

CHAPTER-I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF JAIN COMMUNITY IN KOLHAPUR DISTRICT

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Kolhapur district is one of the leading and progressive districts of Maharashtra. The present Kolhapur region forms the southern part of the Maharashtra state adjacent to the Belgaum district of the Karnataka state. The region occupies a significant place in the history of the Deccan from a very early period. A large number of Jain people are staying in Kolhapur city and even district and pursuing trade activities as well as engaged in agriculture.

It is said that Jainism traveled from the north to the Deccan and once it did, it found a permanent home here. A Kannad inscription calls this region as the abode of the Jainas (idu-Jaina dharmavasam-adattu). It took roots here and greatly influenced the life and thinking of the local populace. It gained a large following and large number of Jaina centres rose on this land. The inscriptions available in Kolhapur region, give the some information on the spread of Jain religion in the Kolhapur region. They mention about the construction and maintenance and give details about the line of ascetics belonging to

different lineages. (Anvaya, Gana, Gachchha etc.) And speak highly about their erudition in the Jainism.

In the pre-independence period some Jain leaders took active part in the freedom struggle of India. In 1947 India won the independence and Jain freedom fighters turned their attention towards other fields such as co-operative, agriculture, education and Banking. This community rendered yeomen service to the all round progress of Kolhapur district. Mahaveer co-operative bank established in 1937 and Ratnakar Bank established in 1943 are some leading Institutions run by Jain community and has been financing a number of poor and needy man and giving incentives to the change of the life of common man. Ratnakar Bank has well established and 71 branches in Kolhapur district. There are old Jain Basadis belonging to 10th to 12th centuries and Jain Mathas which are centres of cultural activities.

Therefore, in this Research project an attempt is made to study Jain community in Kolhapur district, a socio-economic study (1948-1990) by using original sources such as annual Reports of the Banks, files of news papers such as Pragati Ani Jinvijaya, Ratnatraya,

Sanmati etc. biographies of the Jaina leaders, math records etc. as well as secondary sources pertaining to our study.

In this respect, it is very important to take a brief survey of early history of Jainism since its inception to 1948.

DEFINITION OF RELIGION: -

Jainism is a distinct and old religion. Generally, religion played important role in human civilization. It is very difficult to define religion. There is no unanimous definition of religion. The dictionary meaning of religion are-

1. Human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal god or gods entitled to obedience and worship, effect of such recognition on conduct or mental attitude; particular system of faith and worship as Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, (Jaina).
2. Monastic condition, being monk or nun center into, be in enter or be member of a monastic order.)
3. (Rare) Practice of sacred rites.
4. Make a point-1 of especially doing same habitual action. ¹

The following are some important definitions of religion.

According to Radhakrishnan, "Religion is a kind of life. He states that, religion is not the acceptance of academic abstractions or the celebration of ceremonies but a kind of life or experience of reality.²" (i.e. Anubhava)

About religion Swami Vivekananda has stated, that religion is constitutional necessity for man and plays a role higher than anything else in our life.³ There are so many factors which lead man to develop faith in God and religion. Man is religious by his inner nature and necessity. It has taught us to love others as we love ourselves and to serve them. Religion has helped to unite men at the spiritual level. Lord Buddha, Christ and Mohammad all spoke of love and compassion for the humanity.

Gillin John Lewis define that Religion in its simplest and most scientifically acceptable definition is a belief in the super-natural in relation to man.⁴

D.K. Bedkar states that religion is the heritage. He further elaborates that it consists of tradition, customs, dogmas, principles

manners, etiquettes in our day to day life. The habits, customs and other things in the life of man may change but the religion remain constant. For the well being of society there must be religion. As an individual needs a religion for mental peace. So also it needs for society.⁵

Ogburn William A. and Nimkoff Mayer F write that religion is a system of beliefs, emotional attitudes and practices by means of which a group of people attempts to cope with the ultimate problem of human life.⁶

Generally it is believed that a religion is a code of devotional and festival rules. But in a true religion there could be no bargaining. For in fact religion is an eternal reality, most pure and sacred. Indeed, religion is meant to show the way to attain salvation or the final beatitude or freedom from the misery of births and deaths.

RELIGIONS IN INDIA: -

Today, the religions in the world are divided into two groups, Eastern religions and Western religions. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are the eastern or indigenous religions and Zoroastrianism Christianity and Islam are western or alien religions.

