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JAINISM: ITS GROWTH AND PATRONAGE UNDER THE HOYSALAS

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ABSTRACT

Jainism is not merely a set of principles and code of conduct, but a way of life. Jainism has enriched the culture of the Karnataka in more ways than one. In the medieval period of Karnataka history religion hardly be separated from any activity of an individual, rulers or a social institution. Jainism was a proud record should have gained patronage under the Hoysalas. Jainism was predominant religion in the Hoysala kingdom in the beginning. Religious donations and royal patronage gained by Jainism its great character to serve in Karnataka. Jainism was constituted a living faith of all classes of people from royalty to peasantry. It would be evident from detailed survey that Jainism was patronized by most of the Hoysala kings. Bhaskar Ananda Salatore rightly states that history of Jainism in South India is nothing but the history of Jainism in Karnataka.

Keywords: Hoysalas, Jainism, Karnataka, Patronage and Religion

Introduction

Jainism is not merely a set of principles and code of conduct, but a way of life. Jainism has enriched the culture of the Karnataka in more ways than one. In the medieval period of Karnataka history religion hardly be separated from any activity of an individual, rulers or a social institution. B.A. Salatore states that history of Jainism in South India is nothing but the history of Jainism in Karnataka¹. It is natural to expect that 'a creed which held sway over the lives of princes and peasants alike' should have deeply influenced the culture of the Karnataka. Jainism attained its stature and prominence, particularly under the enlightened patronage of such dynasties as the Gangas, the Western Chalukyas, the Rastrakutas, the Kalachuris and the Hoysalas. Jainism has left deeply influenced the Kannada literature, art architecture and in other spheres of life. So, Jainism was a proud record should have gained patronage under the Hoysalas.

Objectives

1. To analyze the importance of Jainism in Karnataka History.
2. To study the growth and patronage under the Hoysalas.
3. The impact on the rise of religions.
4. Further research areas of study in Karnataka religions.
5. To locate new areas of research taking into consideration development of religions in Karnataka.

Primary Sources: The following are the primary sources are refereed to write a research article. Inscriptional sources, Epigraphia Carnatic Volume 1 to X, P. Gururaja Bhatt's Studies in Tuluva History and Culture, Dr J. Duncan. M. Derrett, The Hoysalas a Medieval Indian Royal Family, William Coelho the Hoysala Vamsa were the primary sources refereed to prepare a research article.

Methodology: This research article is based on the study of qualitative and quantitative aim to understanding the rise and growth of Jainism in Karnataka. The qualitative research work gathers a depth in understanding Jainism in history of Karnataka perspective. This article is the elaborate archives of constructed Jainism in literatures of Karnataka and possibly to find out alternative of understanding religions in the regions of the Deccan.

The very foundation of the Hoysala kingdom is attributed to the Jaina teacher who according to an inscription at Sorab was Sudatta², while another inscription gives him as Vardhamana Muni³. According to inscriptions the progenitor of the Hoysala dynasty was Sala, who was a devout Jaina and a worshiper of family deity Vasantikadevi or Padmavathi at Sosavur. The event of Sala killing the tiger by the words of Sudatta Poysala. The account of the origin of the dynasty and blessed by the Jaina guru to establish kingdoms found in early inscriptions⁴. This also explains why the early rulers of the dynasty, were followed Jainism and activity patronize it.

Monk Sudatta Vardhamana brought the Hoysalas into the political arena of the Deccan in 10th century A.D. It is possible that the matrimonial alliances which the Hoysalas established with the Gangas under whom Jainism attained its Golden Age, must have prompted the Hoysalas to extend their active patronage to Jainism⁵.



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Vinayaditya II was a great patron of Jainism. An inscription of 1131 A.D. informs us that Vinayaditya "Gladly made many number of tanks, temples, Jaina shrines, nadus and villages."⁶ Makara jinalaya, Neminatha Basadi and Shantinath Basadi at Angadi were built during Vinayaditya's rule in 1050 A.D. Parsvantha Basadi at Hale Belagola built in 1094 A.D.

Ereyanga, son of Vinayaditya was also a devout Jaina. He made a grant of Rachanahalla in Belgola-12 in A.D, 1094 "to the celebrated Gopanandi Pandita Deva of the Kondakundanvaya of the Srimula Sangha and Devigana..... for the repairs of the Basadis of the Kabhappu Thirtha of Belagola for divine worship, for gifts of food, and for vessals and cloths."⁷

Ballala I ruled only for a short period. He married the 3 daughters of Mariyane-- Dandanayaka a devout Jaina. (Padmala, Chavala and Boppa Devi). Mariyane along with merchants of Belegerepattana, set up the Jain image in the Basadi at Hatna in Tiptur Taluk.

