CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER IV

SOCIO ECONOMIC LIFE OF SATAVAHANA PERIOD

4.1. Introduction:

The study of socio economic life can be conducted on the basis of various sources. The study of cultural life cannot be complete without understanding the sociological background of the period. Hence we can study various social institutions, customs and traditions as well as social relationship between various social organizations and social communities. The study of institutions as well as literary sources can help to examine various facts together in a new angle. This approach has been authenticated in this chapter.

The study of socio economic life in ancient period is complex because there is a lack of sources and authentic sources are quite rare and scanty at one hand and they are not easily available on the other hand. Satavahana period was period of peace and glory. Social cohesion was a major reason behind the prosperity of the period. R.C. Majumdar has observed that “While in Greeks, the Parthians, the Sakas and the Kushanas were harrying the north western frontier of India; a powerful kingdom was established in the Deccan by the Andhras.” Being so they had an added advantage in the all round development of the region. It has been pointed that “Their history is not definitely known but it appears very probable that shortly after the death of Asoka they threw off the yoke of the Maurya dynasty, and thereby brought about its downfall.”

There was a vacuum in south India and Satavahana that to fill it due to their active role on the matrix of power in South India in general and Deccan in particular. They played a vital role when there was Dark Age in north India and uncertainty in South India. The Satavahanas or the Shalivanas ruled entire Godavari Krishna peninsula or delta. It has been observed that “Pratisthan a modern Paithan or Pytoon on the Godavari was their western capital, while Dhanyakataka, near Bezwada on the Krishna was the eastern capital.” Rich natural resources, availability of water, minerals laid to the growth of
trade and commerce in the Satavahana period. The Satavahanas due to their political ability they were able to bring cohesive social life. It has been pointed the society under the Satavahanas was divided with reference to the offices held and duties performed by the people. According to Rapson these officials were connected with the royal family by blood or by caste. The second social class comprised officials like Amatyas, Mahamatras and Bhandararikas and non officials like merchants, head of caravan traders, head of trade guilds etc. The third social class was composed of the physicians, scribes, cultivators, druggists, goldsmiths, etc. The fourth and the last social class included the carpenters, gardeners, blacksmiths, and fishermen. The mercantile people and the cultivators were divided into Grihas, Kulas or Kutumbas meaning families at the head of each of which there was a Grihapati or Kutambin i.e. the head of the family who occupied a position of authority in the family.”  

The classification of social life was based on professional abilities. About organized social stratification it has been observed that “One specialty of the Satavahana period was craft guilds. There are references to guilds of the oil pressers, artisans, potters, corn dealers, weavers, bruisers and bamboo workers. The existence of guilds indicates corporate life of the time.”  

The economic prosperity led to the affluence of art and architecture in Deccan. The prosperity growth and stability led to development of art and architecture in Deccan, which is evident on the basis of cave temples at Rajtadag.

The study of social life in ancient India can be conducted on the basis of sources such as inscriptions, coins, as well as reports of excavations and literary sources such as Puranas. About the study of social life Gisbert has observed that “The essential fact behind it is that man has always belonged to a society of one kind or another, and that without it he cannot exist at all.”  

Social life in Satavahana period is not exception to this. It has been pointed that “The question of the nature of society is largely connected with the question of its origin. It is the former, as we shall presently see, on which the latter depends as a kind of corollary.”  

Like other ancient Indian period, Satavahana period was also part of feudal social structure. It has been pointed that “The natural sociality of man, which is so evident, has nevertheless been repeatedly called into question in history for various reasons. Some of these are mutually opposed.”  

Indian social life being divided in Varna system was many times, mutually opposed to each
other till they survived together because of social bonds and cultural needs. About social life in Satavahana period, Tripathi has observed that there were at least four classes of social divisions. The first being the Mahabhojas, the Maharathis and the Mahasenapatis, who controlled the rastras or districts, comprised the highest rank of society. The second class included officials like the Amatyas, Mahamatras, and the Bhandagarikas such non officials as the Naigama (merchant), Sarthavaha (head of the trader), and the Sresthis (chief of the trade guild). The third class consisted of the Vaidya (physician), Lekhaka (Scribe), Suvarnakara (goldsmith), Gandhika (perfumer), Halakiya (Cultivator) etc. The fourth class comprehended the Malakara (gardener), Vardhaki (carpenter), Dasaka (fisherman), Lohavaniya (blacksmith) etc. The head of the family (kula) was called Kutumbin or Grihapati, his position was certainly one of authority. The life during Satavahana period was thus based on values and ideals. The social life was full of enthusiasm and spirit which is evident on the basis of social exchange. The reconstruction of social life has been possible on the basis of cave temples as well as literary evidences recorded during the period. Such an understanding can be possible by correlating various sources literary, archeological, as well as folk traditions.

The study of social and economic life cannot be separated from each other, because both these aspects are organic and interdependent. Their sociological value can only be examined on the basis of available data. In the Satavahana period though there existed Varna system, yet it was not rigid and it was not barbarized. The social interrelationship was very much healthy, cordial and happy. The feature of Satavahana society was based on excellence performance in every field.

The Satavahana dynasty was able to mark its significant position in the history of Deccan because of the social peace and economic prosperity. A careful and critical study of all these aspects has been studied here.

The social life during Satavahana period was quite peaceful and coherent. The entire process of social change was well accelerated. The social life during Satavahana period was comparatively more progressive and forward looking, because inter-caste
and inter Varna marriages was possible in the period. The caste differences were not
dogmatic and stereotyped and these were based on effective social relationship.

The Satavahana’s social organism was symbolic and inter dependent. The
artisans, artists and craftsmen were major classes having economic dependence on
each other. The self sufficiency of village life was basic foundation as ensured by
Satavahanas during their period. The goods and services provided by villagers were
sufficient enough to meet their demands. Hence the study of social and economic life
must be conducted together, which can provide a new perspective to look at this
promising dynasty in South India. A very progressive outlook was developed in the
period under discussion. The entire process of socio economic change was dependent
on each other and we have to evolve a new compressive approach to study social and
economic life of the period.

A healthy society is always based on progressive views and ideas, which were
unique and unparallel. The entire process of social change can be rightly explained in
the context of ancient Indian life. There is a need to overcome the traditional and
stereotyped images of the period. Some dynasties like Satavahanas must be well
appreciated for their revolutionary progressive ideas.

Thus the study of social and economic life mainly rests on

- relevant social life provided was responsible for economic prosperity
- The entire system was reoriented and society was also undergoing many
  changes by shifting from stereotyped images to new progressive images.

The intercaste marriages were allowed and there was horizontal to vertical
exchanges in the social system. Not much is said about origin of Satavahanas, whether
they were Brahmins or Kshtiryas or they were mixture of these two cannot be exactly
located. The source book like Taitareya Brahmanas is also sailent on this issue. Many
mythological stories are prevailing about this and renouned poet S.D.Inamdar has
written a drama based on the theme titled as Satyawadha Godavari. The author has
finally provided a clue that only Godavari River can tell about the truth of Satavahanas
history and she can only explain these mythological stories effectively. In order to
describe socio economic life of the Satavahana period we have to consider various literary sources in a new angle to highlight different dimensions of Satavahanas rule. The sources to explain Satavahanas socio economic life is ample in nature. What is required is critical insight to throw light on Satavahanas socio economic life in a new angle. In the historical orientation of Satavahanas can be further changed on the basis of reunderstanding the source material in a new angle. Number of inscriptions, literary works like Hala’s Gatha Saptashati and Gundhyas Bsrahat Katha Kosh are available. What is required is new interpretation of facts. These facts can be further brought to light by throwing new light on neglected corners. It is true that social and economic aspects are inseparable and they are closely webbed together. Social institutions can rightly grow if there is good deal of prosperity in the society. Social peace and harmony can be established if economic systems are healthy and active enough to generate new enthusiasm in the society.