HINDUISM: -

Hinduism is one of the oldest and prominent religions of India. In India majority of people are Hindu. It is said that Hindu religion was founded by Arya, the inhabitants of India who came from central Europe. There was not a single founder of this religion.⁷

BUDDHISM: -

Next to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism were important religions in ancient times. The Hindu society had lost its former glory and many kinds of abuses, evil practices and superstitions had crept in it. The Brahmins had a monopoly in the field of religion and they behaved as unscrupulous human beings. Gautam Buddha (567 B.C. to 487 B.C.) was the founder of Buddhism.⁸ He dedicated his entire life for the teaching and propaganda of Buddhism in India.

JAINISM: -

Like Buddhism, Jainism is also heterodox religion. The religion of the Jainas existed in India from very early times and its origin is ascribed to Shri. Rishabha.⁹ He is the first in the line of the

Trithankars. He is also known as Adinath and held in great esteem by the Jains.

At the beginning it was believed that Mahaveer was the founder of Jainism but now-a-days it is accepted by scholars and historians, that Mahavir was the twenty fourth Tirthankar or prophet of Jainism. The sacred books of the Jains tell us that the real founder of Jainism was Rishabha who was succeeded by 23 Tirthankars. Even now days Jainism is prevailing in Maharashtra as well as in Kolhapur district where it is in minority but influenced one.

JAINISM AS A SRAMANIC RELIGION: -

Parampujya Elacarya Munisri Vidyanandaji rightly pointed out that "Jainism is a sramanic religion which prevailed in India as Dr. Radhakrishnan says, much before Parsvanatha and Vardhamana the last two Tirthankars. Jainism has contributed to world culture in its emphasis on *Ahinsa*, *Anekanta* and *Aparigraha*. Ahinsa is the universal religion which has contributed to the enhancement of the unifying force of mankind."¹⁰

Jainism is a religion preached by the Tirthankars. The Tirthankar in this *eon* of the cycle of time is Rishabha and 24th; the

last Tirthankar is Vardhaman Mahaveera. He carried the tradition of the previous Tirthankars. Jainism is a pre-Aryan religion which prevailed in India long before Mahavira and Parsva, the last two Tirthankars.¹¹

Jainism has made a significant contribution to the stream of Indian thought in its fundamental concepts of *Anekant* and *Ahinsa*.

JAIN PHILOSOPHY AND KARMA DOCTRINE: -

In its metaphysical aspect Jainism is realistic philosophy. It posits the dichotomous categories of *jiva* and *ajiva* as equally real. The Jiva is a spiritual substance. It is pure and perfect. It is indestructible.¹² Jiva is active. Due to its dynamic nature it comes into contact with ajiva, the nonliving substance. Due to the contact of the living and the nonliving there is activity, both physical and mental. It gives rise to the after effects of activity which is karma. The jivas in the wheel of samsara are infected by the *karmic* matter. This is beginning less. And in the normal course of things it has no end. But it is possible for an individual self to be free from this bondage by means of moral and spiritual efforts. There is no place for divine grace. One has to reach ones perfection by self effort. The process of

perfection has been formulated by five more categories i.e. *bandha*, *asraya*, *samvara*, *nirjaru* and finally the state of *moksa*.¹³

The Jaina contribution to the philosophy of life is to be found in its insistence that the path way to perfection is threefold: (three jewels).

1. Samyag-Darsana(right faith, right understanding).
2. Samyag-Jnana (right knowledge).
3. Samyag-Charitrya (right conduct).

This is Tri-ratna or Ratna-Traya concept. The threefold way of emancipation is –‘The right belief, Right knowledge and Right conduct constitute the way of emancipation.’¹⁴

The five Vratas Ahinsa(non-violence), Satya (pursuit of truth), Asteya (non-stealing and honesty), Brahmacharya (Celibacy) and Aparigraha (non-possession and non attachment.)¹⁵

The practice of non-violence is the most important principle of the Jainas. *Ahinsa Paramodharma* is the cardinal principle of Jaina view of life. Ahinsa is non-injury physical and mental.

JAINISM AND SOUTH INDIA:

The impact of Jainism in south India is important. History of south India is intimately connected with the history and development of Jainism in this part of country. Jainism is a way of life which has permeated the life pulse of the people of south India including Karnataka and Maharashtra (Kolhapur region).

