

The Rattas Patronage to Jainism

Dr.S.G. Chalawadi

Asst. Professor,
Dept of A I History and Epigraphy Karnatak
University, Dharwad

The Rattas were the significant ruling dynasty, who claimed descent from the Rastrakutas. The earliest record is dated 980 A.D. It comes from the place called sogal. It is believed that sogal was their early capital, from where they shifted first to Soundatti and later on to Belgaum. Their reign continued till 1238 A.D.¹ When they were thrown out of power by the seunas of Devagiri. The Rattas served under the Chalukyas of Kalyan and tried to become independent. When the Kalachuries displaced the Chalukyas generally the Rattas claimed authority over a large administrative division known as Kohundi or kondi 3000. This included major parts of Soundatti, Gokak, Hukkeri, Raibag, Chikkodi, Bailhongal and Mudhol, Jamakhandi talukas which fall in Belgaum and Bijapur districts.

The line of descent of Rattas rulers, commences with Nanna and ends with Lakshmidewa - II. In between there were eleven rulers, namely Karthavirya-I, Nanna - I, Erga, Anka, Nanna-II, Karthavirya II, Sena-II, Karthavirya-III, Lakshmidewa-I, Karthavirya-IV and Mallikarjuna- II.

The Rattas in the course of their rule patronaged both saivism and Jainism. By erecting temples and Basadis and giving much grants to them.

One of the earliest references to Jaina patronage under the Rattas is noticed in Soundatti inscription. We are told that Karthavirya-I gave land (grants) to the Basadis constructed by Pritvirama his successors Kannakaira also gave grants to Jinalya at Soundatti. The next important ruler to give grants for Basadi was Sena-Is, Son Anka.

In this paper an attempt, is made to identify important Jaina shrines ascribed to the Rattas. Literally hundreds of Jaina Basadi's were erected during their rule. But most of them have been destroyed for various historical reasons. Some of them have been converted into shrines of other religious sects, while some others have been completely renovated into modern basadi's.

Among the noteworthy Jaina shrines the temple now called *Veerabhadra temple at Nesargi* deserves to be mentioned. It is a single shrine or ekakuta construction, comprising garbhagriha, ardhmantapa, navaranga and open sabhamantapa. In the uttaranga models of Nagara shrines are noticed. The temples of Jaina affiliation is proved by the presence of small Jaina images carved in the ceiling of the Mukhamantapa. Similarly the beams also have Jina images. From exterior details it can be surmised that the garbhagriha is supported by a phamsana type superstructure.²

The next important temple is the famous *Ellamma temple at Soundatti*. It is ascribed in to 1098 A.D. In an inscription of 9th century it is cited that Prithivirama the son of Merada, build the Jinendra Bhavana at Soundatti and gave land to it. the Eiasadi belonged to Kareyegana Mailapathirtha. Later on Karthavirya and Bagalambika made further donations to this shrine. In a ruined temple called Basadigudi in Soundatti an inscriptions of 980 A.D. refers to construction of a Jain basadi by Shantivarma of Ratta dynasty. His mother Nijayabbari also gave land grants to it. in the same basadi third inscription refers to a basadi build by Kalasena of Ratta dynasty. This basadi has received further grants under Sena-II and Kannakaira-II. The record is dated 1098 A.D. and mentions the Chalukya Vikramaditya - VI as the ruler. These records apparently refer to three different Jaina shrines that once

existed in the vicinity of Soundatti.³ Most probably, the temple now called Yellamma temple could be the Jaina basadi mentioned in the inscription of 1098 A.D.

The Yallamma temple is of Ekakuta *type* comprising Garbhagriha, Antharala, Navarnaga and Agramantapa with three entrances. Externally it represents a Karnataka dravida vimana.

The next important basadi is the *Gadadbasadi or Mahaveera basadi at Raibag*. The inscriptions in Raibag and Kolhapur refer to three basadis in Raibag, which was then known as Huvinabage. The Kolhapur inscription of 1139 A.D. mentions grants given by officer Dasimarasa and his wife Lakkadevi to the basadi built by Marasinga set! in Agrahara Huvinabage. The Raibhag inscription 1201 A.D.⁴ issued by Ratta Karthavirya - IV. States that Eraga (Circa - 1048 A.D.) gave land grants to the basadi of Yapaniya sangha and basadi of Moolasangha. At present there are only two basadi's of which the so-called Gadad basadi or Mahaveera basadi is renovated. Today an image of mahaveer standing in Kuyotsarga is installed here.

The Adinatha basadi should be one of the three basadi's mentioned in the inscription above. It consists of a garbhagriha, ardhmantapa. The basadi is oriented north extremely the adishtana is original, but wall etc. are renovated, about 70 years ago a manastamba was set up by Mr. Gopalappa Girige.

The *Shanlinath basadi at Kallohole* is the next basadi to be mentioned. An inscription of 1008 A.D.⁵ refers to thrikuta shantinatha Jinalaya built by Rajarasa who was the chief of Hagaratage Nadu. Karthaveeryu gave 2000 Kamba of land, for the basadi. The inscription was composed by famous Jaina poet Parshwa Pandita.

The basadi has three garbhagrihas of which one facing east enshrines Parshwanatha in Kayotsarga, the one facing west contains Chandraprabha and the south facing one contains externally image of Shantinatha. The principal shrine carries a partly preserved phampasana shikhara. As mentioned in the inscription, this trikuta Jinalaya was complete with makara torana and manastamba. The three shrines together with images represented the tri-rathas of Jaina concept namely samyakhagnyana, samyak-darsana and samyak-charitrya.