The study of Satavahanas social and economic life cannot be complete without use of potential research material and sources in a new angle. This new angle can only be brushed properly by adopting new theories and frames for analysis of the research problem in the new perspective.

- The sources of history must be examined and evaluated in pragmatic perspective.
- New spirit can be infused in the older sources by interpreting them.
- The interplay between social development and economic harmony can lead to new understanding of socio economic history of the period.

For this purpose sociological perspective has been brought to light.

4.2. Sociology of Satavahana period:

India has a long history and its cultural tradition is also very old. It has been rightly pointed that “India’s cultural heritage is one of the most ancient, extensive and varied among all those which make up the cultural heritage of mankind. Throughout the ages many races and peoples contributed to India’ culture. Some came into contact with her only temporarily, others settled permanently within her borders. The keynote of the
distinctive culture thus evolved was synthesis on the basis of eternal values.” (Reproduced from the introductory remarks in “The Cultural Heritages of India” Vol. I, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Publication. See Rao C Shankar) The Satavahana period witnessed this process of synthesis in urban and tribal life because Aitare Bramahnas described Satavahanas belonged to a tribal race. In the Satavahana period there were many classes, tribes, and Varna distinctions, but they were not against each other or nor they were barriers in development. It is true that the different systems that we find in India “…possess a unity of characters and attitude which makes the manifold a single whole, which we might describe as the Hindu spirit. The civilization which is inspired by a spiritual insight of our sages is marked by a certain moral integrity, a fundamental loyalty, a fine balance of individual desires and social demands, and it is these that are responsible for its vitality and continuity.” (Ibid., p-xxiii Shankar rao) The Satavahana society testifies this phenomenon on the larger context

The following characters of Satavahana’s sociology can be described as under:

- The Satavahanas continued ancient Indian cultural traditions and refined it.
- There was unity in diversity in the Satavahana society. Satavahanas imbibed it as a reality of past and hope of the future. (S.C.Dube “Indian Society”, 1990, p-23, National Book Trust of India)
- Dharma was life center of Satavahana society, They followed morality with high spirit.
- The Satavahanas protected Indian cultural heritage in a scientific manner. They developed architecture and culture for such systematic development.
- Spirit of tolerance prevailed in Satavahana period because they had synthetic approach towards other religion. Though they were followers of Vedic religion, Buddhism and Jainism developed side by side.
- Harmony with nature and environment was important character of Satavahana tradition. Satavahana’s protected natural resources for the future.
- Ethics and morality was essence of Satavahana society. They could develop art and literature due to such dedication and devotion.
In the frame of limited span the Satavahana dynasty was able to develop science and technology in their limited resources. The cave temples were scooped out and pillars of victory were erected to commemorate the triumph and glory.

The economic institutions were self sustaining and they were not on the mercy of state government. Hence number of welfare activities were practiced by them in a benevolent manner.

Whatever earned by the trade guilds and big businessmen, Shreni and Shreties was utilized for public welfare. These were the autonomous bodies free from state intervention and they could promote, arts, literature, as well as activities of sports and culture.

Thus all these salient features of Satavahana sociology revealed that Satavahanas were able to develop new dimensions of life in the ancient period. Their overall performance was better than prevailing dynasties, because the Satavahanas perception of public rule was based on social intelligence.

The new sociological understanding of Satavahana history throws light on social assimilation. Indian society during the Satavahana period was rural society and it has many limitations of time span. In spite of all the stress, stress and strain Satavahana rulers were able to manage their resources for public good. They rightly involved large number of poor people in socio economic change. They persuaded development of women and weaker sections. They were also able to transform the life of folk people.

All these aspects can be examined on the basis of socio economic perspective developed by those rulers. The entire pedagogy of social development can be studied in the angle of Satavahanas endeouring efforts to protect Indian culture in the adverse situation. Their sole aim was to keep India on the top in the ancient period, in which they were successful.

4.3. Features of socio economic life.

* Social peace and prosperity was based on harmonious relationship with each other. Malice and hatred was not prevailing, but there was a feeling of cohesion among various social groups.
* The ramifications in art, literature as well as high quality textile products testify socio economic prosperity of the period.

* The multi cultural, multi religious and multi linguistic assimilation of social life led towards reliable and reasonable development in the background of earlier period of uncertainty and trimmers.

* The liable and objective progress in the period can be reflected in the trading emporiums at Bhokardhan and Ter, which are exemplified on the basis of excavation reports.

*More than 29 cities in the western region flourished as metro townships and Pitlomy has appreciated the boost provided by Satavahana rulers.

* Organized trade gilds and corporations were base of economic prosperity. These gilds were sharing their profit for the construction of cave temples.

* Art, music and dance flourished in the period, which is reflected and highlighted in the dancing panel at Rajtadag, modern Aurangabad.

* Satavahanas trade relations with western countries were of two way nature. They were getting Roman, Kmphora, quality wine from Rome and India was exporting high quality textiles. The balance of trade was in favor of India.

* Silver and gold was pouring in India through western ports and this led to all round economic development.

* We can preferably specify the efforts made by Satavahana rulers for protecting law and order, security in travel and tourism and safety for trade and commerce.

* The endeavor of Satavahana rulers was based on developing all round progress in art, architecture and literature as well as science and technology. This can be exemplified on the basis of structures erected in the period and monuments of pride established in the Satavahana phase.
The Satavahana social life was free and transparent enough to echo stability of the period. The conservation of nature was equally undertaken for the rational use of resources. The study of the features of socio economic life of the Satavahana period revealed that they paid importance for the construction of roads, communication facilities and they promoted local artisans and craftsmen for developing their production services based on excellence and quality. The ethno cultural processes were very well protected and new light was thrown on art work as well as trade and commerce as a vehicle to market their essential textile in the western world. In the Satavahana period Paithani, the super textile was finely webbed and promoted to Roman Empire. The teracota figures, ivory figures, beds and ornaments were also largely demanded in the westerned countries which poured gold and silver to the western ports which were dominated by Satavahnas.

All these features amply show that the socio economic life in the Satavahana period was very well developed and inter play between these two was responsible for cultural development of the region.

All these aspects magnify peace and glory achieved by Satavahana rulers in the period 3 and half decades. This led to attainment of golden age in the southern Deccan, which manifested cultural efflorescence in the period.