Exactly when Jainism came to the south especially to Karnataka and Maharashtra is difficult to say. There is a tradition in Jainism which says that the land was ruled by Jivandhara in the 6th century B.C. , who was himself a Jaina and who meet Mahavira when he came down to the south. Mahavira gave *Diksa* to him and the king became an ascetic.¹⁶

Apart from this tradition it is fairly certain that Jainism entered Karnataka well before the Christian era. Jainism came down to the south with Bhadrabahu, Svamin, last of the six Srutake valins. He reached by stages a country filled with happy people.¹⁷ He was accompanied by Chandragupta the Maurya. Bhadrabahu Svamin practiced Svamlekhana on the mount Chandragiri in 297 B.C.¹⁸ This was the beginning of the influence of Jainism in the south.

Samprati, the grandson of Ashoka, was himself a Jaina in his earlier days. He sent missionaries to the south.

JAINISM IMPORTANCE:

Jainism is one of the leading important and prominent religion in India. Now it is minority religion but one of the oldest religions in India. Ahimsa, vegetarianism, controlled way of life and the concept of *Aparigraha* constitute the main tenets of Jainism.

Beside the philosophy, Jain monks and their followers have also contributed handsomely to the literature, art, architecture and culture of India. The Jain Granth Bhandaras are recognized as a part of our proud heritage.

Tirthankars and Jain Munis have preached love, non-violence and renunciation of 'Trishna' (Passion). The fundamental concept underlying the doctrines of Jainism is "Live and let Live."

Jainism was founded by 24 Tirthankars from Rishabhanatha alias Adinatha to Vardhamana Mahavira. All the Tirthankaras flourished in north India and due to their endeavor, Jainism, heterodox religion came into existence. The last two Tirthankara, Parshvanatha 23rd Tirthankara belonging to the 8th century B.C. and 24th Mahavira

belonging to the 6th century B.C. are regarded as historical personalities.

In the 4th century B.C. during the period of Chandragupta Maurya Jainism penetrated into the south India and Karnataka became the second home of Jainism. Right from the beginning Jainism received Royal patronage.

SOME IMPORTANT CONCEPTS OF JAINISM:

Some scholars expressed their views regarding the concept of Jainism by the following way.

‘The Jaina religion’ remarks Dr. J.F. Kohl “is based on pre Aryan ideas and one of this is animism. It is the source of the respect to all living but we can learn that ‘*Ahimsa*’ is not only the greatest conception, but also one of the most ancient in the world.”¹⁹

Another scholar Dr. Hermann Jacobi had to declare that “There is nothing to prove that Parshva was the founder of Jainism. Jaina tradition is unanimous in making Rishabha, the first Tirthankara (as its founder). There may be something historical in the tradition which makes him the first Tirthankar.”²⁰

JAINISM: AN INDEPENDENT PRE-HISTORIC RELIGION OF ANCIENT INDIA

Dr. Hermann Jacobi said that "Jainism is an original system, quite distinct and independent from all others; and that therefore, it is of great importance for the study of philosophical and religious life in an ancient India."²¹

The age of Mahavira in the 6th century B.C. is marked by outstanding achievements in different spheres- political, religious, social, economic, artistic, and literacy. It saw the beginning of the political unification in India under the hegemony of Magadha and the propagation of Buddhism, Jainism and other heterodox religious sects.²²

The history of Jainism before Lord Mahavira is shrouded in considerable obscurity. Materials which can reconstruct it are scanty, dubious and capable of different interpretations. Scholars have therefore come to widely divergent conclusions. The Jainas themselves believe that their religion is eternal and that before Mahavira (600B.C.) there lived 23 Tirthankars who appeared at certain intervals to propagate true religion for the salvation of the world.²³



Some scholars hold that there are traces of existence of Sramana culture even in pre-Vedic times. H. Jacobi tried to prove both from the Buddhist and the Jaina records that Parshvanatha, the immediate predecessor of Mahavira, who is said to have flourished some 250 years before him is a historical personality.²⁴

JAINISM AND SAMPRATI: (220-211 B.C.)