The Royal Patronage: The reign of Vishnuvardhana occupies an important place in the religious history of the Hoysalas. The period witnessed the rise of Sri Vaishnavism as a prominent religion of the land. As far as Jainism was concerned, his reign period saw the heyday of Jainism. His beloved queen Shantala Devi and his most prominent generals were Jains, and they actively supported the cause of Jainism. Shantaladevi is described as the '**crest jewel of perfect faith in Jainism**'. Her parents, Marasinga and Machikabbe were ardent devotees of Jainism. Prabhachandra Siddhantadeva, disciple of Meghachandra Trividyaadeva of Pustakagachcha of the Desiya gana of the Mulasangha was the preceptor of Santaladevi⁸.

A record of 1123 A.D states that Shantaladevi granted with exemptions from all imposts the village Mottenavile of Kolkaninadu to her preceptor. She caused Vilasankatta to be built as a tank and granted to the Savati gandha Hasti Basadi at Belgola. She also obtained from Vishnuvardhana a garden of 50 kolugas of wet land, in the middle plain below the Ganyasamudra, and granted the same to Savati gandha Hasti Basadi, which she had caused to be erected⁹. She founded the Jaina temple of Savati gandhavarana at Sravana Belgola. The image of Santinatha the 16th Jaina Thirthankara and Yaksa, Yaksini of the Jina found in the Basadi. Shantaladevi adorned the tilles like '**Jina Dharma Nirmale**' '**Samyukta Chudamani**' and '**Chatusa samayasamuddharanakarini**'. It has been rightly said that Shantala 'is a flower of Karnataka culture'. In 1131A.D. Shantaladevi died at Sivaganga and her memory the Santesvara Basadi was built there ¹⁰.

Vishnuvardhana also extended the royal patronage to Jainism. Buchanan sates that like his ancestors Vishnuvardhana was worshiper of jina and adds that at his capital were 700 temples dedicated to that god¹¹. The most prominent generals of Vishnuvardhana were made generous patronage to Jainism.

Gangaraja was greater for his fervor towards Jaina religion. He transferred both the rewards which the king had given him as religions endowments. He renovated all the Jaina temples of Gangavadi, he had the enclosure built around the Gommata Deva of Gangavadi. Gangaraja together with his faithful wife Laxmidevi who by restoring innumerable ruined Jaina temples in all place to their former conditions and by making liberal gifts to the most worthy converted the Gangavadi 96,000 into Koppana¹².

Gangaraja .received "Parama' Village from Vishnuvardhana and granted to the Jaina temples erected his mother and his wife Pochaladevi and Lakshmi respectively¹³. After his conquest of Talked and other Chola territories Gangaraja received again from vdna the land of Govindavadi and granted for the worship Gommatadeva¹⁴. Further he had an enclosure built round Gommateshvara¹⁵. Among the other Jaina temples built by him, mention may be made of Indrakulla griha, now known as Sasana Basadi at Sravana Belgola¹⁶ and the Kattale Basadi for his mother Pochave. Eradukatte Basadi was built by Laxmi wife of Gangaraja in 1118 A.D. He also set up epitaphs of his mother, his wife, who died by Sallekhana, and his teacher Subhaschandra¹⁷. The devotion and fervor of Gangaraja for the Jaina faith won him great regard from the people and he was considered by them as a saint.

Among the other Jaina generals of Vishnuvardhana mention may be made of Mariyane, Bharata, Punisa, Boppa and Bittiyanna. Bharata erected the 2 images of Bharata and Bahubali at Belgolain Chandragiri hills. He also put up the happalige or railing of the hall near those images as also the hall around the Gommatesvara and the grand flights of steps¹⁸. Inscriptions credit him with the building of 80 new Basadis and replacing 200 old ones at Gangavadi¹⁹. Bittiyanna after his successful expeditions to Kongu built Vishnuvardhana jinalaya to which king Vishnuvardhana made grants²⁰.

The Belur inscription informs us that general Boppa built the Parsvantha Basadi at Dorasamudra in memory of Gangaraja and named it Drohagaratta jinalaya. Later it was known as Vijaya Parsva jinalaya and now today known as Parsvantha Basadiin



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Dwarasamudra. He built Santesvara Basadi at Kambadahalli and in A.D. 1138 he built Trailokyrajana jinalaya also called Boppana Chaitylaya²¹.

Punisa was a Jaina and devout disciple of Ajita Munipati and in the manner of the Gangas he decorated the Basadis of Gangavadi 96,000²². The Parsavanatha Basadi of Chamarajanagara and the ruined temples at Bastihalli owe their existence to him.²³ Vishnuvardhana greatly patronage Jainism. His devotion to Sripada Trividya Deva and his buildings of a Jaina abode at Chalyar and making appropriate grants for the repairs of Jaina temples as well as for the maintenance of Jaina saints²⁴.