Thus the social and economic life was very bright and positively flourishing to develop art and architecture in the western India. Dr. R.S.Gupte has studied more than 450 cave temples in western India and many of them belonged to Satavahana period. The study of all these caves reflects cultural glory of the period. The identification, selection, and definition of the research problem is based on pin pointing the cultural life of the Deccan during the Satavahana period. Hence the analysis of resources has been made on the basis of new perspective. The cause and effect analysis of economic prosperity lies in social cohesion. The Satavahana rulers developed solutions to various problems based on their own strategies. Their regular implementation of new schemes was based on their own local models. The Satavahanas could develop their own identity in cultural life in every field because of their dedication, devotion and sacrifice.
4.4. Social dynamics and prosperity:

Economic prosperity depends on social stability. The dynamics of development in any period can be examined in the sociological viewpoint. Trade and commerce is closely related to social and cultural environment in the states during the period. Gisbert has observed that “The conscious interaction of the human being with his environment is always addressed, directly or indirectly to the satisfaction of some need or interest.” In the Satavahana period the socio economic need was development. After the fall of Mauryas, there was no central power to control, coordinate and plan well arranged developing leading to prosperity. This was provided by Satavahana dynasties for three centuries. The Satavahanas produced super and high quality textile which was largely demanded by Greek and Roman societies. It has been pointed that “The satisfaction derived by man from the interplay with his environment are not only confined to the objects produced there from, but they also extend to the ways and patterns in which they have been produced.” Paithani was produced so excellently that this quality textile had almost captured Roman market and the patterns of this art work became extremely popular in Greek and Roman cultures. Taylor has defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a members of society.” The study of socio economic and cultural life of the Satavahana period must be conducted on these lines. The sociological approach helps to understand the social dynamics. The social milieu and cultural ethos can be examined on the basis of authentic sources.

About sociology of development of any period, it has been observed that “In the cultural field also we find innumerable varieties dotted over the length and breadth of this country. Traditional cultural ways and modern thoughts are intermixed here like social dynamics.” Further it is true that “India is a caste as well as class laden society. Vast class differences do exist among the masses.” However, in the Satavahana period social cohesion was attained without many differences of class and caste. People at large were engaged in production of art, crafts, with common interests. The cave temples as well as art and architecture were possible due to such social unity. It has been rightly stated that “India is known for its temple culture which is reflected in
various temples and sacred places scattered all over the country." Important centers of social integration were developed at places like Nasik, Paithan as well as Rajmahendri. These centers have manifested Hindu as well as Buddhist and Jain temples, which revealed social tolerance and feeling of coexistence that was responsible for developing new work culture in the Satavahana period. On this background we have to study aspects of social life.

About the social lag Gisbert has observed that “One of the most common varieties of the civilization cultural lag is that which takes place when the changes in the technological, economic or political systems outrun the old ideas and habituations rendering them obsolete and antiquated.” The Satavahanas were able to overcome the Mauryas backwardness and they established their own progressive approach. Gisbert has observed that “Besides these there are other types of lag difficult to classify owing to the great mixture of cultural and civilization forces involved.” There are many factors for backwardness Satavahanas were able to ride over these lags, which were hurdle in social development. Attempts were made by Satavahanas to overcome these difficulties which were mostly due to lack of coordination in earlier period. The Satavahanas were able to infuse a new spirit in political system, which led to change in socio economic life.

About the conflict between the cultures Gisbert has observed that “Another way in which mixed lags may arise is when a civilized society is confronted with a new technology imported from abroad and associated with a foreign culture which tries to impose its values or political sway on that society.” The Satavahana people in spite of opposition were able to penetrate in Greek and Rome due to their advanced quality products of textile, ivory as well as super quality ornaments. The social acceptance of Indian products was mostly possible due to Satavahanas social progressive attitude.

The products and services evolved by Satavahana rulers were based on excellence. Their quality products were able to compete western European brands, available at the time. Many a times, Satavahanas have upper hand than that of their western counterparts. Their free trade policy was mainly responsible for prosperous, economic development, achieved on high speed by those rulers. Their magnificent
performance in pottery, terracotta, wood work and ivory work was able to establish their superiority in Greek and Roman market. This was so much dominating that the Romans had to bring a resolution for banning Indian textile products in their markets. However, this banning popularized Indian products on large scale and it further increased popularity of these products. The elite aristocrat class was feeling prestigious to use Indian textile as well as Indian jewelry and ornaments as a matter of pride and status.

Thus, India was able to create its brand in western world, which was really a difficult and challenging task. The Satavahanas created Indian model of social and economic system and their brand products in the western world. Truly enough social and economic development went hand in hand and they were able to create environment which was very much favourable for Indian socio economic development. The Satavahana’s political stability led to improve their social and economic development. The another interesting part was that the corporate systems such as guilds and corporations as well as big businessmen were operating on social matrix and they were devoting their resources as well as time for the fulfillment of corporate social responsibility. It would be interesting to study these aspects in a positive perspective in this chapter. Aspects of social life have been unfolded below.

4.5. Aspects of social life:

In order to examine various aspects of social life during Satavahana period various sources of history are available. These sources are literary, epigraphic as well as archeological sources and local legends. All these sources can be corroborated and linked together. In order to attain a balanced approach proper documentation and analysis of sources is required. Dr. D.C. Sarkar in Age of Imperial Unity has rightly described the importance of epigraphic sources. Arun Bhattacharya has pointed that “The three great sacred books of the Hindus the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagwad Gita give accounts of the socio religious economic political life of the period.”

Thus for reconstruction of Satavahana history both literary and epigraphic sources must be properly correlated.
On the basis of sources it appears that society in Deccan was considerably developed and advanced. Some of the glimpses of the services can be described below:

We have to understand hidden currents in social life which depict peaceful and coordinated life.

The conditions of people of India under the Andhras were considerably cohesive and harmonious. In society the Brahmins enjoyed considerable respect. High officials and feudal lords formed one category of people whereas lower officials and traders came in the second category. Physicians, gold smiths and authors etc. were covered in the forth category. The people lived in families and the women enjoyed considerable respect. They were also even handed over the administration of the territory, if need be. In religious performance they joined hands with their husbands. One of the very significant features of the social life was that inter caste marriages were quite common.

This reveals the progressive aspect of the social life. The social life was thus much freer and was based on moral values.

The position of women during Satavahana period was much better than any other period because the Satavahana rulers suffixed the names of their mothers. Then another important feature is that during this period widowhood was not considered a curse. In the society mothers were very greatly respected. Under Satavahana period women was enjoying a special status and she had an opportunity to develop on the basis of her abilities and capacities. Truly the womanhood and motherhood was respected and worshiped in the form of Adishakti. The images of mother-goddesses found in the period amply testify the sources. Gautami, Yadnashree, Nayanika, Vashisthi were the names of royal mothers of the period and the kings were suffixing their names at the front with great pride, such as Gautamiputra Satakarni, Vashisthaputra Pulmai, etc. Arun Bhattacharya has rightly observed that “Women held a prominent position in society and owned property of their own.” Thus the social life under the Satavahanas was respected and sacred towards women in general and royal mothers in particular.
The King was at the top of administration he was a commander in chief of the army and would personally lead the army to the battlefield. The monarchy was hereditary and what was very special about the Satavahanas was the absence of any bloody struggle among the successors to the throne. No fratricidal war, no partition of the dominions between the heirs marred the succession to the Satavahana throne. The eldest son was not necessarily consecrated as heir apparent, i.e. crown prince nor was there any instance of association of the crown prince in the actual administration in the king. The royal princes were, however, appointed as viceroy. In case of minority of the king, the brother of the deceased king or the queen mother would function as the regent. The regency of the queen mother Nayanika is an instance in point.