The country named Ujjayani was also a stronghold of Jainism. The evidence for this centre of Jain culture is mostly found in later traditions. If we believe in the story of Ashok, a grandson King Samprati and his conversion to Jainism by Suhastin, this spread of Malwa must be placed as early as the second century B.C. We are further told that Samprati initiated his grand father in sending religious missionaries. The famous story of Kalakacharya, the Jain saint implies the spread of Jainism in Malwa in the first century B.C.²⁵

Samprati, the grandson of Ashoka is generally accepted to have been a Jaina being converted to the Svetambara creed by Suhastin. He appears to have sent Jaina missionaries of his persuasion into south India. Though we do not know how for they penetrated into

the Karnataka, this is the first reference we have to the Svetambaras in the south.²⁶

SAMPRATI:

The Jaina text give an interesting account about Kunal who was a son of Ashoka and father of Samprati. Ashoka gave him the province of Ujjeni for his maintenance and being too fond of him sent a message for his good education. But unfortunately the step mother of Kunal changed secretly the message for the worst and the Prince was made blind. Although Kunal never succeeded Ashoka yet he pleased his father so much that Ashoka granted his request to appoint Samprati as the viceroy of Ujjeni who afterwards conquered the whole of Dakshinapatha.²⁷

Consequently when Ashoka breathed his last Samprati ruled at Ujjeni while Dasaratha, the other grand son of Ashoka ruled simultaneously at Pataliputra. Out of these two Samprati was a great patron of Jainism. Arya Suhastin was his guru. Samprati was an ideal monarch, who having become a true Sravaka spared no pains to glorify Jainism.

Samprati opened food centres for the monks and the poor. He appointed preachers of Dharma and provided facilities to Jain monks, who went all over India and even beyond its borders to the countries of Arabia and Persia to spread the gospel of Ahinsa. Samprati founded Jaina monasteries in these non-Aryan countries for Jaina monks who went there to propagate the Dharma.²⁸

Samprati celebrated the Jaina festival with great fervor and zeal to which he invited all his vassals to hear and understand the true meaning of Dharma. Masses, too were attracted towards these festivals, which became popular owing to the free distribution of food, medicine and clothes. The imparting of religious instructions was an special feature of them. The people felt satisfied since they were benefited both : physically and spiritually. They realized the true meaning of religion they removed the guilt from their hearts , they imbibed the true ideas of piety and righteousness which prevented them from falling into superstition and sin .

The feudatories of Samprati took the message of Ahinsa to their respective realms and prohibited the killing of living beings in every form. The royal proclamations of Amari (i.e. wholesale

stoppage of killing and bestowing compassion on all living beings) was a glamouring feature of the period and the country abounded in peace and prosperity. It was an effort to make one and all Abhaya i.e safe and secure ; the great ideal of achievement of a Jain Monarch.

As a matter of fact, Samprati furthered the cause of Jainism and Ahinsa culture with perfect zeal and undiminished interest. It is said that he built very beautiful temples, pillars and caves at various sacred places of the Jainas.²⁹ He bestowed his compassion on animals by getting established hospitals and Pinjarapols for them. However the remarkable result of Sampratis religious effort is evident in the fact that Jainism was revived in central India, the Deccan and south India upto Kudukka (Coorg).³⁰ Besides Pataliputra and Mathura Ujjeni also became a strong of Jainism in north India.

Salisuka succeeded Samprati on the Mauryan throne who was responsible to receive and rejuvenate the Jaina religion in Saurashtras.³¹

From the above account of the careers of the prominent Mauryan emperors and their religious gurus who were famous Jain monks , it is evident that Jainism at that time wielded an over-

whelming influence in the royal house and was honored and followed equally by the people. It reminds us of a wise saying of the sages that 'truthfulness fellow feeling i.e. compassion austerities and purity are the four legs on which religion stands.

The historians are right to call the Mauryan period the 'Golden One' of the Indian history in which the life motto of Mahavira i.e. 'Je Kamme Surate Dhamme Suru' – 'The hero of active life could be only the hero of Dharma guided the people to make secular progress for attaining the great spiritual aim of Nirvana.'³²

SATAVAHANA RULE: -

In the Deccan, the Mauryan empire was followed by the rule of the Satavahanas which lasted for 460 years from 235B.C. to 225 A.D. As its greatest extent the Satavahanas empire covered the whole of the Deccan.³³ including Maharashtra and Kolhapur.

