Indian caves show a head dress all this was fairly common both for men and women as usually seen covering their heads with a piece of cloth. The royal ceremonial head dress often consisted of a close fitting crested cap. Gautamiputra Yajnasri Satakarni is seen wearing such a cap on his silver coins.

The ornaments were very popular. Both men and women used various ornaments. The ornaments were well designed variety and various designs of ear rings, necklaces can

²⁹ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: History Part I, Ancient Period, pp.170-171.

³⁰ Ibid. pp.197-198.

be seen in the Amaravati and Nagarjungkund sculptures and Ajanta paintings. Saka and Satavahana rulers wore a variety of ornaments of gold and pearls as can be seen in their coins. Common men and women used the ornaments gold silver and copper.³¹

The houses were built on mud and rubble foundation. The walls were uniformly of bricks and the roofs covered with tiles which were fixed onto the rafters with iron nails. The size of the rooms excavated was probably 7 feet. Each group of houses had a soakpit which served as sanitary convenience. The residents ate wheat *moog bajri* or *nachni* and oil of Karadai seed. It was at this time or slightly earlier that wheat and other grains began to be ground in rotary querns (Marathi) ate some household utensils like the turning stovel (*ulathane*) copper and bronze dishes with amphalas or projections in the centre fine red polished pottery dishes and sprinklers or small spouted lotas, huge wine jars with handles on either sides were brought to Nevasa owing to remain in contact.³²

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

Agriculture, trade, industry and the connected arts and crafts were the main factors of the economic life of the society in the area. The inland towns flourished during the imperial Satavahana period. R.G. Bhandarkar says, besides, Paithan Torwe, Ter, Nasik, Karahataka (Karad) Kolhapur were the towns in a flourished condition during the Satavahanas period.³³ The excavation at Nasik, Nevasa, Ter, Paithan, Bahal, Prakash, Sopara etc. gives an indication of the material culture of the Satavahana times. Solapur

³¹ Dr. Moravanchikar R.S.: Satvahana Kalin Maharashtra, Aurangabad, 1963, (Marathi), p.42.

³² Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State: Solapur District, pp.33-40.

³³ Bhandarkar R.G.: Early History of the Deccan, Calcutta, 1957, pp.51-52.

was the nearest town of Tagura (Ter) which was the important trading centre during the Satavahana period.

The *Rayatwari* system seems to have been prevailing in the Deccan during this period. Land was divided into small units and owned by individual proprietors, Mahara this Mahabhojar and Mahasenapatis who were feudal chiefs. high officers may have owned fairly extensive pieces of land. The state owned some pieces of arable land in a different town and villages which was described as royal lands no data is available to differentiate the land taxation. Timber and fire wood were important forest product they figure among the export to foreign countries land mines were worked in the Deccan and supplied the metal for the Satavahana currency. It is likely that the gold mines near Maski (in Raichur district) may have been worked in the Satavahana period. Land was irrigated with help of wells, rivers and coins. The crops grown in Satavahana period were the grown at present in western India, namely, *bajara*, wheat, sugarcane, rice, gram, cotton, oil seeds and betel leaves³⁴

Cotton industry seems to have been the thriving industry of the Deccan. rough, fine and coloured cotton cloth figures prominently among the export from Broach and described by the Periplus. Tagara (Ter) and Prathisthan were the great centres of the cotton industry. The Andhra province also had large number of the centres of the industry. The considerable trade was carried on with the outside world through the part of western India during the first century A.D. Copper, tin, lead, brass, gold and silver coins are the main items of import while ivory agate carnelian, cotton of all kinds were the main items

³⁴ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State, History Part I Ancient Period, p.177.

of export. The exports articles were collected from various towns in India. Brooch was the main trading centre, while there were other parts of western coast which had their own share of both foreign and coastal trade. Among these may be mentioned Sopara in Thana district, which figures as a harbour in the Jatakas also and Kalyan in Thana district. Most of the Satavahana exports and imports took place through Kalayana Ujjayini in Malwa Paithan, Tagara (Ter) were chief inland trade centres. The commodity goods were brought down to Broach from these market towns.³⁵ Among the minor trade centres we mention Junnar, Karad, Nasik, Govardhana and Vaijayanti. Roads were bad or non existent according to the author of the Periplus, but he is probably over drawing the picture, we find residents of Vaijayanti in Karnataka making donations at Karle. Residents of Karad and Nasik in Maharashtra, giving gifts at Bharhuti in Bundelkhand and citizens of Dattamitri in Sindha donating caves at Nasik. So the roads appear to be sufficiently good and workable, sea communication was also developed. River traffic was rare.