The Srenis were not simply craft guilds or trade guilds but they acted as bankers and accepted deposits for which they paid interests. There are instances of permanent endowments i.e. deposits to guilds making provision for his new robes and other for food necessaries. It is interesting to note that governor of the eminence of Usavadatta deposited his money in permanent endowments in the guilds for the considered that his provision for robe and food would be more secure if he deposited his money with the guilds rather than in the imperial treasure for empire might be destroyed any time but the guild would continue to function despite political change. Interests on deposits varied from 9% to 12% per annum.

The study of social life shows that Satavahanas society was well organized, neatly governed by social norms prevailed at the time. The social structure was thus very well coordinated and webbed on the basis of abilities and qualities of human being. The system provided abilities to all.

However, on the basis of professions also it was divided in to four sections. In the first section were the central, provincial and district officers, like Mahasenapati, Mahabhojc Maharathi etc.; in the second 'were included Amatyas, Sresthin businessman etc.; the third constituted of doctors, men of learned professions, peasants, goldsmiths etc. ; and in the fourth were included carpenters, weavers, blacksmiths etc. The primary unit of the society was the family. The eldest 'male member of the family was the master of the family (Grahapati) and every member of the family
followed his instructions. Women commanded good respect in the society which is clear from the fact that Satavahana rulers included the names of their mothers along with theirs. Women participated in administration also. The widow of Gautamiputra Satakarni looked after the administration of the state as guardian of her sons. Not only inter-caste marriages were prevalent but marriages with foreigners were also permitted and they were accepted within the Hindu society. Satavahana rulers themselves had entered into matrimonial alliances with the Sakas. Even widows were respected in the society. There were no restrictions on foreign travel. Rather, due to increased maritime activities, people particularly belonging to the business community paid frequent visits to distant foreign countries. The attitudes of the people in general were liberal and progressive and the Satavahana society was free from many Darrow attitudes which had found their place amongst the people in the society of the North. The social life under the period was based on human values and had a tremendous capacity to allow human beings, both male and female for their all round rural development in the period.

The pattern of social divisions was somewhat mixed. The basis of social divisions seemed to be economic as well as hereditary castes. Thus, the society was divided into four castes.

The total recall of social life reveals three aspects as under:

- The social life was correlated systematically.
- A totally well organized social system was based on various castes, but it had internal freedom to provide development.
- The correlation and cordial relations was base of the social development during the period.

Inter-caste marriages were prevailing and the religious dogmas were not hurdle in this process. Ability of an individual was more important than in which Varna or caste he born. That means the flexible social system was able to provide mobility and freedom for development of social groups and classes. The aristocrat, artisans and craftsmen enjoyed a special creamy leaver status and the others were enjoying down trodden
situation. The labor class was included in this. However, they were properly paid and respected in the system.

The class structure was more open to cater interests of business and enterprises. Much impotance was given to productivity acceleration in different ways. It was really a challenging task to improve production and to improve growth rate. Satavahanas were successful in accelerating national growth rate on the basis of social will which was generated by them. The Satavahanas small scale industries as well as their middle and big industries were based on trained labor class which was working in tune with business people.

Now on this background features of economic growth can be discussed.

4.6.: Features of economic life:

The features of economic life under the Satavahana period can be examined on the basis of available source material. The literary records and epigraphic evidences can be correlated properly in this regard. These sources can be placed together for further studies. The economic aspects of the Satavahana period can be studied on the basis of archeological evidences also.

The economic life in the period can be studied on the basis of availability of coins and epigraphs. The evidence of economic life is also evident on the basis on the basis of archeological excavations.

The Satavahana administration was very simple and did not entail heavy expenditure. True the constant warfare required considerable spending on the army, yet the expenditure on day to day affairs being not very heavy the need for taxing people heavily did not arise. The sources of revenue of the government were the proceeds from the royal domain, salt monopoly, ordinary and extra-ordinary taxes on land and income from court fees and fines. Many taxes including assignments to soldiers and officials were paid in kind. ²³

Thus the tax policy of the Satavahana states was responsible for promoting economic prosperity in the state. The well developed economic system was responsible
for attracting foreign traders especially in respect of items of textile and ivory as well as woodwork which was well developed by Indian artists. The balance of trade in the Satavahana period was in favor of India. The growth rate of south India was thus more higher than any European country. The dream of making India a super power was cherished by Satavahana. They used natural resources and human resources together in such a manner that the old and new development strategies could help to reshape the economy. The creation and distribution of resources through quality productions was possible due to their positive policies. The economic behavior of people was based on new impetus and boost provided by rulers to raise infrastructure, human resources as well as for the improvement of value system. The credit of raising the economic life on the sound basis goes to policies of Satavahana rulers. They were highly responsible for developing public good by carefully planning natural resources and manpower for improving the standard of living. The rulers’ economic interest were not scanty and narrow, They always gave priority to people’s welfare and safety of nation rather than developing their own pride and glory. Their approach towards human welfare enterprise was very positive and Satavahana rulers focused on good governance at the cost of sacrifice of their own interest. The study of Satavahanas good governance and their support to new innovative ideas could throw light on various aspects of their healthy financial growth.

All these features of economic development revealed that Satavahanas were cordial enough to establish social and economic institutions of high reputation. Their entire efforts was to establish their economic superiority over contemporary political economies in the east and west. They were successful in this endeavor because their strategy was to open new vistas of economic development in a systematic manner.

Their trade and commerce amply testifies this phenomenon.

4.7. Economic conditions during Satavahana period:

Architecture and trade were prosperous. Life of the common man was happy as he was well provided with all facilities of life. They were economically well off. They inherited many traits of the material culture of the Mauryas and made their life better
and well off. There was a free fusion of local elements and northern ingredients under them.

They learnt the use of coins, burnt bricks and ring wells from the Mauryas and added much to the advancement of their material life. Under the Satavahana agriculture was prosperous and the villages’ economy was developed. Rice was cultivated in the territory between the Krishna and Godavari rivers. Cotton was also produced. The peasants used implements made of iron which were extensively used particularly in Carnatic. There were also wells for irrigation.

Encouragement was given to trade and industry. The traders and those engaged in those professions had their own guilds or ‘sanghas’. Coin dealers, potters, oil pressures and metal workers had their own guilds. These guilds looked after the collective interest of their trade and worked for their common uplift. These guilds were recognized by the Government and worked as bankers also.

All these aspects amply testify that Satavahana’s rule was always carefully marching ahead to control economy by adopting fair means. The regulations were healthy and sound to protect interests of artists, craftsmen and traders.

The Satavahana promoted the famous works as well as small craftsmen for production of quality textile, jewelers and ornaments as well as ivory workmanship. The ivory workers of Bhokardhan were invited to work on minute carvings and decorations on the stupa of Sanchi. This amply testifies the stupa quality of artists and craftsman of the period.

The external or foreign trade was carried through the famous ports of Supara, Broach; and Kalyan. India’s trade relations with countries like Arabia, Egypt and Rome were most healthy. In the far eastern countries, Indian traders established their own settlements and preached Indian culture.