The archaeologist literary, inscriptional and numismatic data pertaining to the period of the Satavahana rule in Maharashtra is available in a fairly abundant measure. Roman objects coins are found in Kolhapur.³⁴

The Satavahanas rose to power in the western Deccan in the region around Paithan (Pratisthan) traditionally associated with them and hence spread their empire in all directions. In the first instance they conquered north and south Maharashtra, eastern and western Malwa and what is now Madhya Pradesh.³⁵

In all there were 30 kings of this dynasty and they were also called Andras, Simuka, Gautamiputra, Satakarni, Hala, Pulamai and others who were famous kings among the Andhras, patronized Jainism.³⁶

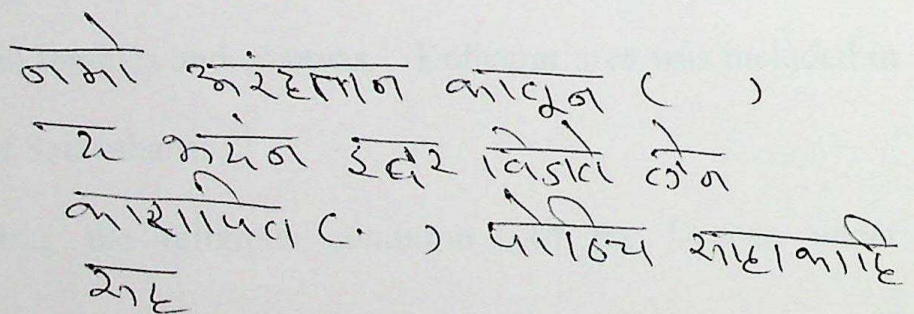
Simuka was the founder member of Satavahana and ruled for 23 years at later stage he became Jain and observed fast unto death.³⁷ Paithan capital of Andhras was a strong of Jainism in the Deccan. It is said that Simuka first ruler converted to Jaina faith and he built many Jaina temples in the capital city of Pratishthanepura. The fifty two stalwart warriors who were in the court of this King also built Jaina temples in the city after their respective names. According to another Jaina tradition Acharya Kalaka tried to influence King Salivahana who changed the date of Pajjusana in order to please the king.³⁸

Jainism found its way into the regions south of the Vindhyas as early as the fourth century B.C. the Deccan was encircled by lands which became the second home of Jainism after it had ceased to be the dominant creed in the land of its birth.³⁹

Jainism entered the Karnataka much earlier than Buddhism. The Digambara teacher, Kundakundacharya was the teacher of the Satavahana princes.⁴⁰

The first Jaina inscription in Maharashtra: -

It is interesting to note that the first Jaina inscription is found at Pale in Poona district which belong to 2nd century B.C. and this inscription is published by Dr. Sankalika. The inscription runs as follows :-

follows :- 

This inscription is related to Jainism.⁴¹ This indicates that Jainism was prevalent in Maharashtra at least prior to 2nd century B.C.

Dr. Hiralal Jain was great authority and scholar in Jainism. According to him, Jainism was professed in Maharashtra prior to 5th

century B.C. and this statement is based upon 'Kakand Chariu' a Jaina book. But this contention is not accepted by Dr. B. B. Desai.

JAINISM UNDER THE SATAVAHANA: - (235B.C. TO 225 A.D.)

Satavahana dynasty ruled Deccan including Maharashtra from 235 B.C. to 225 A.D. and their capital was Pratisthan – Modern Paithan in Aurangabad District. During this period Paithan was the one of the important seat of Jainism. Some rulers of this dynasty were leaning towards Jainism. The founder of this dynasty was Simuk who held power for 23 years from 271 B.C. to 248 B.C. He was a patron of Jainism during the early years of this reign, he is reputed to have built Jain temples and chaityas.⁴² Kolhapur area was included in the empire of Satavahanas.⁴³

Regarding the religious condition of the Deccan under Satavahana period, the following Para is important.

“Jainism found its way into the regions south of the Vindhya as early as the fourth century B.C. The Deccan was encircled by lands which became the second home of Jainism after it had ceased to be the dominant creed in the land of its birth. Malwa and Kalinga

in the north and north-east and Tamilland and Mysore in the south had flourishing Jain Bastis. The Nanda sovereign of Magadha took away a Jain image from Kalinga and Kharvela recovered it. 'At Sravan Belgola in Mysore Chandragupta Maurya is said to have spent his last days in the company of Jain ascetics. Kharvela rendered great services to Jainism in Kalinga. The Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills contain numbers of caves excavated for the residence of Jain ascetics.⁴⁴

It is said that some 52 nobles and feudatories in the court of Satavahan built 52 Jinalaya at Paithan.⁴⁵ Prof. P.B. Desai had given a detailed information about the condition Jainism during Satavahana period.⁴⁶ Karad near Kolhapur was also the seat of Jainism and in the first century A.D. Samantbahu Jaina Acharya was staying at Karad⁴⁷ and there was his discussion with other Pandits.