The numerous donative records we get a fairly good glimpse into the different cross sections of the trading community. Traders in corn, perfumes, jewels are frequently referred to. Garlands iron smiths goldsmiths, braziers, stone cutters, artisans, carpenters, weavers, potters, caravans etc. were the articles of trade and are referred to as donors in several places. The general impression produced by the native record is that the society was rich and prosperous. The artisans, traders, farmers, contributed a good deal to it's well being.³⁶

³⁵ Dr. Morevanchikar R.S.: Satavahana Kaline Maharashtra, (Aurangabad 1963, Marathi, p.42

³⁶ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State, History Part I, Ancient Period, p.81.

Guild organisation was a special feature of trade and industry during areas guilds were known as *srenis* and their older men were known *sresthins*. There are references to the guilds of weavers, potters, braziers, oil managers, bamboo workers, corn dealers. The guild must have been primarily intended to safeguard the interest of the particular trade or industry. It was also conducted banks whose services were availed of not only by its members but also by the general public. Guilds and their banks were regarded as stable institutions, more enduring than kingdoms and empires.³⁷

It was during the regime of the Satavahanas that maritime trade flourished. Roman pottery like the amphorae and the arretine alongwith Roman glass and coins, Roman wine were imported, these objects must have been used probably by the rich people. Explorations of Karad and at various other places in Maharashtra shows that the Satavahanas period a most glorious period in the history of the Deccan which witnessed the presence of the several cave and the powerful rule of king like Gautamiputra Satakarni. Pottery coins, beads and several other objects, found there establish beyond doubt that during Satavahana period import and export trade was given much importance. Cultural contacts with foreign countries like Rome was an added attraction.

The larger part of the ordinary daily transactions was probably done by barter. But silver, lead and copper currency was also in existence to supplement them. No data at present is available to give either the nomenclature or the relative value of the copper and lead currency that was profusely issued by the Satavahanas. There is no sufficient evidence to reconstruct the price level of the period.

³⁷ Bhandarkar R.G.: Early History of the Deccan, Calcutta, 1957, p.53.

RELIGIOUS CONDITION:

During the Satavahana period Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism were the popular religions in the society. Aslikas imperial patronage resulted in spread of Buddhism while Hinduism began to think seriously about its future and began to set its house in the order to counter reformation was started in Hinduism which aimed at eliminating its weak points which were exploited by Buddhism.

Even though the Vedic³⁸ sacrifices were performed by the rulers of this period, but it was not so popular among the general population. The *Bhaktimarga* the conception of a personal god taking paternal interest in the difficulties and welfare of the devotees is most prominent and began to appeal to the masses. Hinduism now began to advocate the gospel of *Avatara*.

The lives of a number of heroes and puranic gods which were described in Mahabharat and *Puranas* graphically emphasised the importance of a number of virtues and good qualities and began to shape and influence the lives of ordinary men. The philosophical side of Hinduism was also strengthened by the systematic exposition of the teachings of its various schools such as mimansa, Vedanta, yoga and Nyaya.