Several towns sprang up in Maharashtra during this period. Paithan, Nasik, Junar were big markets and centers of trade. In the south east Vijaypur and Narsela were well known trade centers. There were guilds of traders as well and they carried trade in
groups. To encourage trade, the Satavahana kings struck numerous coins of gold, silver, copper and bronze.

Satavahana’s economic principles were based on agriculture, industry, trade and commerce. The high quality textile produced by them was demanded by western countries. The demand was so much that the Roman government had banned Indian products of high quality. It seems the Satavahana adopted policy of free trade and the balance of trade was in favor of Satavahana rulers.

The trade and commerce in the Satavahana period can be very well studied in the light of new business ventures launched by them. The Satavahanas reflected high value in their products and services and they could create excellent products which were largely demanded in the western world. The ivory figures found at Ter and Bhokardhan, ancient Tagarpura and Bhogwardhan described by Ptolemy have brought to light tremendous value created by Satavahana workers. The ivory figures found in Satavahana period have been compared to such figures found in Pompym excavations. This shows superb quality of Satavahana art work. The ivory products of Bhokardhan were demanded in western countries such as Greek and Roman cultures. In one of the inscriptions found in Sanchi, revealed that the artiest of Bhokardhan were demanded by Indian rulers in Malwa, Rajasthan, and Bundelkhand. Further it would be interesting to observe that in the collection of Balasaheb Patil in Paithan, there are more than ten thousand antiques belonging to Satavahana period and according to Prof. Jamkhedkar in the collection of Ramlingappa Lamture there are more than twenty-six thousand antiquities and pieces of art work belonging to Satavahana period. The Bhokardhan excavation report published by R.S.Gupte and S.B.Dev amply speaks about the glory of the trading emporium of the Satavahana period, which was on the ancient caravan route from Naneghat to Paithan, Ellora and Ajanta caves. Bhokardhan stands inbetween Ajanta and Ellora caves. All these evidences bespeak about the glory of Satavahana period which has been described in this research work.
All these aspects clearly indicate that the Satavahana’s economy was sound, stable and prosperous.

4.8. Satavahana coins and coinage:

In this period due to economic prosperity coins and coinage were fully developed. There was highly evolved minting system in the Satavahana period. The Satavahanas were the first south Indian native Indian rulers to issue their own coins with portraits of their rulers. Srivastava has observed that during the Satavahana rule some areas of the Satavahana territory witnessed circulation of the Satavahana coins and also the Punch marked coins. Out of the thirty rulers of the Andhra dynasty, mentioned in the Puranic lists, at least fourteen kings issued coins of various types and symbols. The types and symbols had local, dynastic, personal and imperialistic traits. The coins were mainly die-struck. But we have a substantial number of cast coins.” (Srivastava p-145) These coins were of high standard. Further it has been rightly observed that “The coinage of the Satavahanas who ruled for a long period, left an impact on the currency system of the successor dominions.” (Srivastava S.L. “An introduction to the Satavahana coinage” Krishna books, Mau (UP), 2006, p-145)

Satavahana coins provided unique features such as their chronology, language and even facial features like curly hair, long ears and strong lips. These coins bear very effective and projecting figures of their rulers. The majesty, impression and their likings were also reflected through these coins. They issued mainly lead and copper coins, their portrait style silver coins were usually struck over coins of the Western Kshatrapa kings. These punch marked coins were also effective in the political rule of Satavahana. Their political exile as well as march of their victorious rulers is reflected through these coins. Their aesthetic sense was outcome of a well organized economic system having visual reflections and super imposing style, which was their unique feature.

The Satavahanas were the earliest Indian monarchs to issue coins with their images. A healthy trade with Rome ensured a steady influx of Roman gold coins. The numismatic images of the Satavahana reign were replete with social, cultural, and religious symbolism. The lead, copper, and silver coins of the era bear royal insignia such as lions and elephants. The patronage received by Buddhism is also reflected in
these coins. Historians also suggest that the wise king of Ujjain, Vikramaditya may have belonged to the Satavahana lineage due to the similarity in the royal insignia of Ujjain and the ones inscribed on the Satavahana coins.

Satavahanas were people’s rulers to quickly understood feelings of common people. Hence instead of using traditional Sanskrit language, their legends were in Parkrit language. It is interesting to note that some reverse coin legends are in Telgu Language. If we look at the future it seems the Satavahanas magic art of coinage has influenced the future rulers. Creating quality coins of excellent nature was their fascination. They were able to provide prestigious look to their coins. They were also able to express their thoughts through the coins. The Telgu legends on the reverse side have been mostly found in different places such as Godavari, Kotilingala, Karimnagar, Krishna, Amravati, Guntur in AP. Coins found at all these places have been studied by scholars like Srivastava S.L. He has observed that “Coin legends are mostly incomplete and ill preserved.” This has also led to face many problems. By understanding all these limitations it is true that the space and objectivity of the legends provide us a clue to understand which economic system which was evolved in the period. If we throw light on the Satavahanas coins and coinage, the following three features can be noted:

* The concepts were well thought and legends were developed on the basis of such bright, clear and well defined ideas which revealed socio economic prosperity of the period.

* The competitiveness of these coins was far better than contemporary coins, because inspite of Satrapa rulers coins. Satavahana coins were in currency at large level.

* Real and virtual images of Satavahana kings were objectively drawn on coins. The design of the coins was very systematically made and by recognizing the value of their political strength. The technocrats were able to develop effective legends to make an impact because the themes were exclusively original and genius. There was no bar on minting of silver coins, but for practical reasons silver coins were issued only to commemorate certain important occasion and events. Silver coins of major rulers like
Satakarni-I, Goutamiputra Satakarni and Vasisthputra Pulmai are available and they are solving major problems in the recent years. (Srivastava-177) It has been further observed that “Satavahana silver specie appear to have become quite popular, and attempts were made to manufacture imitations by casting them in moulds.” (p-125) In spite of competition and contemporary practices of forgery, the Satavahana coins sustained in the market on the basis of their own quality and excellence. Their perfection was super, and their legends were very much imaginative and creative.

The beauty, elegance as well as systematic design of these coins revealed the well designed excellent and effective presentation of these coins. Rightly observed by Srivasta in his work an introduction to Satavahana coins it seems there is lot of scope for the study of Satavahana coins. The concise study of Satavahana coins illustrate that these coins were ahead of their times. They began a new age of quality coinage in south India. The valuable chart of Satavahana rulers is depicted in Puranas and that has been authenticated on the basis of epigraphic sources. The many more aspects like chronology, family name, cast, religious orientation, and political history of Satavahanas, which clearly reflected through these coins. King wise, type wise, analysis has been made by scholars which throws light on many complicated issues. The availability of coins from Hoards and excavations, personal collections, museums, throw light on many neglected aspects of Satavahana coins. The present researcher has studied Satavahana coins from the collection of late Dr. Shantilal Purwar’s collection in his family museum. Further the collection of Balasaheb Patil and Ramlingappa Rampure at Ter in Osmanabad, also supports all these views and arguments. Broadly speaking Satavahana’s coins manifested their socio economic cultural life revealing good deal of cohesion as well as harmony in political economic, and cultural system of the period. Sociological study of legends and symbols can further throw new light on many complications. Five facts can be presented below about Satavahana coins:

* The Satavahana coins were well designed and well developed and they were first in the South Indian dynasties, to have their own coins.
* The Satavahana silver coins were exception in their period. The stable and prosperous rulers, after commemorating their victory over foreign powers like Shatrapas minted their own silver coins.