Satavahana Traditions: -

Jainism appears to have wielded considerable influence over the rulers and the territory of the Satavahana dynasty during the early days of its career in south India. Pratishthanapura or modern Paithan, the celebrated centre of the Satavahana house seem to

have believed in the teachings of Lord Jina and contributed to the propagation of the faith by their patronage and support. The first Satavahana King Simuka, the founder of the dynasty, became a convert to the Jaina faith and built many Jaina temples in the capital city of Pratishthanapura according to the Jaina account. The fifty two stalwart warriors who were in the court of this king also built Jaina temples in the city after their respective names.⁴⁸

Thus Jainism had taken firm root in the Satavahan capital and it was honored alike both by the members of the royal household and the common people.

Kolhapur area was included in Satavahana Empire and it seems that Jainism penetrated Kolhapur area during the Satavahana period i.e. between 3rd century B.C. to 3rd A.D.

Chalukyas of Badami :- (550A.D. -753 A.D.)

After the fall of Satavahanas, Kolhapur area was controlled by Vakatakas and Chalukyas of Badami.

A reference has been made in a copper plate inscription by Dr. Fleet and James Fergusson⁴⁹ to a Tribhuvana Tilaka Basti at Alta, to which lands have been granted by Samiyara of the Saindraku

family in the region of Pulkeshi II (610A.D. to 642A.D.) of the Badami Chalukya. The grant lands lie at Alata Narindage , Kini, Hatakanangale, Karochi, Rui, Danoli, Kumbhoja, Indali, Nandani, Shirathi, Arjunwad, Latawade and Halondi. All these places are situated in Hatkanangale and Shirol Pethas and in Kolhapur Districts.⁵⁰

Rashtrakuta Period : (754A.D. to 974 A.D.)

The age of the Rashtrakutas 754 A.D. to 954 A.D. was a period of great activity among the Jainas of the Deccan⁵¹ including Kolhapur area.

Owing the patronage of the ruling classes and the literacy and religious activities of a number of famous monastic scholars, Jainism continued to be a strong rival of Hinduism during Rashtrakuta period. Among the Rashtrakuta emperors, Amoghavarsha I (814-80A.D.) was a great patron of Jainism. He appointed Gunabhadra a famous Jain monk and scholar as tutor to his heir apparent Krishna extended patronage to a number of other Jaina scholars and gave grants to several Jaina monastries. His son Krishna II and the latter's successor Indra III also continued to make liberal grants to various Jaina

establishments.⁵² There were a number of Jaina monasteries which played an important part in popularizing the gospel of the Jina. Amoghvarsh built 'Amogbasti' near Nasik. He was also great literacy person. He wrote 'Prasnotar Ratnamala'. He patronized Jina-Sena, the author of Adipurān and Gunbhadrā, the author of 'Uttarpurān'.⁵³

Jainism – During the Silahara Period: -

The Siaharas who were the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas as well as latter Chalukyas, had three distinct families. One ruled over northern Konkan, another over southern Konkan and the third over Southern Maharashtra incorporating the regions of Karad, Kolhapur, Satara, Miraj, Solapur and Belganm. The period from 9th to 13th century A.D. has been roughly assigned to them.

The Silaharas of Kolhapur extended patronization to Jainism and built Jain temples in Kolhapur city as well as surrounding area. This can be proved by their inscriptions which are available and engraved on these temples.

There are many references to Basadis and Jaina halls of prayers built during this period.⁵⁴ The important Jaina temples mentioned are those of Parsvaratha, Rupanarayan and Padmaladevi in Kolhapur.⁵⁵



The Jaina temples Rupanarayana was built by Gandaraditya's feudatory Nimbadevarasa and the same feudatory also built the temple of Risabhadeva at Khidrapur near Shirol in Kolhapur district.

There is Gandaraditya's (Ruler) inscription on the portico of the Sheshashai temple where in the King is described as countenancing the Jain religion which professed.⁵⁶ His another inscription is in Shukrawar Basti and mentions the name of Nimbaraj an underlord of Gandaraditya.⁵⁷ There is an inscription of the same Prince Nimbaraja who built the Adinath Temple and the Manastamba in Shukrawara Peth in the locality of merchants and dancing girls.⁵⁸ Gandaraditya had a queen named Karnadevi and she was a Jaina.⁵⁹ There is an inscription of Gandaraditya and his brother Ballal wherein is recorded a grant to a Jain temple of Hoonor (Vhannur) near Kagal.⁶⁰

The next ruler Vijayaditya by his inscription of Kolhapur, (1143A.D.) granted a land at Ajara to Jain temple of Shri. Parshwanatha Tirthankar.⁶¹

Kamdeva was a feudatory mentioned in King Vijayaditya's Kolhapur stone Inscription.⁶² His betel leaves box holder Vasadeva

had built a Jaina Temple and the King granted some land and a horse for the maintenance of the temple.