The *parshwanatha basadi at Konnur* stands on the river bank and is towards north. An inscription of Vikramaditya-VI dated 1087 A.D. mentions that Dandanayaka Chaundas son, sena built a Jina shrine at Khandanur, that is Konnur, and land grants were given to it,⁶ the temple consists of Garbhagriha, Ardhmantapa, Navaranga and Mukhamantapa. But last two are renovated. The garbhagriha now enshrines a marble image of parshwanatha. Externally the temple represents Karnataka dravida form but the super structure is modern.

The *panchalingshwara temple at Hooli* is one of the best preserved Jaina temples in Belgaum region. The inscriptions at Hooli refer to the construction of Jaina basadi by Lajjiyabbe, the wife of an officer of Kuhundi, 3000 her grand son Nannayya gave land grants 1145 A.D.⁷ probably this Jaina basadi is the same as today's Panchalingshwara temple. Internally temple consists of a rectangular principal garbhagriha, a rectangular gudamantapa with two more garbhagriha on its flanks and a large open Agramantapa in front. But externally it is panchakuta, that is temple with five shikharas of Karnataka dravida order. From an inscription of the time of Kalachuri Bijjala, it is known that 24 images of Jama thirthankaras were installed in the principal rectangular garbhagriha. The basadi is called Manikya Thirthada basadi for this reason, certain Kalamukha acharyas contributed to the construction of its agramantapa.

There was a famous *basadi in Belawadi (Bailhongal Taluka)*, called sahasrakuta basadi in inscriptions. This probably should be in the place of modern veerabhadra temple. The basadi is referred to as early as 1070 A.D. when Jayadeva, Devanna, Chaundaraya and Aitavarma made grants.

In 1075 A.D.⁸ several merchants gave cash grants. Later on in 12th century Kannakaira's daughter Bagiyabbe also gave grants. The name Sahasrakuta suggests that the original Jaina shrine carried a multiple spiral superstructure or a sahasrakuta Jina chaitya inside.

Sankeshwara has a Parshwanatha basadi 12th century A.D. The garbhagriha of this temple is star-shaped. It enshrines a Parshwanatha in Kayotsarga which may be of later date. Similarly exterior outer part of the temple is renovated.⁹

Belgaum - The so called *kamalabasadi* is a well preserved attractive temple in the fort at Belgaum. It is also called *shantinatha basadi*. An inscription of 1204 A.D. informs that Bichiraja, a minister of Ratta prince Mallikarjuna (son of Karthaveerya), built Shantinatha basadi under the name Ratta Jinalaya. Karthaveerya - IV gave grants for this basadi.¹⁰ The temple consists of Garbhagriha, Antarada, Navaranga and Agramantapa. Externally it is a phamasana temple with interesting features. There is a garbhagriha over the garbhagriha as in the case of certain other Jaina shrines like Brahma Jinalaya at Lakkundi. The Agramantapa also has a pamasana superstructure. Interior of this mantapa has been very elaborately carved ceiling. There are number of Jina images inside which are beautifully carved.

There are some uninscribed Jaina shrines which include Adinatha basadi at *Ainapur* and the basadis at *Chlnchani Kadaklat Kagwad* and other places. Since these places were located within the boundaries of Kundi-3000, they may be ascribed to the Rattas.¹¹

To some up the Jaina shrines built by the Rattas, consist mostly of ekakuta order. Some like Kalhole temple were of thrikuta type. They are built either in Karnataka dravida style or phampsana style. Most of the shrines have undergone renovation. In some of the shrines, the principal images are replaced by new images.¹² The survey shows that the region ruled over by the Rattas was prosperous in Jaina monuments.

References:

- 1) Altekar A. S., 1967, The Rashtrakutas and their times, Oriental Book Agency, Poona.
- 2) Burges James, 1971, Archaeological Survey of Western India. (New imperial Series) Vol. I, Antiquities of the Belgaum and Kaladgi.
- 3) Chulawadi. S. G., 2006, Belagave Pradeshadalli Jaina, Dharma (Unpublished) Thesis Karnatak, Karnatak University, Dharwad.
- 4) Desai. P. B., 1957, Jainism in South India and Some Jaina Epigraphs, Gulachandra, Hirachandra Doshi, Jaina Samiskriti Samrakshaka, Sholapur.
- 5) Handur B. R., 2002, Jaina Paramarege Belgave, Pradeshika Koduge, Smt. Manjula Adake, Hukkeri.
- 6) Hampana, 1998, Sasanagalli Jain, Tirthagalu, Bangalore.
- 7) Henry Cousens, 1906, The Chalukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts, Govt. of India, Publication Branch, Calcutta.
- 8) J.B.B.R.A.S. Vol.10, P.220.
- 9) Kempannavar C.C. (Ed), 1990, Jaina Kshetragd Itihya b.B. Karnawadi, Harogeri.
- 10) Kundanagar K.G., 1979, Inscriptions in Northern and Kolhapur State, K.R. Mohite, Arya Bhavan Press, Kolhapur.
- 11) Malagatti V.C., (Ed), 2002, Belagave Jilleya Bhavya Parampare, Offset Printers and Publishers, Belgaum.
- 12) Patil C.B., 1962, Rattar Kalad Sounskitik Adhayana : Basavashri Prakashan, Sankeshwar.