* The Satavahana legends on the coins are mostly in Prakrit language and on the reverse side they also used Telgu language as an effective medium of communication.

* The Satavahana mints were very well regulated and they had an effective network of their coins.

* The ratio of transfer of coins was well maintained and these coins were respected by their own people as well as foreign rulers, which shows recognition that Satavahana powers had received in the contemporary India. The influence of Satavahana’s political power which was spread at different places in South India has been studied by scholars in a right manner. All these aspects can be very useful to throw light on economic prosperity of the period. In short it can be said that Satavahana coins were well developed, well designed and well received by the contemporary world. These coins were largely recognized by Indian society at one hand and these coins were also respected by different rulers in South India. Whenever the relations were cordial and equal the coins were spread in the bordering areas. The matrimonial relations between Satvahanas and Shatrapas also evident on the basis of exchange of coins made by these rulers. The coins were also described size, value and the likings of the rulers. In the history of South India, for the first time, images of kings are depicted on Satavahana coins. It shows how Satavahana mints were well advanced to depict images of their favorite rulers effectively. The coins of Satavahana period were proportionate and balanced. They were minting gold as well as silver coins. Few of the coins in the Purwar Museum collection of Sahaganj Museum visited by scholar along with his Guide has proved that Satavahana coins were very good and excellent and they can be compared to later Gupta period. This is a solid evidence of Satavahanas economic prosperity.

4.9. Society during Satavahana period:
Social life during Satavahana period was inspiring and enthusiastic. The coins, sculpture and literature of the Satavahana period are the source of our knowledge not only in respect of contemporary administration but also about social conditions.

* The Satavahana society was divided into four classes. This division was based on economic activity and status. The first class consisted of high officials and feudatory chief who ruled over provinces and districts. These high elite class of officers were on the top of the ladder and they enjoyed political status and privileges.

* The officers in administration were also having respected position in the system. The second class included petty officers like Amatyas Mahamatras and wealthy traders.

* In the third class were the middle class people such as Vaidyas or physicians, writers, peasants, goldsmiths, perfumers etc. This can be described as higher middle class.

* The fourth and last class were constituted of the lowest vocations such as carpenters, blacksmiths, fishermen and gardeners. There were the four divisions of the society. The smallest unit was the family in which the eldest living member commanded the greatest respect. He was called the Grihapati and was obeyed by all other members of the family.

Thus the above social system was based on their income and profession and not on the Varna or caste. This means the people had a freedom to change their states.

Women were honored. They were given higher education and they took part in religious functions. Some of the rulers even added their mother’s name to their own name, such as Gautamiputra, Vashishthiputra, Pulmavi, Kaushakiputra etc.. This is a unique example of Satavahana rulers in the ancient Indian history. No other dynasty in the ancient period has this practice.

This practice itself reveals that the status of women was much high. Sometimes women assumed guardianship of their minor sons and acted as their regents. They also took part in the Ashvamedhas. The Satavahanas were Brahmans. Still they had qualities of Kshtriya and they were able solider and guards.
Therefore Brahmanism made rapid strides under their rule. The Brahmans were accorded the highest place. Effort was also made to revive the Varna system. In their bid to exalt Brahmanism the Smritis declared that a ten years old Brahman would be more revered than a 100 years old Kashtriya. This respect was based on their tradition of knowledge and wisdom.

Mixed marriages were considered obnoxious though there are some instances of such marriages. Vashishthiputra Pulmavi himself married the daughter of the Saka ruler Rudradaman thus giving respectability to such marriages. In this period inter marriages among the Hindus and foreign tribes of the Sakas, the parthians and the Greeks were freely consummated so that these foreigners were absorbed forever in the Hindu social order. The inter caste and inter Varna marriages provided on large scale.

Thus, the Satavahana society was progressive and was ahead of its time. The kings and generals also followed the progressive policy. The royal marriages were based on strengthening political power. Strength and prestige was looked at the time of matrimonial relations.

The marriage system in the Satavahana period was not rigid but it was flexible. V.K.Rajwade in his book “History of marriage institutions in India” has stressed progressive efforts made by these smaller dynasties. It seems intercaste marriages were promoted and movements from one Varna to other Varnas was possible and all positive efforts were made to support new experiments made to improve this marriage institution. It is true that in the Satavahana period, efforts of social engineering were made and it led to new cultural height to make record achievements in the fields of literature, art and culture.

An open social system is always better than closed system because Satavahanas social system was broad based and it was all involving to develop general will for around development. Good deal of experiments made by Satavahana rulers changed prevailing conservative trends.

Thus the picture of Satavahana society remained always positive and optimistic. The social philonsofits aristocrat class and artizens class was mainly responsible for
cordial and constructive approach helping to each other and leading towards all round development of the society.

* Social life in Satavahana period was peaceful and there was good deal of exchange in the above three social sections which were based on teaching, learning, defence, as well as trade and commerce. The aristocrat class, traders and craftsman were working together for establishing finest qualities among them for the sake of society and nation, which was an important feature of the period.

4.10. Trade and Commerce:

Trade and commerce flourished in Satavahana period due to political stability. Important trade centers such as Paithan or Pratishthan, Bhogwardhan (Bhokardhan), Tagarpur (Ter) flourished in the state. Ivory figures, terracotta’s and high quality textile, locally known as Paithani were demanded in the Greek, Roman market. Indian textiles were earning huge profits and hence there was a resolution to control Indian quality textiles by imposing taxes and banning it. This is the testimony of flourishing trades and commerce in the Satavahana period.

Satavahanas were quite well off economically. Agriculture was still the main occupation of the people. Both national and international trade was very brisk. There were guilds of traders belonging to different industries and acted as modern banks and bankers. Gold, silver and copper coins were in circulation. International trade was brisk. The king encouraged traders. We had then a very good system to reflect economic system.

In the Satavahana period three flourished cities like Pratisthan, Bhogavardhan, Ter and cities like Junnar and Karnataka also developed during this period. The development of all these cities was always helped as part of economic system.

The territories of Satavahana rulers which had helped in increased foreign trade with the countries of the West and South East Asia. Bharoach, Kalyan, Sopal etc. were the important ports within the Satavahana Empire while Vajyanti, Nasik, Junnar etc. were the centers of internal trade. The state had provided safety to trade and commerce and built up roads connecting various parts of the empire to facilitate communication
and transport. The main items of foreign trade were muslin, cotton cloth, silk, spices, medicinal herbs, skins of animals, ivory, pearls, etc. which brought large assets to the Satavahana state. The free trade had provided facilities for attracting traders from Europe. The regular trade of India with Greek and Roman Empire had considerably increased. The network of trade guilds and corporate had a well developed connectivity with the ports and trading cities. The facilities given for traders were responsible for enriching trade and commerce.