Silahara rulers of Kolhapur were men of letter. They extended their patronization to men of literature and Art. Some poets had flourished under them. For examples Karnaparya, the famous author of Neminatha Purana (1140A.D.) Gunavarma II (1235A.D.) who finished Chandranath Ashtaka in Tribhuvanatilak temple Kolhapur and Kamalabhava, the disciple of Maghanandi (1235A.D.) and the author of Shantishvara Purana have all flourished under the patronage of the Silahara Kings Nemichanda (1170A.D.) also is said to have first been patronized by King Vijayaditya of this dynasty.⁶³

Thus the Silahara period was a golden age for the spread of Jainism in Kolhapur area.

HONNUR: -

This village is near Kagal and strong hold of Jainism at least 10th century A.D. onwards. Interesting information is flourished by the inscription on the pedestal of an image in the Jaina temple at Honnur near Kagal in the Kolhapur region.⁶⁴ It records a gift of land to the Jaina temple constructed by Bammagavunda, made by

Mahamandalesvara Ballaldeva and Gandaraditya for feeding the ascetics. This Bammagavanda, we are further told was a lay disciple of Kanti i.e. the Jaina nun, Ratrimati who belonged to the Punmagavrikshamula gana of the Mula Samgha. It becomes clear from this that, as in the Tamil country, there were in Karnataka Jaina nuns who entertained men as their disciples. We are not sure if Ratrimati is the correct reading of the name could it Kantimati? The information regarding the existence in the Mula Samgha of the Punna Gavriksha Mula Gana which is generally associated with the Yapaniyas is also noteworthy. Ballaldeva and Gandaraditya were the princes of the Silahara family of Karad-Kolhapur with the assistance of this fact we can assign the inscription approximately to 1110 A.D., though it is not dated. On the pedestal bearing the inscriptions stands the stately image of the Jina surmounted by the seven-hooded serpent. He might be identified as the Tirthankar Parsvanatha.⁶⁵

Kolhapur-the seat of Jainism and Maghanandi: -

Maghanandi Saiddharitik was superintending priest of illustrations Rupa-Narayana Basadi of Kolhapur or Kollagira and head of the provincial pontifical seat (Mandalacharya) in 1123-24

A.D. He belonged to the Mula Samgha, Kundakundanvaya, Design Gana and Postakagachchha, being a disciple of Kulachandradeva. Maghanandi claimed a large number of disciples of that monastic order, among whom are mentioned Kanakanandi, Srutakirti, Trainvidya, Chandrakirti Pandit, Prabhachandra Pandit and Vardhamana. Maghanandi again was the preceptor of the chief, Samant Nimbadeva who was responsible for the constitution of Rupa-Narayana Basadi.⁶⁶

The high pontiff Maghanandi is mentioned in one of the two inscriptions from Kolhapur itself. The inscription on stone found near the Parsvanath temple close to the Sukravara temple close to the Sukravara gate⁶⁷ refers itself to the reign of the Silahara King Gandaraditya and introduces his reputed feudatory Mahasamanta Nimbadeva. Nimbadeva was a devout follower of the Jaina law. He had perpetuated his religious fervor by erecting the temple of Rupa Narayan of Kolhapur, previously. He constructed one more temple dedicated to the god Parsvanatha in the market site of Kavadegolla and in 1135 A.D. a grant of income derived from imposts was made for the benefit of the temple by several members of the mercantile

corporation of Ayyavale Five Hundred. The gift was entrusted to the care of the preceptor Srutakirti Traividya of the Rupa-Narayana Basadi, who we know was a pupil of 'Maghanandi'. Rupa-Narayana was an epithet of Gandaraditya and the Jaina shrine bearing the name was evidently designated by Nimbadeva, after the title of his master. The present day Parsvanatha temple near the Sukravara gate must be survival of the ancient shrine built by Nimbadeva at Kavade-golla.