Narasimha I was also tolerant towards Jainism. Most of his generals were the followers of Jina. An inscription says "king Narasimha visited Jaina Gommatas and Parsvanthas, as also the Shrine of Chaturvimsati villages and granted for them Savaneru, Bekka and Keggere villages²⁵. Narasimha's foremost general was Hulla who was a promoter of Jainism. He built Chaturvimsati Basadi at Gommatapura a mass of religious merit²⁶. He also renovated many Jain temples. He renovated the Uppattayata's Jaina temple at Bankapura. Hulla built 24 Tirthankara Basadis in Sravanbelagola in 1175 A.D. This is the biggest temple in Belagola and also known as Bhandari Basadi built by Hulla Bhandari. Prasvanth Basadi at Chamaraja-nagara and Trikuta Basadi at Cholasamudra also built during the reign of Narasimha I.

Another inscription, one Machiyakka built a Jaina Mandira and a tank called Padmavatigere during the reign of Narasimha²⁷. Also, during his reign Govideva built Channa Parsva Basadi at Heggere in memory of his wife Mahadevinayakita²⁸.

The example of Narasimha was followed by Ballala II. During his reign the Jaina teacher Vadibhasimha Tarkika Chakravarti Sripala — Traividya Deva along with his disciples, Mariseti, Kamiseti and Bharati setti "together with the merchants from all countries and citizens caused to be erected of fine Jaina temple of God, Abhinava Santinatha Deva called Nagara jinalaya" at Dorasamudra. Ballala made a gift of the villages Muchandi and Kadalalahali in Gummana Vritti in the Maysenadu to Vajranondi Siddhanti Deva for the services of offering 8-fold worship to god, and for repairs of the temples and for free gifts of food to ascetics²⁹.

Devashetty A rich merchant constructed the Jaina temple called Verra Ballala jinalaya, for the services of the temples and the priests, king made a gift of some villages together with the right to collect toll dues on some commodities³⁰.

Recharasa a counselor of the Kalachurya was a devotee of Jina. He obtained from Ballala II, a grant and regranted it to the Jains of Arasiya kere, where he also set up the image of Sahasra kuta jina³¹. Achiyakka wife of Brahmin minister named Chandramauli of Ballala II, built Akkana Basti in Sravana Belgoala in 1180 A.D. For the upkeep of this temple Ballala granted the village Bammanaykanahalli³². In 1195 A.D. Nagadeva a minister of Ballala built the Nagara Jinalaya at Sravana belagola³³. Santinatha Basadi at Bandanike, Ekkoti jinalaya at Vakkaleri, Santinath Basadi at Basti halli were the other Jain Basadis built during reign of Ballala II.

Narasimha II and Ramanatha extended their patronage to Jainism. An inscription on a pillar at Kogali records the gift of gold to the Jain temple of Channa Parsva at Kogali by Pratapa Chakravathin Vira Ramanatha³⁴.

Narasimha III paid a visit to the Vijay Parsava Basadi at Dorasamudra built by Boppana and made offerings to the god³⁵. On the occasion of his upanayana he made another gift to same basadi.³⁶

Somesvara not only paid homage to Jain gods but also invited his subjects to pay homage to them after he had established his triple umbrella in Vijay Thirthdhinatha Basadi. Ballala III's wife Chikkayi Tayi was a devotee of Jainism.³⁷ She also initiated Karkala, Venur, Moodbidri, and Keravase develops into a great centers of Jainism.

It would be evident from the above survey that Jainism was patronized by most of the Hoysala rulers. It is possible that Jainism lost much of its hold due to coming into prominence of Srivaisnavism and Saivism. Jainism an Endeavour to accommodate itself to the age, Jina is described in 1151 A.D. as the Universal Spirit who is Mahaveera Siva, Brahma, Buddha and Vishnu.

Conclusion: Jainism during the 10th century was in a dying stage, once again grew like a phoenix under the Hoysalas. Shravanabelagola, Kambadahalli; Belur, Arasikere, Bastihalli, Adaguru, Sanehalli were still a centers of Jaina enthusiasm. The people of the Hoysala Empire followed different creeds, and all those creeds at one time or other flourished under the patronage of the Hoysala Kings. Jainism was predominant religion in the Hoysala kingdom in the beginning. Religious donations and royal patronage gained by Jainism its great character to serve in Karnataka. Jainism was constituted a living faith of all classes of people from royalty to peasantry.



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Jainism served Karnataka in ample measure and contributed in no small measure for the development of Karnataka. Jainism has left deep impress in the all the spheres of life of the people.

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5. Kama Hoysala, son of Vinayaditya is regarded as the son of Ganga princes. Cf. EC. VI, Introduction, P 15.
6. E.C. Vol II, Sb. 143.
7. E.C. Vol V, cp, 148.
8. E.C. Vol II Sb. 132 and 140.
9. E.C. Vol II, Sb. 132 and 143.
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12. E.C. Vol II, Sb. 127. Koppana or Kopal is in the south west of the Nizma's Dominions and is considered as a holy place by the Jainas.
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