The people enjoyed economic prosperity during the period of the rule of the Satavahanas. Agriculture, trade and handicrafts were the main professions of the people. However, the primary reason of increased economic prosperity was foreign trade. A large part of the sea-coast both in the East and the West was within the Satavahana Empire. The economic activities of the traders were supported properly by the state and Satavahanas.

The traders had their organized guilds which served the purpose of modern banks also. These guilds gave money on varied rates of interest to different castes. From the Brahmanas, the interest charged was only 2%. Kshatriyas paid 3% interest; Vaisyas paid 4% and the Sudras paid 3% interest. The workers too had their separate guilds to look after their interests. There were coins of gold, silver and copper for the purpose of exchange. The gold coin was called Suvarna while the silver and copper coins were called Karsapana. There existed in Deccan favorable balance of trade. Economically the people gained from external trade.  

Guilds (srenis) were a normal feature of the age. We learn of such organizations of corn dealers (dhamnikas), potters, weavers (kolikani kayas), oil pressers (tilapisaka), braziers (kasadaras), bamboo workers (vamsakaras), etc. Besides bringing members of the same craft together, they served as banks, in which money (aksaya nivi) could be invested on interest. The currency consisted of Karsapanas, both silver and copper, and gold Suvarnas. Each suvarna was equivalent to 35 silver Karsapana pieces.

Trade flourished, and ships from the west, laden with merchandise visited the ports of Broach, Sopara and Kalyan. The two important inland marts were Tagara and
Paithan. Communications were generally good, and people freely went from one part of the Deccan to another on business.  

Economic conditions of the Satavahana period were to be viewed from two standpoints, namely the economic condition of the government and of the people. According to N.K.Sastri “The government lived from hand to mouth.” Sastri’s views cannot be accepted because, Satavahanas socio economic life was quite stable and it had a healthy based of development, much new and fresh sources revealed that Satavahanas had ample surplus wealth and this wealth they were reflecting in art, architecture as well as export quality products.

The trading activities in the Satvahana period were both retail consumption commodities on smaller level and major industrial products on the larger level. The Shrenies and Shristis, trade guilds and big bees in the society were accumulating good deal of profit and they were strong enough to protect this wealth and they were transforming this wealth for social good. The huge number of cave temples more than 500 were carved in the region by the support of these trade guilds. The Rajdadag caves in Aurgangabad were caraved by the support of Kanheri Shreties who were responsible for supporting for the scooping this beautiful caves complex. Many antiquities and rear pieces as well as toys found in Bhokardhan excavation amply testify about the network of trade and commerce. On one side there were craftsman who were engaged increating handicrafts and unique art works and on the other hand there were traders who were taking these products both in the country and outside to the elite class who was purchasing these products on higher rates. Of course the profit was generated by traders and their trade guilds were using such profit for fulfillment of social responsibility which was quite closer to the modern concept like corporate social responsibility.

The economic prosperisty had led to cultural efforesance of art work. Art was just like a fountain which was sponstenously coming out of creative social process. This process was not simple but it was outcome of socio cultural environment which can be described as cultural ecology which was created by rich class of society. In the free trade, society gets stability and it can think over development of art and culture. All these manifestations can be very well described through understanding of political economy and its impact on social and cultural life, which was the true metamorphosis of
Satavahana’s society and economy. On this background the profile of Satavahanas social life can be examined on following points, which have been interpreted in the foregoing narrations in nutshell. Thus the Satavahanas social, economic and cultural life was inseparable from each other.

4.11. Profile of Satavahanas:

The study of socio economic aspects of Satavahana period brings us to the conclusion that there was a good deal of social harmony and cohesion prevailing in the Satavahana period. The understanding of relationship between different social segments reveals that there was a good deal of social harmony and cohesion. According to L. Prasad, “The credit of establishing the first empire in South India goes to the Satavahanas. Except the far South viz., the territories south of the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra where the Pandyas, Cholas, and Cheras had their kingdoms, the entire South India and a part of North India were conquered by the Satavahanas at the time of the zenith of their power.” 28 Further, it has been observed that “No such empire ever existed in South India prior to the Satavahanas. Besides the Satavahanas defended the South for quite a long period from the invasions of foreigners, particularly the Sakas which was a creditable achievement.” 29 Due to this stern action Satavahanas were able to bring peace and order in the state. The political geography that Satavahanas shaped was responsible for social stability. It has been further observed that “Satavahanas provided a sound administration to their empire.” 30 Common man was the epicenter of Satavahanas governance. Good governance was possible on the basis of responsible political economy and state organizations. The Satavahana period was highly dominated by benevolent kingship. It has been stated that “The Central Indian Empire of the Satavahanas dynasty showed a much greater continuity and stability than Kharavela’s short lived realm. The Purana texts even maintain that the dynasty ruled for 460 years, but these texts do not always provide reliable historical evidence.” 31 About the pivotal role of king it has been observed that “The head of the state was the king and all powers were concentrated in him. But the Satavahana rulers were not cruel despots and did not rule according to their personal desire. They ruled according to the laws of Dharmasatras.” 32 Due to such
missionary zeal and strong conviction the Satavahana rulers were having benevolent approach towards their subjects. It is true that “The rulers did not either support the divine rights of kings or assumed high titles. They were satisfied with the titles of Rajana, Rojaraja or lord of the Vindhya though some of them were good conquerors and even performed Rajasuya and Asvamedh yajnas.” Performance of these yajnas was very prestigious and which was treated as part of social sanction. The Satavahanas assumed massive social support due to their positive approach. Evidences show that they had donated huge endowments to the social and educational as well as religious deeds. They believed in sacred work assigned to them as per directions given in the Dharmashastra. They were truly following Rajdharma, the state’s responsibility of governing people. The Satavahana administrative mechanism was thus based on people’s participation. King and his noble men were taking every care regarding grievances of people. Their social responsibility seems more credible than that of their political power.

About overall responsibility of the king it has been observed that “The primary duties of the king were the extension of the kingdom, protection of its territories and commanding the army in the battle.” They were all doing for the betterment of poor people. It has been observed that “Satakarni-I, who seems to be identical with the king mentioned in Kharavela’s inscription was the first great ruler of this dynasty. He fought against the Greeks and Shakas in the west and northwest and then extended his kingdom to the east along the river Godavari.” Probably in his period prosperous city Paithan became the capital of Satavahanas and their control over the Godavari belt led to the economic prosperity.

The administrative system of Satavahanas was the responsible system. There was a close link between the rulers and administrators. It has been observed that “The king was helped in administration by his ministers called Amatyas.” These were highly diplomatic officers and they were having proper linkage and coordination for the people’s welfare. They were working as per guideline provided by king or his close minister, who were following dharmashastras perfectly. Further it has been observed that “Only sometimes we find reference of ministers designated as Rajamatyas and Mahamatyas.” Indirectly the principle of decentralization of power was followed and
king used to delegate these powers for the sake of betterment of people. These officers were assigned special tasks to see whether administration was rightly working in tune with people’s welfare or not. Paithan or Pratishthan was capital of Satavahanas which was strategically located. It has been observed that “Satakarni’s capital Pratishthan (Paithan) was located on the banks of the Godavari what is now in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra. Due to this advance along the Godavari towards the southeast he could proudly called himself Lord of the South i.e. daksinapatha-pati.”  