Siva, Vishnu, Ganesh, Saukasana, Vasudeva Dharma Indra, Sun and moon figure as the popular Hindu deities during the Satavahana period. It was also probably due to this relation that a nude mother goddess became popular in India and occurs throughout the Deccan and northern India. Among the commoners both Saivism and Vaishanism were

³⁸ Gazetteer of India Maharashtra State, History Part I, Ancient Period, p.182.

fairly popular. Pilgrimage to holy places is strongly recommended in the epics and *puranas*. Fasts on *Ekadasi puranika* and other religious days was popular, donations were given to Brahmins and religious centres. Pious Brahmins used to perform the religious rites and ritual in his daily life as prescribed in contemporary *Smritis*.³⁹

Buddha was in flourishing condition princes and chiefs calling themselves Mahabhojas and Maharatthis, merchants (Nalgamas) goldsmith (suvarnakaras) carpenter (vardhakas) corndealers (Dhanyakasrenis) druggists (Gandhiras) and ordinary householders (Grihasthas) were donating the amount for monasteries to be excavated out of the solid rock for the use of the followers of Buddhism.⁴⁰ The later tradition no doubt states that the Buddha had once visited Paithan the future Satavahana capital, but we may doubt its accuracy. Among the missionaries sent by Asoka for the spread of Buddhism, there was one Greek convert named Dharmaraksita, who was sent to Alaranta or northern Konkan and who may have tried to spread the religion in Maharashtra as well. Earliest traces of Buddhism in western India go back to about 250 B.C. The Buddhist religion was much popular in the Deccan before the advent of the missionaries despatched by Ashoka.

The most ancient Buddhist records in western India were those at Kolhapur Pitalkhora and Sopara. When Dharmaraksita came to northern Konkan he apparently induced Asoka to get a set of his edicts engraved at Sopara. So far we have discovered only fragment of fourteen rock edicts at that place. The number of Buddhists during this time was not small. The Satavahana government appointed an officer to supervise over the Buddhist monks and their monasteries. We find the reference to various Buddhist sects at

³⁹ Ibid., p.189.

⁴⁰ Bhandarkar R.G. Early History of the Deccan, Calcutta, 1957, pp.49-50.

Karla, Nasik, Kanheri, Sopara and Junner. The Hinayan sect was popular in Deccan and the object of the worship in the early caves are the Stupas. The unman figure of the blessed one does not occur either at Bhoja, Bellsa, Karla or Nasik. The Mahasan sect began to popular army at about 400 A.D. The Buddhist mode of worship was similar to the Hindus. One lamp was kept burning and scents and flowers were offered to the *stupa* after the ceremonies sprinkling. Monks usually came down from the hills to the adjoining villages for getting their food provision for the supply of robes and medicines the monks were made by the rich people.⁴¹

There is little reference to the existence of Jainism in the society during this period. The followers of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and different sects were living in place and harmony. There is no trace of any conflict between these during this period.⁴² The Satavahanas claimed themselves to be Brahmins. However, they were extremely tolerant as evidenced by rock cut caves towards the Hintyana Buddhism. The coins of the Satavahanas display a number of Buddhist symbols. One more creditable aspect of the Satavahanas was that they patronised and encouraged the *Prakrit* language and literature. It was the Satavahanas that art architecture and literature flourished. Series of beautiful terracottas and figurines of Konkan have been reported from Ter, Nevasa, Paithan and other places. The rock cult Buddhist caves at Bhoja, Kale, Kanheri, Junnar, Nasik, etc. were excavated during the times of the Satavahanas. The rock-cult human figures and the terracotta display district style which can rightly be termed as Satavahana style.⁴³

⁴¹ Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State, History Part I, Ancient Period, p.191.

⁴² Morvanchikar R.S., Satvahan Kalin Maharashtra, Aurangabad, 1963, p.108.

⁴³ Ibid. pp.105-106.

The Andhra period in the history of the Deccan is marked by Buddhist cave excavated the western ghats from Nasik down to Kolhapr and Goa, the Nasik, Kanheri, Naneghat, Karla and Bhanja caves are famous in the history of Buddhist architecture.

The art architecture and literature flourished during the Satavahana period which shows that this period, can be called as progressive and prosperous period in the history of the Deccan. Solapur district, as it was a part of this empire may have also enjoyed this peace and prosperity during this period.

Thus Satavahana period in the Deccan was important one and its adjoining area was the part and parcel of Satavahana empire from 235 B.C. to 225 A.D.