Prof. Srinivas Rittis view: -Religious importance of Kolhapur

Prof. Shrinivas Ritti formerly Professor of ancient India history and Epigraphy Karnatak University Dharwad edited recently inscriptions from Kolhapur district and published by Prasaranga, Kannad University, Hampi Vidyaranya on January 15, 2000. Prof. Srinivas Ritti gives the following account about the religious importance of Kolhapur region during 10th to 12th century A.D. It runs as follows : -

“It is said that Jainism travelled from the north to the Deccan and once it did, it found a permanent home here. A Kannad inscription calls this region as the abode of the Jainas (idu-Jina-dharm-qvasa-m-adattu). It took roots here and greatly influenced the

life and thinking of the local populace. It gained a large following and a large number of Jaina centres rose on this land. The inscription in this volume though in a limited way give some information the spread of this religion in the Kolhapur region.”⁶⁸

He further adds-

“*Kolhapur itself was a predominant Jaina centre.* There are several Basadis in the city even today and most of the are ancient ones. Most of them are in worship also. Some of them are called Mathas and they maintain good manuscript libraries also.”

Traditionally Kolahpur is considered as one of the ‘four spiritual thrones’ of Jaina religion. A late inscription (1774A.D.) mentions four Siwhasanans (or thrones) of Dilli, Karvira, Jina-Kanchi and Penugonda. Inscription No.10 refers to Kolhapur as *Kshullakapura*. It is an attempt at Sanskritisation of the name Kolhapur, Dr. P.B. Desai explains that Kshullaka is indicative of the Jaina affiliation. He says that Kshullaka was an order of the Jaina monks.”⁶⁹

Kolhapur was an eminent stronghold of Jainism from early times and it has maintained its reputation almost to the present day it

was reckoned among the four pontifical centres or spiritual thrones sacred to the Jaina community.⁷⁰

This tradition is affirmed in a later inscription⁷¹ from the Jaina temple at Vadagaon in the Kolhapur area. The record is dated in 1774 A.D. and refers to the preceptor Lakshmisena Bhattaraka as presiding over the Simhasanas of Dilli, Karvira i.e. Kolhapur, Jina Kanchi and Penugonda.⁷²

Medieval Period:

The Yadavas of Devgiri were defeated by Muslim rulers of Delhi and about 1318 A.D. all Maharashtra including Kolhapur region went under the Muslim control. In 1347 A.D. Bahamani Kingdom was established at Gulbarga and Kolhapur area went under Muslim rule. From 1347 to 1673 Kolhapur was under control of Bahamani and Adil Shahi. There was no information at all about the development or spread of Jainism in this area. Moreover little setback received to Jain religion because there was no evidence of constructing new Jain temples. But Jain community was living peacefully without harming political authority. Some Jaina images were defaced due to the rule of iconoclastic.

Chatrapatis of Kolhapur and Jaina Community(1710 to 1949):

Shivaji the Great conquered Kolhapur area about 1659 but regarding the condition of Jain community very little or no information is available in the 17th century. A separate Maratha state of Kolhapur was founded by Tarabai in the year 1710 at Panhala and lasted upto 1st March 1949.

Jainism had a good days during the reign of Shahu Chhatrapati who ruled the Kolhapur state from 1884A.D. to 1922A.D. Shahu Chhatrapati started Jain hostel in Kolhapur in 1902 and assigned land, monetary help and other facilities.⁷³ Shahu's records speaks much about this. Shahu Maharaj established Shahupuri settlements where number of Jain families settled and pursued trade. Even Laxmipuri, many Jain merchant's opened their shops with the encouragement from Kolhapur Durbar.

Like Shahu Maharaj, his son Rajaram Maharaj (1922A.D. to 1940A.D.) also extended patronization to Jain community in Kolhapur state. Prof. A.B. Latthe was the Diwan of Kolhapur state from 1926A.D. to 1930A.D. and this was golden period of Jaina community.⁷⁴ Daksina Bharat Jain sabha was also patronized by

Kolhapur Durbar. Rajaram Maharaj granted two big plots for Jaina community in Laxmipuri for running Sravikashram for Jain girls.

Not only this but many Jain people were staying in Kolhapur state and occupying important positions. They achieved past glory. A religious functions were held and Chhatrapati was attending sometime for Jain festivals.

Even when Kolhapur state was merged into Bombay Province on 1st March 1949, Prof. A.B. Latthe was advisor to Shahaji Chhatrapati.

Thus right from 2nd century B.C. to 1949 Kolhapur area was occupying by Jain people and they helped to develop this area by their own way by constructing temples and running some useful educational and religious, co-operative institutions for which we will enumerate in the succeeding chapters.

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