

# CHAPTER VII

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Epilogue

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Solapur district is one of the leading and progressive districts in Maharashtra. The district has past glorious history and hoary antiquity. The district of Solapur lies entirely in the Bhima-Sina-Man basins, just before the Bhima river leaves Maharashtra state to enter into Karnataka state. Bounded by 17° 10' north and 18° 32' north latitudes and 74° 42' east and 76° 15' east longitudes, the district is fairly well defined to its west as well as to its east by the inward looking scraps of Phaltan range and the Osmanabad plateau respectively. The adjoining districts are Sangli to its southwest, Satara to its west, Pune to its northwest, Ahmadnagar to its north, Bhir, and Osmanabad to east and the Bijapur district in Karnataka state to its south.

The district of Solapur is known after its town headquarters. 'Solapur' is believed to be derived from two words '*Sola*' meaning sixteen and '*pur*' meaning village. The present district of Solapur consists of Adilpur Ahmadpur, Chapladev, Fatehpur, Jamdarwadi, Kalajapur, Khadarpur, Khandravkiwadi, Muhammadpur, Ranapur, Sandalapur, Shaikpur, Solapur, Sonalgi, Sonapur and Vaidkawadi. Though the district has a very vast area of cotton growing belt it was equally known for poverty and also as a drought hit district from the ancient past, due to low percentage of rainfall.

Though archival excavations have not been done in the Solapur district yet some excavations done in bordering districts in Pune and Ahmadnagar prove that Solapur figured in pre-historic times also. Findings in the excavation at Jorwe, Nevasa in Ahmadnagar districts, show that man lived in central Maharashtra even in early Paleolithic

period. He used cleavers and flakes as his tools and weapons choliolithic microlithis have also been found in Jorwe and Nevasa. It is during this period they cut down the forest and began agriculture. They chose elevated sites on the banks of rivers and settled there.

The region to the south of Godavari, in which the Solapur district is included, was inhabited by the aborigines who were called *Rakshasas* in the Ramayana and the sages living in this region were constantly harassed by these *Rakshasas*.

The Solapur district figured in historical period during the Mauryas and Ashokan inscription mentions the *Petenikas of Pratishthana* Aurangabad district and Bhojas of Vidharbha and Kuntala country in western India. Solapur area was part and parcel of Mauryan empire, after the overthrow of the Mauryan dynasty in *circa* 184 B.C., Solapur area went under the control of the Sathavahanas. The first king of this dynasty was Simuka. Though Satavahana was the founder of the family, the dominion of Simuka probably comprised Pune, Nasik, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad and Solapur districts. Satavahana rule lasted from 235 B.C. to 225 A.D. and during this age of the Satavahanas the central part of the Deccan comprising the Aurangabad Ahmednagar, Bhir and Solapur districts must have attained a high level of prosperity.

After the fall of Satavahanas Vakatakas rose to power. The Mulitan verses in the inscriptions in cave 16 at Ajanta mention Herisena the last known Vakataka ruler and states that he conquered Avanti Malwa Kalinga and Andhra and Kuntala in which Solapur district was included. After Vakatakas the Rastrakutas held their sway over the territory of Maharashtra. After Vakatakas the Chalukyas of Badami and Rastrakutas of Malkhed held their sway over this area.

After the fall of Chalukyas of Kalyani, the Yadavas of Devagiri rose to power. The Yadavas ruled over Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Northern Karnataka. Solapur and adjoining areas were under the control of Yadavas of Devagiri. Some inscriptions of Yadavas of Devagiri are found in Solapur area as well as in Pandharpur. Siddheswar temple and Kudal Sangam achieved importance since 12th century A.D. The early history of the Yadavas is shrouded in some obscurity. It seems that the Yadavas were first known as Seunas and their dominion was called *Seunadesa*. The Sangamner copper plate of Yadava Billama II and Hemadri also testify that the *Seunadesa* was known after the name of Seunachandra, who was the son of Dridhapatara.

The largest number of inscriptions in the Deccan in the period concerned belongs to the Chalukyas of Kalyana, naturally because of the long and active rule of the members of this dynasty. Their inscriptions occupy the important place, numerically speaking. The reason appears to be that the Solapur region was the home of the Kalachuris, and with their rise to power, the Chalukya influence gradually waned in this region.

Unfortunately no excavation is carried out in this area therefore there is scarcity of sources material of the period of Satavahana to Rastrakuta. There is need to undertake excavation in Solapur area which will enable to enrich the past history of Solapur.

But fortunately epigraphist like Shri Nivas Ritti brought out some inscriptions from Solapur district, and this helped to reconstruct the history of Solapur area for the period of Chalukyas of Kalyani and Yadavas of Devagiri. These inscriptions are important and they fill up many gaps in our knowledge of history and culture of ancient Deccan.

It is significant to note that out of the forty inscriptions published, by Shrinivas Ritti and Kumbhar, thirty nine inscriptions are in Kannada script and language while the remaining epigraphs are written in Nagar script and Sanskrit language. This shows that though Solapur district now belongs to Maharashtra, it was a part of Karnataka during the ancient and medieval times. These inscriptions are represented by three imperial dynasties of ancient Karnataka namely, Chalukyas and Kalachuris of Kalyana, and the Seunas of Devagiri. Thus the Chalukyas and Kalchuries of Kalyana the Yadavas of Devagiri and their inscriptions at Mangalwedha, Pandharpur, Velapur, Mangarul, Akkalkot, Kamati, (Khurd), in Mohol taluka, Darphal, Mardi, Sivani, Solapur, in north Solapur taluka. Achegaon, Aurad, Bhandarakavathe, Gunjegaon, Hanamgaon, Hutgi, Kandalgaon, Kumbhari, Lavangi, Madre, Malakavathe, Mandrup, Nimbari, *Tirtha* Vangi, Nandani, in south Solapur taluka which prove that Solapur was under the control of these three imperial dynasties.

Moreover Pandharpur, Akkalkot, Mangalwedha and Siddheshwar temple of Solapur occupied special importance in ancient period as well as in medieval times. Pandharpur has been famous as a sacred place of Vithoba, the temple of Vithoba at Pandharpur has been main attraction for many persons. The devotees of Vithoba come from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka states. The temple of Vithoba built during the period of Yadavas of Devagiri. Fortunately some inscriptions are found on the walls of the temple of Vithoba. Hemadri, the great prime minister of Yadavas, left his inscription at Pandharpur. Pandharpur has been cultural and religious capital of south India since the 12th century onwards to present day. This Pandharpur is included in Solapur district.

Like Pandharpur, Mangalwedha had a special significance in ancient period because it was the seat of Kalachuris who were at the beginning the feudatories of Chalukyas of Kalyani but later on Chalukyas usurped imperial throne of Kalyani. But special events took place at Mangalwedha and that was Basaveswara, stayed many years at Mangalwedha. We get some Kalchuri inscriptions from Mangalwedha.

Akkalkot was the seat of Silaharas dynasty which flourished from 10th to 12th centuries A.D. We get some inscriptions from Akkalkot. Shiddheswara temple of Solapur was built during 12th century A.D. It is very important religious centre for grants of Solapur. This temple has some inscriptions.

Kudal is a place on the bank and Sangam of river Sina and Bhima. This place is naturally beautiful and having religious importance. On the Sangam of rivers there are two temples of Sangameswara and other is Murlidhar. The temples were constructed during the period of Chalukyas in 11th century A.D.

Thus this is a systematic attempt to study the Ancient History of Solapur district from the pre-historic times to Yadava period (up to 13th century A.D.) by using epigraphical sources as well as other secondary sources.