It seems whole south India was under the influence of Satavahanas. It would be interesting to study how the state was divided into zones. It has been observed that “The kingdom was divided into Janapadas (provinces) which were further subdivided into Aharas (Districts) for the purpose of administration.”  

It would be interesting to understand how the ladder of administration further extended. It is true that “Rajyaputra, Maharathi, Mahabhoj and several other officers looked after the administration of Janapadas and Aharas.” The division of power was thus from central local. It has been observed that “The city administration was looked after by municipal boards while village assemblies looked after the administration of villages with the help of local officers called Gramikas.” Their glory has been reflected in objective foreign accounts. Pliny reports that in his time the Andhras as he calls the Satavahanas, had 30 fortified cities, 1 lakh infantry, 30,000 cavalry and even 9000 war elephants. They were thus the strongest power in South India.”  

This is the testimony of Satavahanas strong political power with a network of responsible administration. It has been observed that “Every district had a cantonment where the soldiers were kept permanently to maintain order and peace in the district.”  

The Satavahanas were able rulers, dominated their power on the bank river Godavari. It is true that “Nevertheless they were deprived of the central part of their realm on the upper Godavari by the Shakas who were pushed to the south by the Kushanas.”  

The Satavahanas had a continuous history of rulers. It has been observed that “Only King Gautamiputra was able to restore the Satavahana realm to its earlier greatness in 125 AD. Gautamiputra’s son Vasisthiputra, alias Shri Pulumavi, ruled the Satavahana kingdom around 140 AD at the time of Ptolemy, who referred to Shri Pulumavi as Shri Polemaios.” The glory of Satavahanas described by Ptolemy in
his atlas refers to the significance of this dynasty. 
Arun Bhattacharya has observed that “Foreign trade flourished and Ptolemy a 
geographer who wrote about 130 A.D. mentions many ports. Export was mainly in 
muslin. Imports consisted of such luxuries as wine, glassware and finer textiles.” 46
About the gross achievements of Satavahanas it has been observed that “The 
Satavahanas came into prominence by putting to an end the Kanva power and 
extended their sway from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal in the Deccan.” 47 Thus 
Satavahanas had established well organized state. Further about the last phase of 
Satavahanas Arun Bhattacharya has observed that “Very little is known of the 
Satavahanas after the second century AD. The Satavahanas power came to an end in 
the western Deccan after the death of Yajnasri.” 48

4.12. Co-relation of facts:

The evolution of socio economic life was possible on the basis of both primary 
and secondary sources. The correlation of facts has benefited a great deal to look at the 
problem. The entire process has been very well studied here in nutshell for highlighting 
various facts in a systematic manner.

The literary, epigraphic and archeological evidence has been correlated properly 
to throw light on social and economic life. The trade and commerce and means of 
exchange have been studied here to reveal the economic life of the period. The entire 
phenomenon has been evolved in nutshell. The Satavahana trading emporiums in 
Bhokardhan and Ter revealed that these were flourishing centers having a well 
developed society. The epigraphic evidences reveal that the trading system was based 
on Shrenis. The trade guilds and groups were well organized and they had a thorough 
impact on social and economic life of the period. The various aspects of social and 
economic life explained in this work revealed excellent performance of the period. The 
gravity of economic life was based on correlation of facts. The entire study can be 
described as the nexus of the study. Free trade was basic foundation of the period. Due 
to free trade and simple methods of taxation were responsible for balance in trade and 
commerce. The entire study reveals that the balance of trade was in their favor. In the 
Satavahana ports, gold and silver was pouring. The textile, handicrafts and ivory works
were largely demanded in western countries. Due to these products the Satavahana were benefitted and the entire process was completed. This process was possible due to proper correlation between the trading system and trade services. The entire process was accelerated on the basis of proper correlation between economic systems. The big traders, relatives and service forums actually were correlated to each other. The teamwork in the field of trade and commerce and entrepreneurship was effective and this had led to economic prosperity of the period. In the Satavahana period this teamwork existed on large scale and this was responsible for overall progress of the period. All these aspects have been neatly explained in this work to unfold the economic system together.

The study of statecraft in the Satavahana period in this chapter was conducted with special reference to social and economic aspects during the period. Political, social and economic aspects of life were related to each other and the political stability had led to social peace. Further peace and stability was responsible for rise of economic system. Trade guilds and Sresties were able to develop due to this co relationship. Choudhari has rightly observed that “Considered from the different aspects of life during the unusually long Satavahana rule we may conclude that the period of peace and prosperity that followed the conquests led to an all-round development of the political, social, economic, religious and cultural life under Satavahanas.” 49 This led to economic development in the state. The cohesion between quality social systems, and economic organs was responsible for flourishment of trade and commerce which poured money gold and silver towards the western ports of India. The study of political bodies, social systems and self esteemed guilds and Srenis, shows that there was a good deal of cooperation between all these bodies which lead to the development of profitable organizations.

The political geography of Deccan was changed by Satavahana dynasty. They were able to bring unity and ideology to south Indian empire. The entire south was under their sovereignty and they were responsible for assumption of social structure. The Satavahanas social life was peaceful and harmonious as they had strong economic system which leads to the prosperity and all round development of the state. This
economic prosperity had led to the development of art, architecture and literature. They were able to promote Buddhism and Jainism and the cave temples of Bhaje, Karle and Bedsa amply testify the phenomenon. The social cohesion and harmony was an important feature of the period.

4.13. Summary:

Thus, in this chapter major focus on social and economic life under the Satavahana period. In the beginning new approach was presented in a systematic manner further social dynamics and prosperity was neatly explained.

The sociology of Satavahana life was crystallized at one hand and features of socio economic life were newly interpreted. The study of social life reflected that there was unity in diversity and people working together in a cohesion. The sociological grime work of the Satavahana society was rightly interpreted in this chapter and it has brought to light three new features:

- The Satavahana society was having many differences in each other, but it had a common impact on socio cultural life.
- There was a positive constructive spirit which led to the all round development of the state.
- The moral and spiritual gospel of ethical values was a basis of material progress.

Thus, it is true that the tradition texts to social reality and good will created by Satavahana rulers undergone a process of value inculcation and that led to common appeal of development, Hinduism along with Buddhism and Jainism stayed together and a new spirit was infused in the period. Society at large observed these ethical values and transformed constructive approach through its new creations reflected in art, culture and literature.

Society was a body corpus and it has a organic nature in the Satavahana period. Aspects of social life such as family caste, Verna, marriages, as well as customs and traditions that prevailed during the period were described. In this process exchange of social norms and behavior was underlined. Further the richness and prosperity of the period was based on emerging economy. Hence various aspects of economic life were
properly highlighted. The agro based economic structures was explained. Different types of coins such as gold, silver, were testimony of prosperity. The exchange of coins as well as mints that prevailed in the period is the evidence of advancement of coins and coinage. Further trade and commerce during the period was examined on the basis of literary as well as archeological sources. The excavations at Bhokardhan and Ter show evidences of this prosperous state. Thus correlation of various aspects of society and economy reveals that a good deal of prosperity was prevailing and on this background in the next chapter harmony in religious life has been properly pinpointed.